The Pasifika Trades Training Initiative WelTec 2012-2013

Tavita Filemoni, John Horrocks, Lisa Wong,
Seann Paurini, Arden Perrot
– WelTec

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Authors

Rev Tavita Filemoni, Dr John Horrocks, Dr Lisa Wong, Seann Paurini, Arden Perrot

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Kia orana, Bula vinaka, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Taloha ni, Fakatalofa atu, Mauri, Namaste, Warm Pacific greetings

Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations used in the study

CPIT	Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
ITP	Institutes of technology and polytechnics
LN	Literacy and numeracy
LNAAT	Literacy and numeracy for adults assessment tool
MIT	Manukau Institute of Technology
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
PAC	Pacific Advisory Committee
PTTI	Pasifika Trades Training Initiative
SET	Student experience team
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
Unitec	Unitec Institute of Technology
WelTec	Wellington Institute of Technology

Executive summary

The aim of this project was to evaluate the factors that had contributed to the successful completion of pre-trades courses by a group of Pacific learners at the Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec). All learners in the study had received fee-free scholarships in 2012 and 2013 under the Pasifika Trades Training Initiative (PTTI). This initiative was developed by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to encourage Pacific learners into pre-trades training and to provide skilled workers for the Christchurch rebuild. A unique aspect was the involvement of Pacific church ministers in student recruitment. The ministers nominated candidates for scholarships, and were involved in the early stages of planning for this initiative. Once the students commenced their studies, the ministers also provided pastoral care and support.

WelTec was one of five institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) that took part in the PTTI. A total of 106 Pacific learners were enrolled through the PTTI scholarship programme at WelTec in 2012 and 2013. Of this number, 82 learners or 77.4% successfully completed their qualifications. This was in line with the overall performance of Pacific learners at WelTec across all programmes. However, the learners involved in this initiative stood out because they had entered study through a different pathway from other students. As none were currently studying at the time they applied for the scholarships, they might have been expected to have more difficulty with some of the academic aspects of the work. The fact that their results were just as good as other Pacific learners supported the value of the fee-free model and other aspects of the PTTI approach such as the role of the local Pacific church ministers

Many of the factors that support success for Pacific learners are well-known. These include support from the Pacific community, courses and institutional structures that are responsive to Pacific needs, and a sense of a visible Pacific presence at the place of study. This work sought to look in greater depth at the scholarship pre-trade programmes to highlight some specific practical initiatives that supported learner success, as well as aspects or initiatives that could be further developed.

The method was a case study approach, based around a series of interviews with key participants who were involved with the students, as well as seven of the students themselves. Participants included church ministers, academic and administrative staff at WelTec, Pacific mentors at WelTec, members of the WelTec Pacific Advisory Committee (PAC), and WelTec's employment officer or 'work broker'.

Findings

There were four principal factors that supported the students' success:

- A whole of institution approach and community support. The initial recruitment by the church ministers and the pastoral care they provided placed this programme firmly within a community context. WelTec staff from many different areas also communicated with one another to provide support for this group of students. The students themselves described this as a "push" – the active involvement of staff in overseeing their work, checking on attendance, contacting families and urging them to achieve (the particular steps that helped students to achieve are listed in Appendix 1).

- Challenging students to have a vision for their future. The students needed to have a vision of where their course was taking them. This impetus was provided in the first instance by the Pacific church ministers who recruited the students. This "visioning" was important as these PTTI students were unlike the usual entrants to pre-trade courses who would have decided themselves which particular programme was the right one for them.

- Readiness of all the participants to recognise that they were learners. Learners included staff, as a number of the practical innovations that helped the students were developed once the course was running.

- Assistance for students who lacked specific skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy (LN). The process by which church ministers nominated candidates for scholarships was detached from the usual recruitment methods at WelTec. This meant that some students who enrolled on the PTTI in 2012 struggled with academic aspects of the courses even though their practical skills and motivation may have been excellent. As a result of this finding, the response for 2013 was to embed LN within the courses.

Further interventions

This study suggests further steps that could support Pacific learners at WelTec itself and, if applicable, at other providers of the PTTI programme:

- More assistance to students on the path from study to work. Stronger study-to-work connections are required under the consortia approach which has been operating since the start of 2014 (refer page 8 - The consortia approach from 2014-2017).

- Further formal relationships between WelTec and employers, such as memorandums of understanding.

- Collection of more data about work outcomes for Pacific students, in order to identify if courses are, in fact, preparing students for work or whether more can be done towards the transition from study to work.

- The adoption of a Pacific strategy at WelTec itself, in order to place more decisions within long-term objectives, rather than being responses to pressures as they arise. This has, in fact, happened since the completion of the study, with the formal adoption of a Pacific strategy in July 2014.

- Clarification of the future roles of the church ministers, in terms of the selection of scholarship candidates and student support.

- A review of the policy that now places a maximum age limit of 34 years on students who receive scholarships.

Introduction

The Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec) was one of five institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) that were selected to take part in the Pasifika Trades Training Initiative (PTTI). This provided 300 fee-free full-time trades training places in both 2012 and 2013. The other ITPs were Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT), Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT), Whitireia New Zealand (Whitireia) and Unitec Institute of Technology (Unitec). As this programme had a number of novel features, including the involvement of Pacific church ministers in the selection and support of the students who applied for the fee-free scholarships, WelTec undertook the current study in order to find out what factors helped these Pacific learners[1] to succeed.

The aim of the PTTI was to encourage and support students who might otherwise not have undertaken tertiary study. This was in line with the objectives of successive Tertiary Education Strategies and, in particular, the *Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015* (Minister for Tertiary Education, 2010) and the *Pasifika Education Plan 2009-2012* (Ministry of Education, 2009) for greater participation rates at higher levels of study for Pacific learners and to prepare them better for employment. It was also designed to provide a larger skilled workforce for the Christchurch rebuild.

An evaluation by the Tertiary Education Commission (2013a) of the first year of the PTTI indicated that it had, in fact, reached potential learners who would not have normally entered tertiary study. Successful elements included community leadership, the scholarship model, and academic support including pastoral care and community pastoral care. The transitions from study to work, on the other hand, needed strengthening, starting with better data collection and extending to sector-wide collaborations between tertiary education organisations themselves and industry, as well as clear integration of the path from education to industry. These recommendations have resulted in a new model from 2014, in which a consortia approach has aligned the PTTI more closely to the needs of employers and learners (TEC, 2013b).

A feature of this programme was that the participating institutions had to demonstrate links with their local Pacific communities. At WelTec, this was through the involvement of church ministers, who nominated suitable students for the courses that were funded, pre-trades qualifications at levels 3 and 4 (Figure 1). The involvement of the church ministers was also seen as a way of providing pastoral care for students during their study.

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[1] The term Pacific learners is used in this study. It is synonymous here with 'Pasifika' – the term used by documents such as the *Pasifika Education Plan.*
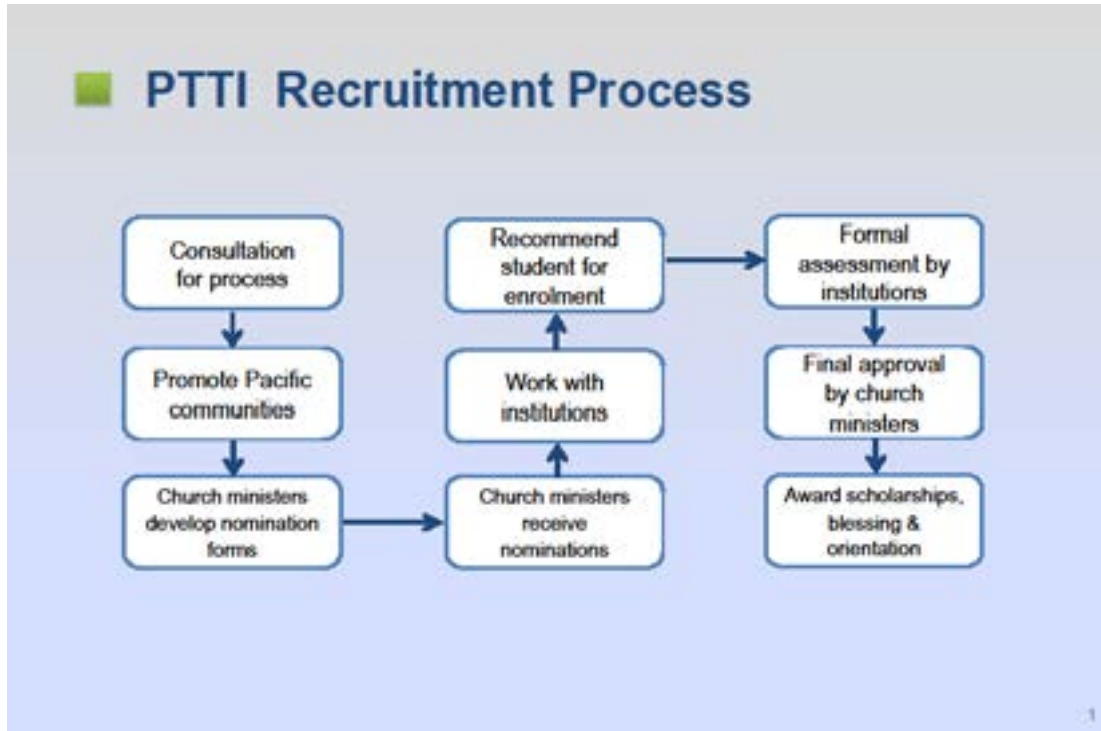
Figure 1: The Pasifika Trades Training Initiative recruitment process 2012-2013.

The results in terms of qualifications completed for the first year of the PTTI in 2012 were encouraging. At WelTec, the qualification completion rate for the Pacific learners supported by scholarships for pre-trade courses was 76%, which matched the rate across the institution for success by Pacific learners in 2012 and was slightly ahead of the rate of 73% for qualification completions for the ITP sector as a whole (TEC, 2013c) (Table 1). The PTTI students at WelTec in 2012 were studying carpentry, painting and decorating, plumbing and gasfitting, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, brick and block laying and landscape construction.

Table 1. Learner enrolment and completions for the PTTI 2012 (TEC, 2013a).

PROVIDER	NUMBER OF LEARNERS	NUMBER OF QUALIFICATION COMPLETIONS	QUALIFICATION COMPLETION RATE
Unitec	28	17	63%
CPIT	64	-	-
WelTec	46	48	76%
MIT	71	58	60%
Whitirea	49	29	59%
TOTAL	258	152	65%

CPIT courses were disrupted by the Canterbury earthquakes and CPIT was given permission to modularise courses. The successful completion rate for the module delivery was 76.8%.

Watch a video

An overview of the PTTI programme and the training programme He Toki ki te Rika/Inspiring Māori leadership in Trades[2], is provided by the youtube clip *Strengthening Communities* (22 December 2014)*.* It has a focus on how business and communities also benefit from students' success and includes interviews with students, tutors, a Pacific church minister and industry representatives: (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueokVkR96lo&feature=c4-overview&list=UU-St1Gu0Zzo7q2pb4jk2mXw).

