

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

## **New Zealand College of Massage**

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## **Literature Review**

*Does the provision of structured professional development to private training establishment [PTE] tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

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*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

Question:

*Does the provision of structured professional development to tutorial staff in PTEs (Private Training Establishments) result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

Answer in brief:

- 1. Extensive literature exists within the schooling and university sectors, theoretically connecting effective professional development with enhanced student outcomes*
- 2. Within the secondary school sector, several local investigations provide direct evidence of this connection and the benefits of appropriate professional development*
- 3. Within the tertiary [university] sector direct evidence is very limited*
- 4. Within the tertiary [PTE] sector direct evidence is non-existent*

Issues arising from these answers:

- 1. Within the PTE tertiary sector, further evidence is needed to validate the connection between professional development and student performance*
- 2. The type of professional development that yields the most positive outcome also needs to be evaluated and identified*



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*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

## **1. Focus of this literature review**

The literature review that follows has been prepared for AKO Aotearoa and the New Zealand College of Massage, a private training establishment [PTE]. The literature has been reviewed in the context of the research question and attempts to determine whether there is a connection between professional development and enhanced student outcomes. Initially, this review establishes a definition of professional development and relevant student outcomes are identified. Secondly, the papers and reports documenting investigations into the secondary and tertiary sectors in both New Zealand and internationally are reviewed and analysed. Finally, the various findings of the literature are summarised, applicable conclusions drawn and suggestions for future research are proposed.

The question under investigation is:

*Does the provision of structured professional development to private training establishment [PTE] tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

This investigation has a direct impact on training providers whether they are public or private. With the current focus for tertiary training providers being to raise student outcomes and with the quality of teaching being assessed and reported to the Tertiary Education Commission [TEC], providers are investigating methods that will guarantee enhanced student outcomes. Should the professional development track achieve this, then the investment in such activities can be justified. This literature review will provide an overview of the current research available and define what further research is needed to provide a comprehensive answer to the question above.

## **2. Defining professional development**

Numerous definitions of professional development exist. These tend to revolve around the enhancement of skills and knowledge and an increased ability to practise one's job with the application of, or involvement in, learning and training. [Shepherd 2006] While the following examples provide context to this review, they also reveal a wide and varied understanding of professional development: Professional development can be defined as:

- the increase of knowledge or skill through study, travel, research, workshops or courses, sabbaticals, internships, apprenticeships, residencies or work with a mentor or master [Canadian Arts Council as cited in Shepherd, 2006]
- a process of learning and keeping up-to-date in one's area of expertise [Sociology

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

Commission as cited in Shepherd, 2006]

- formal or informal training to enhance skills, knowledge, and ability to practise day-to-day building construction skills [Master Builders as cited in Shepherd, 2006]
- a personally initiated obligation and right to build discipline expertise, to enhance personal growth, to improve teaching abilities and to contribute to organisational development [Queensland Government as cited in Shepherd, 2006]
- refers to vocational training [Wikipedia as cited in Shepherd, 2006]

However, for the purpose of this investigation, a definition of structured professional development has been contextualised from Shepherds' [2006] analysis as:

Engagement in [formal or informal] training and/or learning in order to enhance skills, knowledge, and hence the ability to practise [one's occupation as a tutor/lecturer]

### **Definition of Formal training**

Adult learning programmes or courses that either have an assessment or have attendance requirement in order to obtain credit

Further to this, Hegarty et al, [as cited in Shepherd, 2006] states:

*The obtaining of credit is broadly interpreted here as relating to the recognition of the professional development within a particular institutional context. This may occur through recording attendance or involvement, crediting participation to a learning programme or qualification, or through forms of assessment. Engagement in formal professional development can be an expectation of the institution, but also of the discipline or profession in which staff are positioned.*

Hegarty et al, [as cited in Shepherd, 2006] goes on to state:

*This type of development is usually formally recognised, part of an individual's workload, and may or may not be remunerated and driven by institutional actors such as staff developers and Heads of Schools. Examples include attendance at training courses, study toward a formal qualification and formal mentoring arrangements.*

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

Whereas, informal training is described as [adapted, Shepherd, 2006]:

All [structured] learning activities that are undertaken to increase one's knowledge and skills in a particular area [teaching/lecturing] but which are not formally acknowledged with credit achievement.

Examples of such informal structured professional development engagement include:

*Planned discussions with colleagues, [workshops, peer engagement, reflection exercises], reading articles, practising skills, searching on the internet etc. This type of professional development is not formally recognised for credit, [but is an acknowledged part of staff workload]. [Adapted, Bholá, 1983].*

Please note that informal spontaneous conversations or reading fall outside the scope of this definition.

### **3. Defining Student Outcomes**

There is not a clear consensus within the literature as to what are appropriate measures of student outcomes.

One solution is illustrated in the work of the University of Arizona [1987] in its student assessment plan, where they sought to measure the student outcomes within a university study. This investigation noted that the missions and goals of the eight differing schools and programs of the university varied widely. This meant that any form of inter-school reporting was difficult, as was developing an assessment plan that allowed university-wide comparisons while reflecting the unique missions of the schools. The solution reached by the research group was to adopt a decentralised approach to defining student outcomes specific to each school. Outcomes for each school arose from the schools' own mission and goals and included measures of student success/achievement, integrated with timely progression through program, retention, and graduation. This decentralised approach was also reported on by Hawke [2007] who noted that "within any tertiary setting generic student outcomes can be viewed in a wide spectrum of measures".