The consortia approach from 2014-2017

For all participating institutions, the PTTI model used during 2012-2013 was replaced by a consortia approach from 2014 which draws in both Māori and Pasifika community groups such as iwi, hapū, and charities, as well as the churches who took part in the earlier initiative. Funding for Māori and Pasifika trades training scholarships has been increased to expand the number of places from 600 to 3,000 by 2017, though only students aged between 18-34 can now apply. In line with a greater focus on employment opportunities, the Māori and Pasifika Trades Training Initiative is a joint government initiative between the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and TEC. The basis for student selection has altered as a result of the consortia approach, but the PTTI of 2012 and 2013 can still offer useful data about what did or did not promote student success for Pacific students. Much of this will still be applicable under the new consortia approach.

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[2] He Toki ki te Rika is a Māori and broader communities trade training programme launched by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, CPIT and industry partners to train Māori for leadership roles in the Christchurch recovery.

Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to evaluate in detail how the PTTI had functioned at WelTec in the years 2012-2013 in terms of successful student outcomes. There was a focus on what had worked well and the areas that needed development.

Scope

- Teaching and learning and support practices, including literacy and numeracy (LN).

- Community involvement

- Pastoral care

- Retention and completion

- Transition to work after completion of the pre-trades programme

- The interactions between the many parties involved with the programme, including the Pacific Advisory Committee (PAC), the church ministers who selected the PTTI scholarship candidates and WelTec's employment officer or 'work broker' who facilitated the learners' transitions to work.

Literature review

There have been a number of research projects in recent years on the factors that have helped or hindered the success of Pacific learners in tertiary education (Airini, Brown, et al. 2010; Alkema, 2014; Millward, Stephenson, Rio, & Anderson, 2011). Since the early work by Huntsman, who described how a group of Pacific learners at Auckland University had put together a booklet that set out their own experiences and needs (Huntsman, 1989), the same themes have been repeatedly identified. The booklet itself, *Coconuts begin with a C: Pacific Islanders at university*, highlighted the importance of aspects of learning that may take place outside the formal lecture situation. These included student background, socioeconomic constraints, academic difficulties, embarrassments and 'quirks' and explanations of them.

Pacific learners in tertiary study – how many take part, how many succeed

Huntsman was looking at what happens after students start their study. The PTTI has followed a different path. The initiative was designed, in part, to draw students into study in the first place. An emphasis on participation has been part of the TEC's successive tertiary strategies, as Pacific learners still have a lower participation rate in the tertiary sector than other groups, including Māori. Both the *Pasifika Education Plan 2009-2012* (Ministry of Education, 2009) and the *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017* (Ministry of Education, 2013b) have set goals for the greater participation of Pacific learners, particularly young students. However, the gap in participation between Pacific learners and other groups is greater at universities than at ITPs (Ministry of Education, 2013a). At WelTec, for example, 9.8% of the students in 2012 and 9.94% in 2013 were Pacific, a proportion that reflected the number of Pacific people in the catchment area for WelTec

In terms of course completions and qualifications completions, the performance of Pacific learners at ITPs has also been closer to that of other students in that sector than at universities, where there is more of a gap between the performance of Pacific learners and students in general (Table 2).

Table 2: TEC performance indicator data for 2012 (TEC, 2013e)

STUDENT GROUPS	COURSE COMPLETION Universities	COURSE COMPLETION ITPs	QUALIFICATION COMPLETION Universities	QUALIFICATION COMPLETION ITPs
Māori	73%	73%	61%	61%
Pacific	72%	73%	60%	62%
All students	86%	79%	80%	70%

It would thus be a mistake to conclude that research that is focused at the university level will always be directly applicable to students in ITPs. There is a need for research that is specifically directed towards participation and success for Pacific learners at ITPs.

In terms of participation and retention, some of the key factors were identified by Millward et al. (2011), whose study 'Voices from Manukau' studied the pressures that might cause Pacific learners to drop out of study. It was based on data from MIT, the institute of technology at Manukau City, where there is the largest Pacific population in New Zealand.

Nearly 30% of students at MIT are Pacific. This study identified external factors that might disrupt study, such as finances and childcare, as well as institutional or internal factors, such as unsympathetic tutors or negative peer group experiences. A further set of influences were described as secondary factors, such as moving away from the district or getting a job.

Contexts for success

What is common to all the studies of success for Pacific learners, whether in terms of participation or completion of qualifications, is the importance of the wider contexts in which learning takes place. This finding is now so well-established that further reviews of the literature are not going to be particularly helpful. What previous research has contributed are methodological approaches that have been found useful and a better understanding of the elements that need to be considered to support Pacific learners to do well. Among the methodological approaches that have been successful are the use of the *critical incident* technique for data collection (Airini et al., 2010), the *kakala* framework (Thaman, 2003) for research and analysis, and the *talanoa*[3] perspective used in interviews (Chu, Abella & Paurini, 2013).

Chu et al. (2013) used the *appreciative inquiry* approach to provide a philosophical framework for a study which included two ITPs and one Private Training Establishment as well as universities. Appreciative inquiry, with its strengths-based structure, rather than deficit-based thinking, leads naturally to solutions as opposed to the identification of failings. The overall research question in their study was: *What are the key enabling characteristics of educational practices that have successful learning outcomes for Pacific learners* (p. 62). The findings, which complement those of Airini et al. (2010) and Millward et al. (2011), provide something of a checklist for successful teaching for Pacific learners in tertiary educational settings.

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[3] As employed in the study by Chu et al. (2013), the *talanoa* method took the form of an unstructured interview, or conversation, which allowed the participating staff and students to speak freely (p.56). *Talanoa* refers to engagement in stories "…related within the storyteller's cultural frame of reference and incorporate the language of the storyteller" (p. 23).

How committed are tertiary providers to success for Pacific learners?

Rather than focus on specific educational practices that might aid success for Pacific learners, Horrocks, Ballantyne, Silao, Manueli, & Fairbrother (2012) focused on institutional commitment to this goal. They examined the extent to which universities and ITPs had carried out the successive government strategies for Pacific success set out by the TEC. One of the questions asked was whether the institution had developed its own Pacific plan. Where this had been done, the process of developing the plan had itself contributed significantly to the awareness of Pacific needs within the institution.

Annual reports were also assessed to see what evidence was recorded of compliance with the government's strategies. An example here was the extent to which the institutions had implemented the demand in the 2002 strategy (Associate Minister of Education, 2002) for more Pacific staff at all levels of decision-making in the tertiary education system (Objective 25 in Strategy Five: *Educate for Pacific People's Development and Success*)*.* This was important, as one of the key findings in the interviews was that Pacific progress in an institution only took off once Pacific staff themselves were in senior management positions. Despite this finding, only five out of 18 of the institutions who took part reported on key performance indicators which related to Pacific staff in 2010. Moreover, throughout the nine years of annual reports that were studied, universities were more consistent and active in reporting on performance in this area than were ITPs. This was despite the fact that there is a higher proportion of Pacific learners in the ITP sector than at universities, with 10% in 2012 in the ITP sector by comparison with 6% in the university sector (Tertiary Education Commission, 2013c).

Among the findings from the interviews were concerns about how changes in government funding might impact on recruitment of Pacific learners, as well as whether government policy might discriminate against the very programmes that could help Pacific learners to succeed, such as university-based foundation courses or introductory courses at the polytechnic level.

Why do students enter trades training?

Why students take up trades training in the first place is also important, as are the factors that help them to move successfully from pre-trade study to apprenticeships. Chan (2011) used a focus group approach to explore these questions with 116 pre-trade students and 86 first-year apprentices in Christchurch and the South Island. The majority of the apprentices group were also interviewed either face-to-face or by telephone.

Chan found that the principal reasons that a student chose a particular trade were an interest in the work itself (a match between the job and a student's own perception of his or her affinities), a need for a job that would provide personal fulfilment, or a passion for the chosen trade. The last of these choices was most strongly seen in trades that students saw as having high prestige – in this study these were boatbuilding, hairdressing, and cooking. This focus on trades training thus provided a very specific extension to the studies which have examined why students take up particular occupations after leaving school.

The PTTI stood outside the usual considerations students have given for taking up training in particular trades, as students were recruited who may not have been considering trades training at all. However, Chan's study gave some strong indications of what might be important in determining whether students were successful either in finding apprenticeships after study or in staying in the apprenticeships they obtained.

It appeared that getting an apprenticeship after study very often came from contacts with family members or friends. Apprentices who failed to continue with their training were also those who had weaker links of this kind. Apart from this, students who dropped out of apprenticeships may have successfully completed their pre-trade training, but tended to enter it after achieving lower attainment at school. These factors are, at first sight, relevant to the 2012 and 2013 cohorts of PTTI students, some of whom lacked strong school preparation. On completion of their training, they may also not have had the same opportunities as other students to tap into work networks in the trades provided by friends and family.

Support from the Pacific community

The Pacific community itself has been firm in its desire to see students assisted into apprenticeships. This was made clear in consultations by WelTec in 2009 with representatives of Wellington's Pacific communities, which were aimed at determining what they saw as the educational needs and priorities in terms of tertiary study. Pacific communities believed that tertiary education should lead to employment and assist the transitions from study to employment.

There were calls as well for bridging courses to prepare Pacific learners for this study by improving language, literacy, and numeracy skills. Older students were also considered to be important, especially those who might have been employed for many years in a particular industry but lacked formal qualifications, or had been made redundant (Torr, 2009). These priorities eventually gained some recognition in the form of the PTTI.

What the WelTec study aimed to contribute

By concentrating on a specific programme, the objective of the study of the PTTI at WelTec was to add further depth to these findings. The PTTI was of particular interest as it was designed from the start with a focus on community involvement and support. This was a new approach. It also happened to contain one cohort of learners who all had Pacific backgrounds and had a Samoan tutor. This provided an opportunity to study how this particular combination of learners and teacher might contribute to success.

Methodology

Design

This was a case study designed to provide a description of the multiple influences that impact on Pacific learner success in a particular study programme. Information was collected for student results on the courses themselves and embedded aspects of course work such as student achievement in terms of LN. Twenty-seven interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth perspectives from individuals involved with the PTTI in their various roles (Figure 2).
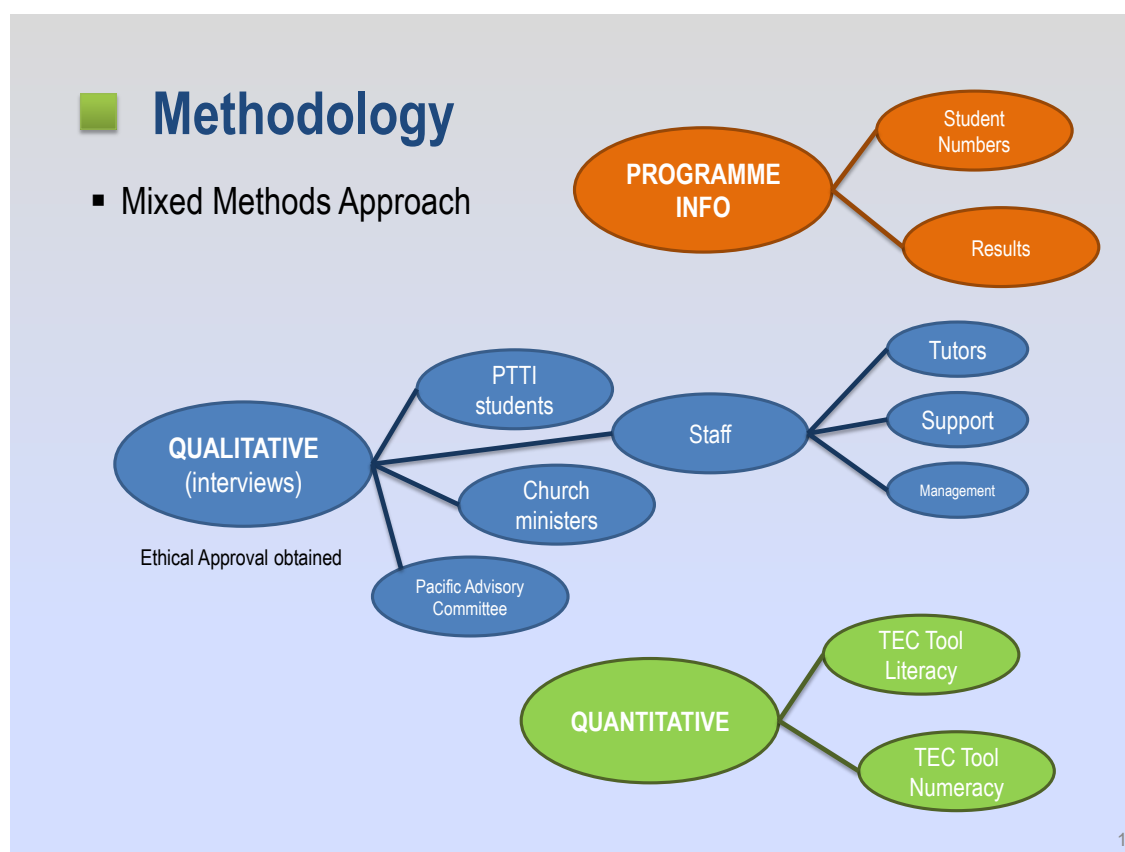
Figure 2: Qualitative and quantitative data collected for this study

Interviewers and interview structure

The interviews were semi-structured, as the research team jointly prepared some topic areas they thought would be of importance for the different groups of participants. A copy of these topics was provided in advance in the case of tutors, members of the WelTec PAC, the Academic Director at WelTec, and the church ministers. The topics were talking-points rather than required areas. Participants were told that they were welcome to introduce other topics or concentrate on those they found most significant. The interviews were

consequently more in the nature of an extended conversation, though it could be going too far to describe the approach as *talanoa*.

Interviews were recorded (with the exception of two briefer interviews with tutors and one with a member of the PAC) and transcribed for analysis. All five members of the research team took part in one or more of the interviews. In order to ensure reliability in the analysis, two of the team analysed the interviews independently, then combined their observations.

Interview participants

- Pacific learners
- Members of the consortium of church ministers who nominated students for the programme
- WelTec Pacific Advisory Committee (PAC)
- WelTec staff:
    - Academic Director
    - Trades tutors
    - Pacific mentors at the Pasifika Centre
    - Manager of the student experience team (SET), which handles students enrolments
    - The Manager, Pasifika
    - Literacy and numeracy (LN) support staff.
    - Pacific staff members at the Students Association
    - Staff member assisting with job placements or 'work broker'.

Results – Student information

"What these numbers represent is the start of a revolution."

Hon. Tariana Turia, Associate Minister of Tertiary Education, Skills, and Employment, speaking at an orientation for Māori and Pasifika Trades Training Students at WelTec, Waiwhetu Marae, March 2014

PTTI students 2012 and 2013

The typical profile of a student on the PTTI programme was that of a young male. Only four of the students were female. The median age was 20.46 years. There were, however, a number of older students, with 20.2% of them 35 years or older. The oldest student was 62 years. Just over half of the students identified themselves as Samoan. The next largest ethnic group was Tongan (Table 3).

Table 3: PTTI student ethnicity at WelTec 2012-2013.*

STUDENT ETHNICITY	2012	2013
Cook Island	2	1
Fijian	0	2
Niuean	0	2
Samoan	26	25
Tokelauan	12	2
Tongan	12	10
Total	52	42

*The total number of students, by ethnicity (94) is less than the total number who enrolled over the years 2012-2013(106), as 12 of the 2012 students re-enrolled in further pre-trade PTTI courses. The number of students by ethnicity in 2013 is one greater than those by enrolment (see Table 4), as one student self-identified as NZ Māori, Samoan and Tongan.

Participation and course completion

Of the 106 students who enrolled on the PTTI programme at WelTec during 2012 and 2013, 82 of them, or 77.4% successfully completed their courses. The most successful programme was pre-trade carpentry, in which all students in the 2013 cohort were successful (Table 4). This was the only course taught exclusively by a Pacific tutor, who was also a fluent speaker of Samoan.

Table 4: Pacific learner enrolment and completion 2012-2013*.

PROGRAMME	2012		2013	
	Enrolments	Passed	Enrolments	Passed
Carpentry (L3)	23	18	18	18
Landscape Construction (L4)	10	7	0	0
Decorating (L3)	4	4	2	1
Pre-Trade Painting (L2)	12	10	1	0
Plumbing & Gasfitting (L3)	11	7	15	10
Brick & Block Laying (L3)	5	4	2	2
Engineering – Fabrication (L3)	0	0	3	1
TOTAL	65	50 (76.9%)	41	32 (78.0%)

*Why there were fewer enrolments in 2013 is unknown, though one possible explanation is that the catchment of potential scholarship candidates was well-canvassed in the first year of the programme, which left fewer available candidates for 2013. As well, 13 of the 65 enrolments in 2012 were actually re-enrolments in a further PTTI programme in that year (see also note to Table 3). This meant that there were 52 students who enrolled for the first time in 2012, versus the 41 in 2013.

Literacy and numeracy

Student LN was assessed by using the TEC's Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT). The tool measures the percentage of students taking part in the LN initial and progress assessments (compliance) and the LN significant gain. The LN significant gain indicates the statistically significant improvements between the initial and progress assessments.

The percentage of PTTI students who received a LN assessment at the beginning and at the end of the programme (compliance) increased from 51.0% in 2012 to 80.3% in 2013, while for all WelTec students compliance increased from 58.0% to 64.8% (Table 5).

Table 5: LN assessment compliance (percentage of students taking part in the assessment)

LNAAT MEASURES	2012		2013	
	PTTI	All WelTec	PTTI	All WelTec
Compliance (% students)	51.0	58.0	80.3	64.8

In 2013, there was a substantial increase in the percentage of PTTI students who achieved a significant gain in their literacy skill level (33%) between the initial and progress assessments, as measured by the LNAAT (Table 6). In 2012, no students (0%) achieved a significant gain in literacy. The significant gain achieved by PTTI students was well ahead of that for WelTec students as a whole. There was also an increase in the significant gain in numeracy from 2012 to 2013, as detailed in Table 6.

Table 6: LN significant gain 2012-2013.

LNAAT MEASURES	2012		2013	
	PTTI	All WelTec	PTTI	All WelTec
Significant gain (Literacy) (% students)	0	6.7	33	11.3
Significant gain (Numeracy) (% students)	16	10.8	27	18.8

LN was embedded into course work and academic support in 2013, producing a marked increase in the significant gain for PTTI students for both literacy and numeracy. Professional development was given to tutors by the LN advisor together with co-teaching by the LN team and learning support tutors.

Results - Interviews

1. Church ministers
2. Pacific Advisory Committee
3. PTTI students
4. Academic Director
5. Tutors
6. Administrative and support staff

1. Church ministers

"People contact and people knowledge, local knowledge, is always a much better way."

The involvement of church ministers was an unique aspect of the PTTI programme. It was the ministers who developed the concept initially, selected the candidates, and promoted the scholarship opportunities to members of their congregation and the wider Pacific community. They also provided ongoing pastoral support to students and their families. All these factors provided a community framework for the students.

The ministers' vision

The PTTI grew from a wish within the Pacific community to use education to give better employment hopes for Pacific peoples, particularly younger members who were either in short-term jobs or without work.

> "The vision of the Ministers' fraternal in Wellington [is] that we believe that we can improve our children's education by working collaboratively with tertiary education [institutions]. It has been our vision right from the start and this is also how we see a way where we could lead our young people to success."

The Ministers' Fraternal group (the Fellowship of Samoan Ministers Wellington) was established six years ago and has grown from a membership of six to around fifty members. Through their links with the TEC, the ministers were able to gain government support for the PTTI. The next step was to engage with the tertiary providers, with church ministers from the Wellington region meeting with the CEOs and staff from Whitireia and WelTec. An important liaison role at WelTec was played by the Pasifika Manager, Aleki Silao. As one minister pointed out, this involved a degree of learning on both sides, "... for the tertiary

[institutions] to understand us and for us to understand them and for us to try and explain how we want things done and for us to understand the institutional culture..."

The ministers' role

Apart from their work in initiating the PTTI in the first place and setting up the format together with WelTec and Whitireia, the church ministers were active in publicising the PTTI within the church congregations and the ministers' fraternal:

> "All the ministers will go out to their own churches and their own parishes and invite the people and inform them that this is a wonderful opportunity for many people, especially for young people, to enhance or to further their studies of any career of their chosen field in order for them to get a good future for their families. That's how we began this process…My role as a minister is nearly every Sunday prior to what we call the enrolment takes place. '… Please, we've got this how many more weeks to go, take the opportunity.'"

This minister also had booklets from Whitireia and WelTec at his church. A number of members from his own parish were working at Whitireia and brought information to the church for about two weeks before the student intake. He said that his congregation, through all these various means, were well aware of the scholarship opportunities. Other ministers in the fraternal were urged to enrol students from their congregations, even if only four or five each. Other methods of recruitment such as sending out brochures was seen as ineffectual by contrast with the person-to-person relationship.

Family involvement

The church ministers had direct involvement with the student's family. This included steps such as visits to students in their homes, invitations to potential students to meet at a minister's house, have a photograph taken, and to take part in a discussion about where the student saw themselves in five years' time:

> "I target parents and target students as well. I go and talk with them. And that's part of the pastoral care that we actually do is actually from the very beginning of the conversation going into their house..."

Pastoral care, "visioning", and identifying students' strengths

Pastoral care was part of the initial recruitment of the students but often involved much more. It included informal contacts with Whitireia and WelTec about students on the PTTI who were having difficulties, which may have included sensitive family issues. One minister also talked about the complementary roles in pastoral care provided by the educational providers – this was a student choice. He acknowledged that in some cases students might

be more comfortable with this source of pastoral care. Another minister pointed out that pastoral care could also extend to honouring student success through presenting high-school and tertiary achievers at church occasions and getting students to think about their longer-term future. This included the mature students and parents:

> "We do a lot of consultation, a lot of cultural consultation asking about their future – why did they come to New Zealand? Now it's not just about getting a certificate; it's about what they see in the future. It would be how this would contribute into that, what their aspiration is. We also would like to see them as a model for their children of achieving higher if they can provide that. ... For me, I always challenge the parents like that: "Please make sure. Time will come that your children will be asking, 'So what did you do for you or for yourself?" ... "Did you do something?" and "Why didn't you do it?"

The ministers were in a position to help people to clarify their long-term goals - "visioning." For mature students this might be discussing a family's aspirations with them and their financial prospects – what income might be expected, for example, as a qualified tradesperson. This could involve couples looking at their commitments over a period of up to five years and how one partner might help another during this period. For 18 or 19 year-olds pastoral care would be different, but would still be about the student's future and what further study, for example, may follow an initial qualification.

Schools were not seen as providing that detailed pastoral care. In a strengths–based approach used by one minister, potential students might be asked to provide evidence such as CVs, so that they could be encouraged to enrol on a course that suited them. The minister could then identify their academic level and say, "Well, this is an opportunity that can cater to your strengths."

Financial matters

An extension of the pastoral care role was concern for the financial position of some of the mature students:

> "If they're married we bring together the couple because we need the support from the wife if the husband is going and we need to strategically look at a family as a whole rather than just the student who's going for the training because if we take that person away from the employment mainly to go for training then we've got to put something there in place because that money was really to use for the running of the family. So if you take away a person who has already been employed, which we did in the last two years, we have to do a lot of pastoral work, a lot of negotiations with the people involved."

The ministers also took a role in helping PTTI students to find jobs. This might, for example, be working for a start on a new building associated with their church.

Strategising future directions

"We don't need our Pacific learners walking around with certificates earning nothing."

This was a critical voice. Without government and industry support the training would be a waste of money and would not achieve the vision the ministers were supporting, one in which the trades scholarship led to work and Pacific people provided a contribution to the economic development of the country.

Just as the PTTI programme grew out of a community need recognised by the ministers, this broader future for Pacific people within New Zealand was a continuing focus for the ministers. It was seen as too early to know how the consortia approach now in place would turn out, but the greater involvement of employers was welcomed. The link between training and work remained unfinished business:

"I think the finished product, if we can use that term for the whole process, is our Pacific learners signing contracts for employment... for them to become professional trades[men] in regards to whatever trade that they would select that I think only comes into reality if the apprenticeship programme is in place...which is a two to three year programme that has to be provided."

2. Pacific Advisory Committee

"We need to preselect people for success and employment."

Members of the WelTec PAC were involved from the start of the PTTI and met with the Pacific church ministers fraternal and WelTec staff during the establishment phase. Though very much in favour of the PTTI, they strongly expressed the wish, in a meeting with senior WelTec staff in 2011, that they should have a part in the selection of PTTI students. Disappointment was expressed that this did not happen, nor were WelTec support or teaching staff involved in the nomination process. This made it less likely that the students who were selected were necessarily prepared for study at the level required.

If candidates were not well-prepared, the result might not only be failure, but the student would also be left with a student loan which was required by some to meet living costs as the PTTI scholarship covered only fees and course-related costs. The question of preparation for study was not just at the entry point to the tertiary system. The gaps in LN were "immense and a product of the entire education system." A member of the Advisory Committee, also on the board of trustees of a secondary school, noted that their school had

pupils that were coming to them from primary school with "… their maths at a deficit level, so that it's on the secondary school to do the catch-up and that transfers up the chain, so the WelTec tutors and support are having to do the catch-up as well."

For students entering tertiary study, the answer might not be bridging programmes. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is reviewing bridging programmes and one member of the PAC is on the governance group investigating this issue. It was pointed out that a student entering a particular programme may need help with one particular area of skill, rather than having to enter a six or 12 month foundation course. At present such targeted options are not funded.

The Advisory Committee was able to support student successes at the end of 2012, when one member organised an event for the successful graduates from the first cohort of PTTI students which was held at one of the houses built by the pre-trade carpentry students.
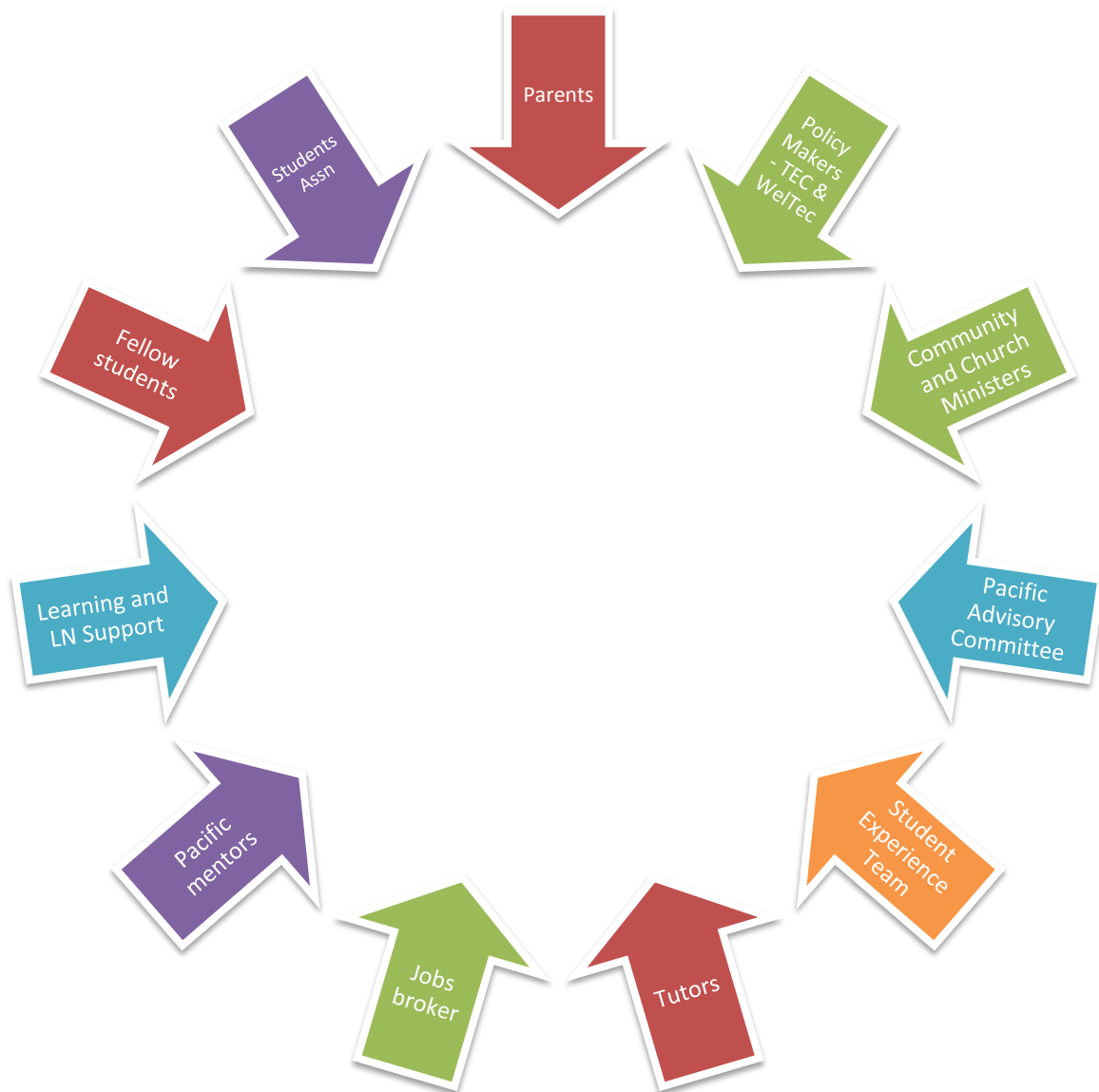
Groups contributing to the success of PTTI students at WelTec

3. Pacific Trades Training Initiative students

The seven students who were interviewed were positive about their experience, but had quite different comments to make about the programme and the factors that had helped them to complete their study. They were studying a variety of pre-trade courses: plumbing and gasfitting, carpentry, brick and block-laying and tiling.

Working with other students

This was seen as an important part of succeeding. It sometimes came from special-purpose groupings, such as the six students who got to know each other through an additional series of sessions on LN. For another student it came about because the tutor was sick and the course was short-staffed. This student also said he had some help from some of the palangi[4] students in his class. Another, who was the only Fijian in his group, emphasised that students he worked with were friends by the end of the course and helped each other:

> "Our team was a good team... some of the boys are good at theory; we used to do stuff like helping each other. Those not good at practical work we'd go and help them out."

Working together was seen most strongly in the carpentry group, which had a Samoan tutor:

> "We were like brothers pretty much at the end of the course, so I still keep in touch with a lot of them."

Mentoring - the "push"

The help and mentoring by staff, which included those at the Pasifika Centre as well as trades tutors and staff in learning support roles, was seen as very important. This was often quite directive. The word "push" was often used. The constant contact by telephone was mentioned several times. Students were also urged to achieve – to look beyond the qualification itself:

> "They're [learning support staff] really, really good at their job. Sometimes we don't turn up but they ring us....push us really hard."

> "He was a good tutor. He was understandable; easy to communicate with him. He used to push us on our assignment and theory work like completion if you don't know anything he'll come back to us and show us. He was a good teacher. And [ ]

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[4] Palangi is the Pacific term for a European person

she was a [ ] teacher; she was all right; she's nice. Yeah she always pushes us 'cause we only got three months with her."

"Yeah, he always push[ed] us to do our job and get it done, 'cause nearly some of the boys didn't finish the course, that's why they pull out, yeah, 'cause he was there pushing us to do our practical."

"He was just patient for the Pacific learners to move on; not just be like builders but be owners. His morals were like real good; straight up. He told us what was on his mind and what he wanted us to be. I think that inspired me just to move on keep going."

Pasifika Trades Construction Students working together at the dedicated house building training site in Petone.

WelTec Student Mentor, Earl Va'a, drops in on Pasifika Trades Brick and Block laying students.

Figure 3. PTTI carpentry students, 2012

Support could involve the family and contact with families by tutors and student support staff:

"Anything we needed. Maybe like home or something. We could just easily talk to them and they'd help us out... They're always there and just check up on us and offered to help a lot. ... Yeah, sometimes they call my parents like once a month, and tick me off if I'm not attending class."

Theory and practice

Difficulties with the theoretical aspects of the course were more of an issue for older students or those who came into the course with a limited record of achievement at school. One student who had come from the PTTI programme at Whitireia commented on the gap between older and younger students:

"A lot of people from my church got scholarships as well; all the old men. The barrier I saw from them was they saw it as like a free ticket sort of thing; just like 'scholarship'. Like when they started the course they started to realise how much sacrifice they were taking, like going to the course for jack – no money leave a full-time job just to get an allowance that's like only a day of working ... in the class they were getting left behind and all that. Yeah the results from my church is that some old men that done the carpentry course, they left their full-time jobs and now they're jobless."

Where to next?

For some students the course had fulfilled the aim of getting them into study from situations where they were either not working or working part-time. However, the fact that the scholarship was limited to a year meant that further study at a higher level was not necessarily affordable. This was so in the case of one student who wanted to carry on to Level 4 Plumbing and Gasfitting. The support the students had in preparing CVs was commented on, as was the work of WelTec's work broker. One student demonstrated that the course need not lead to employment to be useful – she intended to apply her plumbing skills to maintaining the caravan she used in her own business.

4. Academic Director

"The added attention and emphasis that the initiative brought to the institute resulted in us focusing a lot more on how we provided support services."

The current academic and administrative structure for supporting Pacific learners at WelTec is headed by WelTec's Academic Director. His role includes management of the relationship between WelTec, the Pacific community and the churches, and also with WelTec's strategic partner, Whitireia, which is based in Porirua.

He emphasised that the collaboration with Whitireia has been a large part of getting the PTTI going, particularly as in his experience the Pacific communities in Wellington see themselves as having common interests and demarcations such as Porirua versus Hutt Valley are not helpful.

With the arrival of the PTTI students in 2012, it became apparent how much the Pasifika Centre was a stand-alone operation which had limited resources to help this new group of

learners. A significant administrative change was that the centre became more of a portal through which students could link to a wide range of services so that the provision of services for Pacific students was integrated into mainstream support. The PTTI programme thus became a somewhat unexpected driver of change –"…it was an important initiative and we wanted to be successful at it."

The consortia model

The funding model for the PTTI has been altered from 2014 and this highlights how favourable the conditions were for the institution during the period of this study, 2012-2013. In 2012-2013, student places were additional to those the TEC had agreed to fund for each year. The institutions now must fit the scholarship students within the agreed places which means that PTTI students are financially less attractive than if those places were filled with fee-paying students.

WelTec's relationship with the church ministers

WelTec and the church ministers have agreed the ministers will fulfil the same recruitment and nominations roles in 2014.

This was seen by WelTec as a recognition that the church ministers were working for all Pacific communities and that they were in a position to provide ongoing support to the students they had nominated. In other words, an endorsement by senior management of the role the church ministers had played in 2012-2013.

Though WelTec acknowledged the importance of the church ministers in recruitment and celebration of student achievement, there were still some unresolved issues about the extent to which the ministers might offer pastoral care and support during the students' period of study.

5. Tutors

"We need to be here as Pacific Islanders. Let's not follow, let's lead"

Role models, relationships and mentoring

One tutor found that letting his students take the lead was often more effective than teaching at them. As a Pacific Islander himself, the tutor felt a sense of responsibility for the students he taught and he saw a need for the students to also take greater responsibility for themselves and their learning. He set out to motivate a sense of self-discipline and Pacific pride in his students – encouraging them to see themselves as role models and leaders on behalf of the Pacific Island population.

A common theme across all tutor interviews was that "…they [students] could probably relate more (to)…an Island way of working." A 'one size fits all' approach does not work because different students learn in different ways and do not respond to 'mainstream' teaching methods. Two tutors stated that a 'Pacific focused' course would be beneficial to students in general as would a stronger Pacific mentor system external to WelTec. The idea of external Pacific mentors to work alongside students was also highlighted by LN support.

The value of mature students was noted as mature students took on a mentoring role without being prompted. This developed organically, similar to the tuākana-teina relationship integral to Māori society, essentially a 'buddy system' where older or more experienced tuākana (brother, sister or other relative) help and guide younger or less experienced teina (a younger sibling or other relative of the same gender). One tutor, for example, recalled that a 50 year old student was a positive role model for his own sons who were also enrolled on the plumbing course. "So dad's leading the way which is good…"

Attendance and reliability

A key challenge was attendance and reliability. For all tutors, poor attendance was a significant issue. One tutor suggested that the importance of attendance should be 'drummed into' the students. For instance, while it was possible to build a house to completion in a short time, absent students could disrupt the process for attending students while missing valuable knowledge and training that the tutors did not have time to repeat.

In some cases many students simply did not or would not attend. One tutor believed that attendance should be a requirement for course completion. He said that fee-paying students had a higher attendance rate and family issues for students who were poor attenders frequently presented a problem. On the PTTI course there was no way to make students accountable for failing to attend. He found this frustrating because many students simply did not answer phone calls or reply to emails to the point where Pacific staff had to visit their homes and take them to their class.

Parental support was also problematic and tutors expressed interest in having more contact with parents, suggesting that close involvement of the parents at home could be a major stimulus for students to keep up with their courses. Tutors are not legally able to share information about their students with their parents when students are 18 years or older. Tutors found this frustrating.

Attitudes

Two tutors assumed that fee-paying students would perform to a higher standard than PTTI students although no evidence for this was indicated. According to these tutors the fact that the PTTI students are getting a publicly funded (or 'free') education might mean they take it less seriously. Among the more negative comments that were expressed was a belief that

many students did not want to attend at all but that intense pressure to train in an area they had no interest in left them with no choice. "The reason they're here is because mum and dad or someone says it's a good idea". This tutor estimated that about 50% of the students were interested in trades training while a colleague noted that some students had completed several unrelated courses without sufficient knowledge and skills development and little to no interest in seeking work.

A 'hands on' approach works

All tutors reported that the most enthusiastic were easiest to teach. One stated that a hands-on approach to learning was critical, in order to teach trainee independence and fundamental work skills such as time management, as well as providing practice in the skills and attitudes they would need in their professional working lives. It was also easier to teach practical aspects of a trade than the theory-based components. A very successful activity, for instance, was building a house and learning from the mistakes made while doing this.

Recruitment and selection

Some tutors thought the selection criteria should be more demanding and more transparent. Tutors expressed concern about the church ministers' involvement in student selection and one suggested that some students who didn't want to be there in the first place were pressured (by church ministers and family) to attend. Some tutors thought that the students, their parents, and the ministers involved in selection were sometimes confused about what to expect from the course. This ranged from ministers' expectations that students would acquire numeracy and literacy skills, while parents thought that students would get apprenticeships straight after the course.
Tutors recommended that there should be more oversight of recruitment and selection of PTTI students and suggested that a representative or representatives(s) from WelTec (e.g. tutor, student, senior academic) be part of the selection panel.

6. Administrative and support staff

"We got them through and it was only with a lot of help from learning support."

The learning support and mentoring teams were frequently cited as having an invaluable role in motivating the students and helping them to resolve problems. One staff member in the Pasifika Centre would, for example, drive to students' homes to pick them up when they didn't answer their phones or attend courses. All tutors referred to her work as vital for their own success.

6.1. Literacy and numeracy support

There were two models of support for LN. The first was embedded into the class situation and focused on basic skills for employment such as CV and cover letter writing and employment rights. The second was the establishment of small study groups which were overseen by the LN advisors.

Figure 4: Examples of the relationship between LN course work and how they are used in the workplace

LN was embedded at the start of courses. Students were assessed at the beginning and at the end of their programme using the LNAAT. LN advisors are required to report on the success of learner literacy gain to TEC.

There were major LN problems among significant numbers of PTTI students. One tutor pointed out that there was also ignorance of employment rights. The inability of many students to grasp basic LN concepts and a lack of funding, resources, and support from the wider Pacific community were cited as challenges. Student mentors on the other hand lent credibility to the LN advisors' work. With student mentoring support, the LN advisors were able to gain the confidence of the students. One LN advisor reported that the students would not have trusted her without these partnerships in force. It was also considered vital to gain the students' trust. One advisor considered the fact that she was not a Pacific

islander may have been an issue at first for students but eventually she managed to gain their trust:

> "…one of the guys brought in his son who was at Porirua College in for me to help him with his NCEA literacy as well. So I felt like I had a bit of trust which was cool."

Concerns raised by LN advisors included a lack of time for LN learning and inappropriate or misleading recruiting procedures where the nature of the courses was not fully explained to potential students before they began their training. One LN advisor felt a sense of personal responsibility for a female student who failed. There are many students from disadvantaged backgrounds and there was a need for "Pacific success" to be demonstrated to these students, "…so they know it's real."

There was widespread support among teaching, learning support and LN advisors for a preparation course as a way to get students up to scratch with basic LN skills before attending a trades course. Most of the tutors reported challenges in "post-training" students who had difficulties with language barriers, theory and basic skills such as filling in enrolment forms. All tutors reported that students are generally good with their hands, but still lacking adequate LN skills.

Perhaps by contrast with the majority of tutors, one tutor noted with surprise that a number of students were more capable with theory than they were with practical work. Another tutor argued that it is not the job of tradesmen to teach students how to read and write, and yet a significant portion of the course he took was devoted to reading and writing rather than where it should be - focused on teaching trades. However, the tutor also said that there was a distinct improvement once LN were embedded into course work.

6.2. Student experience team

"**We had to learn pretty quickly.**"

The WelTec student experience team (SET) has various roles which include providing potential and current students with advice on programmes and courses, ensuring students are enrolled on appropriate courses, and providing them with financial guidance which can involve help with Studylink. The PTTI programme highlighted the need for the SET team to be active in approaching students, even to confirm that they were actually coming. This might mean contacting the family:

> "Sometimes you need to actually talk to the member of the family, go through the family member to get to the student and involving the family because the family need to be involved all the way through."

Useful initiatives

The SET team were helped by developing a working relationship with the church ministers and the staff at the Pasifika Centre. Some steps that proved helpful were:

- Having extra workshops to help the students with financial issues such as engaging with Studylink
- Making sure that the students dealt with one person, rather than a variety of staff members
- Having the church ministers available nearby and the student advisor thus being readily able to meet with them
- Realising the need to have contacts with people who had the right language to communicate with the students (after finding that some Tongan students in the 2012 intake had gone without money for some time)
- Being aware that some students on the programme were struggling financially because they had given up jobs to study or they had not foreseen the costs of travel
- Recognising at enrolment whether students might need LN support.

Difficulties

- Timing gaps – because the students' first point of contact was the nomination process with the ministers, a delay in filling in the enrolment form could mean that students were late enrolling and then got into problems such as not getting their money on time
- Understanding the new environment – Students needed to come and have a look at the facilities at the beginning, so they had a greater sense of what their study environment was.
- The push to get students on the PTTI programme put pressures on to assess the students properly and make sure they were on the right programme at the start.

6.3. Learning support

How student support was provided during the two years 2012-2013 was something that evolved as needs emerged. One of the most important of the changes came at the end of 2012, when it was recognised that it was not enough just to have the students completing their courses. They needed to be better prepared for going into the workplace.

> "It was quite late in the year and so we did a big piece of work with them around creating their CVs and telling their stories; and we talked with them about telling their stories rather than a formal CV, although they ended up being formal CVs."

Other improvements added in the first year of the programme were:

- The appointment of a Samoan support person to be the student mentor for the PTTI students
- A Pacific Jobs Week to help students understand better their career options and to introduce them to potential employers
- The appointment of another support person from a Tongan background to work part-time in the Pasifika Centre
- Opening up the Pasifika Centre to make it less of a formal space where students could do things such as play music
- The appointment of a work broker to help students complete CVs and liaise with potential employers. His office is very visible in Te Whare Āwhina, adjoining the other facilities such as the Students Association, the Pasifika Centre, and the Student Experience (enrolments) complex.

6.4. Students' Association

"You want WelTec to be more than a place where you just come and get your piece of paper and you leave."

The Students' Association became an unexpected home for some young PTTI students. They gathered there to play chess almost every day, or would go out together to play touch [rugby]. The president of the Students' Association noticed that the programme's participants became a strong group of friends, and that the Students' Association area had become a place where the friends socialised. It became a 'time off' area viewed as separate from the institutional learning environment. At the same time, the friends supported each other in their study and grew in maturity during the year.

> "That group of students… really encourage each other, so they kind of, if one of them tries to take the day off, 'cause you hear them, oh, we're going back now, and one of them will be like, oh, I wanna go home, and then, oh, don't do that, like let's go, otherwise we all go home,…. They encourage each other, so it's really good to see that."

'Brownsville Tech'

'Brownsville Tech' was the name chosen by students for an informal club that many of the PTTI students belonged to. They had a Samoan Independence Day celebration as well:

> "It kind of brought the students together. You could see it at lunchtimes, they would all come out here and have a laugh and bit of banter."

The student president, who comes from a Pacific background himself, was also aware how important it was to have the Pasifika Centre in the middle of the campus. Though the space there wasn't large, it was busy and around the middle of the day would be packed with students using the computers, playing guitars, or having a cup of tea.

Another staff member in the Students' Association office, a fluent speaker of Samoan, found she was sometimes helping the older students with practical issues such as who to go to for assistance with travel or hardship support. Her language skills were often utilised, as well as being another Pacific presence, someone people could approach:

> "They just walk up, see me speaking Samoan and they come and chat with me."

6.5. The work broker

This role became increasingly important, as it became clear that students needed support to look for jobs. An existing staff support person was appointed to the position of work broker in mid-2013, 18 months after the start of the PTTI programme. As in the case of staff working in other areas, this role required a great deal of new learning.

This staff member had responsibilities for a wide range of students and works from Te Whare Awhina. He supports both Māori and Pacific Trades Scholarship students.

Relationships with employers

> **A "very very good relationship" is needed because "if you blow it they don't knock on your door anymore."**

In order to maintain contacts with recruitment companies and around 130 employers, the work broker informally categorised students into As, Bs, and Cs to assist him place the students. In his words:

> "I didn't want to do it, but I had to. I had to figure out who goes where and who's actually going to perform to the requirement of what the employer is looking for and who's going to probably suit this option and that option…"

Not only was it necessary to be honest with the employers, it was also important to be aware of their usual concerns and questions. Employers were interested in understanding:

- A learner's attendance and time-keeping record and skills
- A learner's character, for example, how they get on with other people
- Practicalities such as where the student lives
- Whether the learner has a driver's license

The last of these requirements was very important and it was recommended that this be built into the qualification in some way. The work broker described it as "… a major, major part of employment." The need for this qualification was also mentioned by a representative of the trades recruitment agency, AWF Trades. Many students are simply unaware that without a driver's license they may not be able to get to work in the first place, or be useful to an employer who may wish to get inexperienced tradespeople to do jobs such as picking up materials, rather than have their senior employees do this. The work broker was also involved in initiatives such as developing a memorandum of understanding with a recruitment agency and a Jobs Passport. The latter was a document that put in one place all the information that a student needed to supply to a prospective employer, including a recent photo for identification, a CV, and evidence of a driver's license (see Appendix 2).

The excellent students were not problematic, but those who had only just passed could sometimes find employment, but not necessarily in the area in which they had trained, many in labouring jobs:

> "You hate to say it; it's the reward for their effort, which is probably not the gold medal but maybe the bronze; still into employment. They may not have been the greatest student but once they're in employment and its solid employment and they're earning money every week their commitment, their discipline and a lot of things change. And I take that into perspective."

Christchurch jobs

> "I'm never reluctant to send anyone to Christchurch; it's just that I've got to make sure that the groundwork was done properly before they're gone."

One of the aims of the PTTI was to assist with preparing a skilled workforce for Christchurch. A number of students had been placed there, but the job was the easy part. Accommodation was the biggest challenge and there were other aspects that had to be considered as well:

> "It's all those services around the job that need to be fulfilled like for example accommodation, doctor – you've got to get a GP – if you're sick you can't just go to anyone…. If you are young you need some people around you, support people, relatives and that sort of scenario and friends. And if you've got a family that you leave behind here, maybe kids, a partner, you've got to deal with that issue."

This reluctance to move was less evident in the case of younger students, though even among them there were some who preferred to stay in the Wellington region.

One advantage of having a work broker was that he was in a position to point out to students that just finding a job itself was not always the answer. They also had to consider factors such as the cost of transport to work, so one of the first questions he asked students was where they lived. Similarly, a Christchurch opportunity might be limited if the pay was no more than elsewhere, as this did not take into account accommodation costs and the possible loss of local family links.

Workload- multiple points of contact

The broking job was complex. Not only was it desirable for students to come and talk before steps were taken like sending out CVs, but the job required contact with a large number of agencies, quite apart from the employers themselves. Among these were the recruitment companies, the Ministry of Social Development, Work and Income NZ, Studylink, and industry training organisations.

6.6. Pacific mentors

"The most rewarding thing is that they pull through…everything they were supposed to do."

The mentors based at WelTec's Pasifika Centre were the first point of contact for the PTTI students who sought support. At the beginning of 2012 this role was almost entirely the responsibility of the Manager, Pasifika, but evolved to include two full-time staff members by the end of 2013 (one of whom, however, also had a mentoring role for international students). Mentors during the 2012-2013 period included representatives from Tokelauan, Fijian, Samoan, and Tongan communities in the Hutt Valley.

These mentors had multiple roles which made their jobs very demanding, including:
- Monitoring student progress, including attendance
- Site visiting to catch up with students and see what they needed
- Help with Studylink and hardship grants
- Working together with tutors
- Pastoral counselling

In 2013, one of the student mentors was looking after not only Pacific learners at level 4, but was also responsible for Pacific learners at the two Wellington campuses and WelTec's Auckland campus. During this time she was employed only in a 0.5 position.

The mentors said that apart from seeing the students succeed, it was also rewarding for them to notice the self-esteem and confidence that could come from their interventions.

The Pasifika Centre

The mentors at the Pasifika Centre thought a Pasifika Centre was very important as a place where students could meet and interact. The Pasifika Centre is located next to the SET team offices where students inquire about enrolment matters. This was seen as an advantage: "We're right here, so they're like, 'Oh, Okay, there's a Pasifika Centre.'... It's just good to be right here."

Student recruitment and selection

Though acknowledging the importance of the church ministers in student recruitment, both of the mentors who were interviewed advocated strongly for a role for WelTec staff in the selection process, including tutors. Once students were at WelTec the mentors had to deal with students who may have not been well-suited to their course because of difficulties with language, academic preparation, attitude, or personal problems. This was seen as a major flaw in the structure of the PTTI and one which put unnecessary pressure on teaching staff and the mentors.

The mentors thought that the students could be expected to show they were ready for the scholarships, perhaps through completing an application form as if they were applying for a job, together with a CV, references, and an explanation about why they wanted to be on the programme. This question of readiness was seen as important, not just academic readiness but a commitment to putting in the work to succeed.

Challenges

LN were often problems for students, but the biggest challenges identified by one of the mentors were the personal issues students had, often reflected by attendance. The other mentor agreed but saw this question as more holistic:

> "I always say, "They(the students) don't care how much you know , the staff, the tutors, the mentors, until they know that we care… and that's when they'll come to you and say, "Oh yes I struggle with this."

To be effective the mentors also needed the tutors to inform them about how students were coping with tasks such as completing assignments, to be able to act before students started to slip away.

Sometimes the attendance issues arose because students who had given up jobs to be on the PTTI programme had not realised quite how little their income would be while studying.

Older students

One mentor was disappointed that students over 34 years would no longer be selected with the establishment of the consortium approach in 2014. During 2012-2013, the older students often mentored and supported the younger ones.

Relationships with tutors

At times the mentors became involved with conflicts between students and tutors and had the job of negotiating with the tutors to resolve the situation – some tutors had quite a narrow approach of "this is my way," while other tutors might never give up, even when a student had a bad attitude. One mentor felt some of the older tutors could be out of touch with young students, the "grandfather type… I'm thinking you need to retire."

A major achievement was in getting the tutors to engage more with the LN team, as some were sceptical about the value of this support. That is, until the positive results started to come in. One of the Pacific mentors had been involved with the LN programme at the beginning of 2013 but was able to step back during the year because the LN team were doing an "amazing" job and also keeping her well-informed about the students' progress.

Language

It was helpful at times that the various mentors were able to communicate with students in their own languages, but there was also a feeling that some students who had difficulties with English might have been better off in a private training institute where the teaching throughout was in a language such as Samoan.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to present an evaluation of a particular programme in order to find out what factors in it supported success for Pacific learners. Many of the factors that were found to help students in this study reinforced the findings from previous research, such as the work of Chu et al. (2013), such as the importance of community relationships which supported students during their study, a place to belong within the institution, a Pacific support group that works with students, and good relationships between learners and staff, both Pacific and non-Pacific.

This project has revealed a number of other important insights, some quite practical such as the need for Trades students to have a driver's licence if they are to find work after completing their course. Other insights are more complex, such as the need for staff to be able to respond to unexpected demands and modify their teaching practices to provide support to this particular cohort of students. Most of the specific practices and mechanisms that helped support Pacific learners during 2012-2013 are summarised in Appendix 1.

Course results

The most successful programme was the pre-trade carpentry course, with an overall success rate of 87.8% in the 2012-2013 period. This course had a Samoan tutor who placed considerable emphasis on working as a team, taking personal responsibility, and having pride in being students of Pacific heritage. The learners' success could also be attributed to the way the course was structured, as they spent much of the time constructing a house. This provided a tangible sign of their progress and gave them the opportunity for daily practice of their skills. By contrast, the plumbing and gasfitting students also took part in the house build but, as their tutor pointed out, their role was at a specific stage in construction and involved less time, so they did not have the benefit of seeing clear-cut progress over a number of weeks.

The LN results showed increases between 2012-2013 both in the number of students who took part in the LN programme and in the significant gains on the LN performance indicators. This reflected the response to problems related to LN in the 2012 year, in part because the 2012 students were selected for the PTTI before their basic skills had been formally assessed. The 2013 cohort were also selected in the same way, but by then LN teaching had become embedded in the PTTI programmes.

Aspects revealed from interviews

The interviews revealed several aspects of the programme that helped its success, as well as potential areas for improvement. The positives that emerged were:

1. Visioning
2. Recruitment through community links
3. Staff as learners
4. The "push" – being directive
5. Pastoral care
6. Being part of a team
7. Visibility
8. Work readiness

1. Visioning

This was perhaps the most significant contribution of the church ministers – stimulating potential students to see themselves in the future roles that could follow their choice to take up study. It often took the form of direct challenges to the students and their families to think boldly about their future, either individually or in situations such as church meetings. It was reinforced by community events celebrating students' successes. Students' goals and their own perceptions of them are aspects of training that can be neglected, though recognised by Chan (2011) in her work with Christchurch trades students and by the people in universities and ITPs surveyed by Chu et al. (2013). For the PTTI, "visioning" took a very active form. It was not merely a matter of finding out what potential PTTI students thought of their future, but outlining options for them that they may not have considered.

At WelTec itself "visioning" took a number of forms. One tutor, for example, encouraged students to think ahead to a time when they might themselves be employers. Another tutor took a group of plumbing students to Samoa at the end of 2012 to help with reconstruction of water systems after the cyclone the previous year, thus giving them a preview of how their new skills could help their country of origin, communities and families.

2. Recruitment through community links

It is doubtful that the PTTI programme would ever have succeeded without the assistance of the Pacific church ministers in recruiting students. The minister's involvement meant the entire programme was positioned within a community context from the beginning. Though not all students may link with a Pacific church community (at least one student enrolled on the basis of information he found on WelTec's website), no other way of recruiting and supporting these students would seem to have had the same impact.

3. Staff as learners

This was a strong theme throughout and frequently commented on by staff. The plumbing tutor who took a group of students to Samoa found this a valuable experience, not just in terms of learning about Samoa itself, but how the students felt about working there, whether they might return to live there some time, and the logistical issues that would come if all trade training was offered in Apia – all useful background for his teaching the following year.

The support and administrative staff had to make many adjustments as they learned how to make the PTTI effective. These were often forced upon them by events such as the discovery in 2012 that some of the students needed more help with LN skills. The adjustment made here was to embed these skills in the PTTI for the 2013 intake of scholarship students. Among the changes adopted by SET were making sure that the students dealt with one person, rather than a variety of staff members. They also set up extra workshops to help the students with financial issues such as dealing with Studylink.

Tutor Ken Hodge with student in Samoa, 2013.

The Pacific mentoring staff had difficulties with the selection process itself. Although selection of scholarship students initiated within the community had a positive aspect, a disadvantage of off-campus selection was their unfamiliarity with WelTec when they first arrived, nor had they met any of the teaching or mentoring staff. There was also little time given to both ministers and Pacific support staff to organise the scholarships and enrol the students. These concerns may be less acute now that the consortia approach requires that scholarships be awarded after the students have enrolled.

4. "Pushing" – being directive

The need to do more than just recruit and support students but to actively encourage them, check their attendance, remind them of opportunities, point them towards goals and generally "push" them, was recognised by the students themselves. They often used the

word "push" to describe the work of tutors or other support staff. The role of fellow students in this process was also seen – the drive to keep going was often supplied by them, as in the case of the group who met regularly in the Students' Association offices. The presence of older students was helpful in some classes, as they provided models for good work habits for some of the younger students.

The experience provided by this study is that this intense mentoring and direction was vital. It often required a degree of flexibility by staff; finding out, for example, why students might not be attending and making some allowance for that or contacting students' families. It was also multi-directional and might come, for example, from the family or the ongoing pastoral work of church ministers, quite apart from the tutors and support services within WelTec.

5. Being part of a team

The power of being in a group was also a part of success and was reinforced strongly particularly for the carpentry students. Students themselves also created informal support groups. To what extent this can be fostered or whether it is better just to provide an environment in which it can happen is unknown, but the informal groups did demonstrate that they are more likely to occur if there are welcoming non-teaching environments where they can meet such as the spaces at the Pasifika Centre and the Students' Association.

6. Pastoral care

Pastoral care came from several directions. The church ministers were involved primarily in the initial process of student encouragement and selection, but also continued to provide support in instances where a student's family might need help. The other main sources of pastoral care were the tutors, the SET team, the mentors at the Pasifika Centre, and the LN tutors. Other students also played an important part. Where this study suggests a departure from the usual notions about pastoral care is in the highly directive form of it – the "push."

7. Visibility

The visible presence of Pacific learners and staff at WelTec was much greater during the period of this study than it was in previous years. The Pasifika Centre is in the centre of the Student Hub area and was often seen as busy by students passing towards other facilities such as the library and student café. There were Pacific staff in the adjoining offices of the Students' Association and in LN support, apart from the Pacific mentors working in the Pasifika Centre itself. A Pacific Jobs Week at the end of each year also highlighted a Pacific presence, as well as a welcoming event for the PTTI students. The factor of "visibility" was identified in the studies by Chu et al. (2013) and Horrocks et al. (2012) as providing an essential context for making Pacific learners feel at home in their learning environment.

8. Work readiness

One of the aims of the PTTI was to train students so that some could take part in the Christchurch rebuild. This was a specific aim but one within the spirit of the Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017, which is directed towards Pacific people obtaining skilled employment in high-growth, high-demand industries.

The contribution towards providing a skilled workforce for Christchurch was mixed. Though some students were placed in Christchurch, external factors such as family commitments and a lack of accommodation limited the numbers who went south. One unexpected consequence of the rebuild was that it opened up job opportunities in Wellington, particularly in landscape construction, as several skilled tradespeople from this field had relocated to Christchurch.

Much of the learning required for how to support the PTTI programme came from the gap that occurred between course completion and placing students in jobs. WelTec's response was:

- To appoint a work broker to link students with job opportunities
- To help students prepare CVs and create a Jobs Passport (see Appendix 2)
- To encourage students to have an interview with the work broker
- To build up a database of local employers and recruitment agencies
- To run a Pacific Jobs Week
- To seek out work opportunities in Christchurch
- To identify what employers want from potential employees
- To advocate for drivers' licenses as part of the trades training
- To establish stronger links with employers and recruitment agencies, as in the case of the memorandum of understanding between WelTec and AWF Trades, the Wellington recruitment agency for positions in trades, especially in the civil and construction industries.

All these steps are part of the integration of the path from education to employment identified by the TEC as a missing component in the first round of PTTI in 2012 (Tertiary Education Commission, 2013a).

Outcomes during this study

Two institution-wide decisions occurred during the period of this study that will support the success of Pacific learners. These initiatives can be regarded as outcomes of the study that have been achieved since a draft report of this study was circulated in June 2014.

1. Formal strategy to support Pacific learners at WelTec

The adoption of a formal Pasifika strategy by WelTec in July, 2014 will now provide a framework for planning and clear objectives against which performance can be assessed. This will inform strategy and goals in WelTec's 2015-2017 Investment Plan. Advances in the PTTI often occurred in response to problems rather than as considered developments. The informants in universities and ITPs in the previous study by WelTec on success for Pacific learners (Horrocks et al., 2012) emphasised the importance of strategic thinking about Pacific issues. They found that the very process of developing a strategy provided opportunities for an institution to reflect on what it was doing and helped it to anticipate the needs of its Pacific learners. It also enabled an institution to construct an administrative structure with clearly-defined roles for Pacific managers and staff, one in which senior Pacific staff had considerable decision-making power.

2. Expanded Pasifika Centre

One consequence of the success of the PTTI has been the increased use of the Pasifika Centre. The importance of this centre was recognised in WelTec's new Pasifika strategy (2014), together with a goal of achieving a status and situation for a centre that will be comparable to that already achieved for WelTec's Māori students and staff by the establishment of Te Whare Awhina support centre at WelTec. The suitability and proximity of a property on the WelTec campus was identified in September 2014 which has enabled an expanded Pasifika Centre to be realised.

Areas for future development

Further steps that WelTec could take to improve the success of Pacific learners also emerged from this study. Some are specific to the PTTI, others are wider institutional changes. Areas for development include:

1. Improved recruitment and selection procedures for the PTTI
2. Establishing a Careers Centre to improve learners' opportunities for employment
3. Extending the age limit of 34 years
4. Development of a database of practical actions that have proved to help Pacific learners
5. A comprehensive collection of data on potential employers

1. Improved recruitment and selection procedures

During the recruitment process at the start of the PTTI in 2012 there was a very short timeframe for the church ministers to set up their selection procedures. As one of the PAC members pointed out, any students who were not ready for study, whatever the reason, might not only experience failure but also end up with the burden of a student loan, despite the help the scholarships provided in terms of fees.

In her study of trades apprentices in Christchurch, Chan (2011) found that while students with limited academic backgrounds might well pass pre-trades courses successfully, they were likely to be the first to drop out of subsequent apprenticeships. This suggests the importance of screening students at entry and either directing them to further study before entry or recognising from the start that they will need additional help during their study. This latter option has been followed to some degree by the LN support embedded in the PTTI since the beginning of 2013.

Another option is to provide pre-study courses in specific areas where students might need strengthening. This could be delivered through quite limited, skill-specific options, rather than full-time programmes, but at present funding for this type of targeted assistance is not available.

2. Establishing a Careers Centre to improve learners' opportunities for employment

Though tutors usually had links with employers in their industry and were helpful in many cases in directing students towards work, their main function was teaching and one tutor, in particular, was not happy that he was expected to sort out jobs for the students as well.

The success of the work broker suggests that WelTec could extend this role, possibly by establishing a Careers Centre whose function would be to maintain industry links, seek out long-term work opportunities and advise students about their future. The work broker has been helping Pacific graduates from the pre-trades courses but he is also responsible for many other students. The establishment of a well-staffed Careers Centre with its own offices, as is found at universities and some ITPs, could greatly improve the chances of Pacific learners finding suitable apprenticeships and work after completing their study. This would be in line with the **education-to-employment system integration** identified as required by the TEC in its evaluation of the delivery of the first year of the PTTI (2013a).

3. Extending the age limit of 34 years

Some of the older students struggled with LN components of the courses. However, they were able to be models to younger students in terms of application and time management. One PTTI student who successfully completed the painting and decorating course has proved to be an exceptional employee, so much so that his employer reported back in 2014

that he could take ten such people if they were available. This student is now 55 years. Cases such as this suggest that the current age limit of under 35 may be too low.

4. Developing a database of practical actions that have proved to help Pacific learners

This study has identified a number of practical steps that are helpful (Appendix 1), but even some of the staff working with Pacific learners may not be aware of the range they cover, or the contribution they might be able to make to events such as Pacific Jobs Week or dissemination of information through the community on the PTTI and what it offers. Such a database might also include the names of successful Pacific graduates who may be willing to act as models to current or prospective students, the contact details for the ministers who have assisted with recruitment and pastoral care, and details of programmes at other ITPs which also have PTTI students.

5. Comprehensive collection of data on potential employers

The next phase of evaluation could include comprehensive collection of data on industry contacts and on student employment post-WelTec. [5]

Conclusion

This study was designed to evaluate the factors that promoted success for Pacific learners who completed their qualifications under the scholarship-based PTTI programme at WelTec in 2012-2013.

A primary goal of this scholarship programme was to assist and encourage students who might be or who were unemployed or in low-skill occupations to improve their job prospects through education. The project findings indicated that such a cohort of learners needed considerable support. They needed to be given a vision for their future. Many also needed help with gaps in their basic LN skills. This assistance could at times be quite directive. If there is any single finding from this study, it is that good results can be achieved if there is an intense, institution-wide effort to ensure that such learners are progressing.

The development of these learner support structures required learning from all of the stakeholders. This comment was mentioned in the interviews with teaching and support staff and the church ministers. Many of the difficulties unique to the PTTI in its first year (2012) arose from the way the students were recruited, as students were not always well-prepared academically for study. These issues have now largely been resolved, either through embedded LN support or because since 2013 Pacific learners taking pre-trades

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[5] A study of this kind was carried out for WelTec's counselling degree, in which five years of graduates were surveyed about their post-degree work status, as well as being asked for their reflections about their training at WelTec (Campbell, Fraser, & Horrocks, 2011).

courses are selected on the same basis as other students. Other practical steps that were found to support successful learning are listed in Appendix 1.

Though specific to WelTec, many if these initiatives, such as the Passport to Work, might have useful application in other tertiary education contexts.

Appendix 1: Educational practices that supported success for PTTI learners at WelTec

Visioning

- The active role by church ministers and teaching staff in asking students to think about their future and their goals. This extended to active help and encouragement for students with this process and happened in a number of places, such as meetings with families, church events and during learning itself
- Involving families in the process of creating and maintaining a vision of where the course might lead
- The recognition of success by ceremonies at church occasions and at the WelTec graduation ceremony.

Community links

- Involvement by WelTec's PAC, whose members came from a variety of Pacific communities, in the initial establishment of the PTTI with WelTec and the church ministers
- The role of the church ministers in selection and recruitment and pastoral support of the scholarship students
- Contact between the Pacific mentors at WelTec and students' families.

Institutional

- Close involvement by the Manager, Pasifika, at all stages of the PTTI, supported by the Academic Director
- Support by the CEO from the beginning and visible support throughout by her attendance, and that of the Academic Director, at events related to the PTTI.
- Development of the Pasifika Centre at WelTec, so that it became a social hub, not just a place linked to the office for the Pacific mentoring staff.

Student support

- Appointment of an additional part-time Pacific staff member in a mentoring role in 2013 (full-time in 2014)
- Appointment of a work broker to prepare students for work through practical steps such as help with CVs and getting drivers' licenses
- Assistance of the work broker in introducing students to prospective employers
- Development of a "jobs passport" to prepare students for employment
- Improved support at student induction with advice about financial matters with providers such as Studylink and workshops to help students with financial issues
- Assigning each student to a single SET staff member to deal with enrolment and financial matters
- Help with language and translation for students whose first language was not English

- Earlier assessment of student skills at enrolment, so that additional academic support could be provided as needed
- Close monitoring by the Pacific mentors of student-tutor relationships and timely contact with student's families in cases of difficulties
- Embedding LN into the PTTI from 2013.

Appendix 2: The Passport to Work

This was developed during 2013 in conjunction with the Tamaiti Whāngai staff at WelTec. Pacific learners at the 2014 induction meetings at both WelTec and Whitireia were each provided with a *Pasifika Trades Training Passport to Work,* which outlined the skills and strengths relevant for work. They included personal readiness, work readiness, and job searching readiness. It was designed so that it could be shown to potential employers. In order to make sure that the students had covered these areas, planning for 2014 included workshops to help them complete specific parts of the "passport."

This passport to work is intended to help you become work ready as you progress through your studies and into employment. It is designed so that you can show your passport to an employer.

Name: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Class: _____

Mentor: _____

Signed by WelTec Mentor: _____

Date: _____

My Study Goals

_____

_____

_____

_____

Personal Readiness

Core Personal Strengths:	☐	Financial Literacy:	☐
Training Plans:	☐	Teamwork:	☐
Time Management:	☐	Leadership:	☐
Health and Well-being:	☐		

Work Readiness

Drivers Licence:	☐	Work Experience:	☐
Site Safety Certification:	☐	Employee Handbooks:	☐
Basic Health and Safety:	☐	Safe Work Practice:	☐

Job Search Readiness

Career Planning:	☐	Job Search:	☐
Skill Identification:	☐	Applying for Jobs:	☐
CV & Cover Letters:	☐	Employment Agreements:	☐
Interview Skills:	☐		

PTTI Passport to Work

Appendix 3: Pacific learners at WelTec

WelTec is based at Petone in the Hutt Valley. Formerly the Hutt Valley Polytechnic, it was renamed in 2001 after it took over some of the courses of two other ITPs in the region which went out of existence at that time, Wellington Polytechnic and the Central Institute of Technology. In addition to its Hutt Valley campus, it operates sites in central Wellington, Auckland, and Christchurch

Whitireia New Zealand (Whitireia), based in Porirua, and WelTec are the Wellington region's principal providers of face-to-face instruction at the ITP level. The two institutions have been linked since 2012 in a strategic partnership, led by a single council and a combined academic board. This initiative is developing a unified quality management system, and integrated and coherent tertiary vocational educational training to students in the Wellington region that will enable them to transition seamlessly between the two institutions. Both institutions participated in the first round of fee-free scholarships for Pacific learners in the trades. An example of the new link between WelTec and Whitirea is that one of the successful students from the PTTI at Whitireia in 2013 is continuing trades study at WelTec in 2014. A joint Whitireia/WelTec research symposium in November 2013 provided an opportunity for these two institutions, both of which have large numbers of Pacific learners, to share research information about work that was assisting these students to succeed.

Pacific learners at WelTec

Table 8: Pacific learners at WelTec, 2011-2013

	2011	2012	2013
TOTAL number of students enrolled at WelTec	10,385	9,480	8,059
Number of Pacific Students	958	926	801
% of students with Pacific Island affiliations	9.2%	9.8%	9.94%

In 2013 WelTec had 8059 students. Of these 9.94% identified as Pacific learners, much the same proportion as in 2012.

Educational performance of Pacific learners

Results for Pacific learners at WelTec have shown a trend for greater success in terms of retention and completion since 2009.

Table 9: Educational Performance Indicators for Pacific learners and all learners (in brackets) at WelTec for SAC Funded (domestic) students at all levels (TEC).

	COURSE COMPLETION	QUALIFICATION COMPLETION	RETENTION
2013	77% (81%)	63% (69%)	64% (71%)
2012	76% (82%)	63% (71%)	54% (67%)
2011	66% (77%)	48% (64%)	53% (64%)
2010	64% (75%)	47% (64%)	53% (61%)
2009	52% (67%)	40% (57%)	38% (51%)

Pacific Advisory Committee

Liaison with the local Pacific community has been through the role of a local PAC, with representation from Pacific communities in the Hutt Valley, including the Tokelauan, Samoan, Tongan and Cook Island populations. This committee also oversaw and advised on the progress of a previous WelTec-based policy study, *Success for Pacific Learners* (Horrocks et al, 2012).

Pasifika Centre and Pacific staff

A Pasifika Centre at WelTec is situated in the middle of the Student Hub area alongside the offices of the Students' Association. It has two Pacific staff involved in student mentoring. WelTec also has a Manager Pasifika responsible for the ITP's broader strategic goals.

Other Pacific staff at WelTec work in LN support, administration, and as teachers, including one head of school. There are regular staff forums for Pacific staff, both those in teaching and in administration.

Appendix 4: The research team and Pacific advisory group

The research itself was headed by the Reverend Tavita Filemoni Manager, Pasifika, WelTec. An internal advisory group of staff with research experience was set up to advise on the research project. This was made up of two Pacific staff members and a Māori staff member who was involved in the Victoria University-based study of Chu et al. (2013). The advisory group was involved in assessing how the interviews might be conducted and the initial questions for each set of participants. As the research project evolved, it became clear that two of these staff members could contribute to the research itself by carrying out some of the interviews, particularly those with students. The distinction between advisory group and research team thus became less clear, but there were clear advantages gained by adding their expertise into the research team itself.

The WelTec research team was:

Reverend Tavita Filemoni, Manager, Pasifika
Dr. Lisa Wong, Research Manager
Dr. John Horrocks, Research Associate, WelTec
Arden Perrot, Lecturer, Bachelor of Youth Development
Seann Paurini, Research support

Students at the Pasifika Centre, WelTec

Appendix 5: Questions for the semi-structured interviews

These were a guide for interviewers, rather than being prescriptive.

Students
1. What were your experiences before/during/after undertaking trades training?
2. Can you identify the support you received from Pacific support staff and Learning Support advisors that was helpful (e.g. literacy/numeracy)?
3. What aspects of training at WelTec did you find the most rewarding?
4. Can you identify any factors that helped you complete their training?
5. What challenges/barriers did you meet during the programme (e.g. financial, transport)
6. Do you have any other comments you would like to make related to your training?

Tutors
1. What were your experiences while teaching on the PTTI programme.
2. What did you as a tutor do differently for PTTI students compared to other student groups (Pacific-specific classes).
3. Can you identify the type of support that the students received from Pacific support staff and Learning Support advisors?
4. Can you identify any factors that helped students complete their training?
5. Can you identify the challenges/barriers the students met during the programme

Pacific support and Learning support staff
1. As Pacific support staff and Learning Support advisors, what type of support did you provided to the PTTI students?

Student Experience Team (SET)
1. It has been identified that there is a high level of Pacific cultural awareness by non-Pacific staff within the institution. How has this been achieved amongst the SET team

Pacific community/Church ministers
1. What were the experiences of the Pacific community while supporting the students before/during/after the course
2. As Pacific Community/Church Ministers, what was your level of involvement in student recruitment and support during the study (mentoring, pastoral care).
3. What is the community view towards Pacific Learner success.
4. What is the community view of WelTec involvement in the PTTI and its support to PTTI students.
5. What is the community view of Pacific awareness amongst WelTec staff.

6. What has occurred in the institution that has given WelTec greater Pacific awareness?

Pacific Advisory Committee
1. What was the advice of the PAC to WelTec when recruiting the first cohort of PTTI students
2. What is the PAC view of Pacific awareness amongst WelTec staff.
3. What has occurred in the institution that has given WelTec greater Pacific awareness?

Senior Management:
1. Position and role with respect to the Trades Scholarship programme.
2. How will this change for 2014 with the new funding model? Positives/ problems?
3. Changes have made selection process rushed for 2014. What do you see as the impact of this.
4. Selection of students Previous interviews have identified this as problematic because of involvement of church ministers (e.g. learning support and Pasifika support staff not involved at this first stage). Solutions?
5. Church ministers: how well has this process of engagement worked?
6. Job Broker: success of this – could it be a model for all student job support?. i.e. expansion of role
7. Does this scholarship programme provide impetus for a wider formal Pacific strategy?
8. Does it suggest value of employing more Pacific teaching staff?
9. Can the programme be evaluated separately in terms of income and costs, to see if it leaves WelTec with a surplus or deficit.
10. Possible improvements?
11. Your own feeling of positives in working with this programme.

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