This approach however does not provide an effective means of measuring the impact or benefit of professional development across the educational sector. To answer the research question, a more uniform understanding of 'enhanced student outcomes' needs to be found. To this end, "researchers have been interested in student retention, persistence, and achievement since the 1960s." [Leach et

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

al, 2005] These are standard outcomes that can be consistently measured and provide some form of accountability for stakeholders. Other outcomes that can be related to the enhanced quality of teaching are the students' ability to apply, reflect, refine and make connections in their learning. This approach provides a basis for measuring the effectiveness of professional development inputs and determining whether the programmes are functioning so that the majority of students are achieving positive outcomes. The following measures in the list below, from the work of Leach et al, [2005], Brookfield, [1995] and Mezirow, [1994] are criteria that can assess student outcomes:

- Attendance [mark necessary]
- Course completion [finish the course]
- Course pass [however "pass" is defined]
- Programme [the summation of all courses] completion [last the distance]
- Graduation [attain the pass mark necessary]
- Gain social networks
- Apply knowledge
- Reflect on knowledge gained
- Refine knowledge gained
- Make new learning connections
- Deduce new ideas

For the purposes of further investigation into this connection, the measure for 'positive student outcomes' that will be used is as follows:

- Achieving the necessary grade to "pass" the paper or course with graduation as the ultimate outcome

Therefore, 'improved student outcomes' will be defined as

- A greater number [percentage] of student gaining the necessary grades to graduate

and positive outcomes will be:

- An increased percentage of those students who started a programme of study completing it and therefore and graduating

## **4. Literature from the New Zealand Schooling Sector**

### **The Best [School] Practice Synthesis**

Although the schooling sector is outside the scope of the research question, it is closely aligned to the style of teaching and learning that most often happens in a PTE setting. Also, significant research has been undertaken in this sector within New Zealand, which directly informs the question under investigation. The Best Evidence Synthesis, [BES] [Timperly et al, 2008] which represents a survey of current world wide best practice published as a research document from the Ministry of Education that draws on research internationally and from New Zealand examining the connection between professional development and enhanced student outcomes. This analysis states 'effective professional development' can give a school student [yrs 1 through 13] a two year boost in their learning. [Butler, 2008]

As part of the Ministry's Best Evidence Synthesis programme, 97 studies of teacher professional learning and development programmes were analysed<sup>1</sup>. Of these, seventeen were local [New Zealand] studies. These demonstrated that the professional development carried out in schools in New Zealand lead to enhanced student outcomes. The BES shows an educational practice that actually produces better results for students. [Butler, 2008]

The New Zealand studies also showed high overall impact compared with those of other countries. "Much of our professional development work is clearly world-leading", said Ministry Deputy-Secretary Rob McIntosh. [As cited by Butler, 2008]

According to Butler, [2008] the work of the BES team has already received international acclaim from the International Academy of Education who will publish the findings in 2009, and also from the American Educational Research Association which will feature the research in its 2008 annual review due to be published shortly.

The BES team identified the following key findings of New Zealand's professional development practice, [Butler 2008]

- New Zealand's Literacy Professional Development Project was exceptionally successful, especially assisting low achieving students
- New Zealand's Numeracy Development Project is a national professional development initiative that compares well by international comparison
- The teacher development programmes that made the most difference involved cycles of research and development

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1 The BES was written by a team of four researchers headed by Professor Helen Timperley of University of Auckland.

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

- Teacher professional learning and development is more likely to succeed when school principals and leaders are actively involved
- Student outcome improved markedly as the teacher's content and assessment knowledge improved
- The quality of expertise available to assist schools with professional development was critical to its effectiveness

These conclusions suggest that a strong correlation exists between appropriate professional development and enhanced student outcomes.

However, the key issue that arose from this research is the quality and style of the professional development. It was apparent that certain styles of professional development [ongoing evaluation, reflection, input and support] have a better impact on student outcomes than others [one-day meetings or workshops]. This will be discussed in section 7.0, further in this review.

## **Successful Professional Development Projects in the Schooling Sector**

### **Literacy Professional Development Project**

When exploring in more detail the Literacy Professional Development Project,<sup>2</sup> [identified in the BES report above] a clear understanding of the enhanced student outcomes as a result of the professional development endeavours emerges.

The Literacy Professional Development Project (LPDP) began in March 2004. The LPDP had a focus on improving teacher content knowledge in literacy, pedagogy and practice, and building effective professional learning communities through structured and controlled professional development activities. The project provided schools with an evidence-based professional development programme, which aimed to improve student learning and achievement in literacy. Arising from the project<sup>3</sup> a 2007 report published by Parr, Timperley, Reddish, Jesson and Adams stated

*With respect to differential achievement by ethnic group, in reading, there was a difference in performance of the major ethnic groups at both points in time. However, all groups made significant progress in terms of gains in total score and stanine level from Time 1 to Time 2 and there was no difference in extent of gain. In writing, the median score at Time 1 was barely different across ethnic groups. At Time 2 there was a significant difference between groups with both NZ European and other significantly higher than Māori or Pasifika. However, this may be a function of a very small sample of schools as in a school that made excellent progress, all groups progressed equally. There were no significant differences by gender in reading achievement scores in this sample or differences in rate of progress. In writing, however, females scored significantly better at both points in time but both girls and boys*

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<sup>2</sup> entitled, "Identifying Effective Teaching and Professional Development Practices for Enhanced Student Learning

<sup>3</sup> involving a total 288 schools and 3,288 teachers



*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

*made significant progress and there was no difference in the rate of progress.*

The report [Parr et al, 2007] outlined the activities undertaken by teachers within the two-year project. For example, within a window of four months [a baseline was established prior to the professional development exercises] teachers engaged with relevant readings, classroom observations and staff meetings focused on building their knowledge and skills, in order to make their teaching of writing more explicit and applicable. At the end of the four months, further classroom observations and student interviews showed they had been successful and student achievement improved substantially during these four months.

### **Enhancing Effective Practice in Special Education**

A further Ministry of Education research project, undertook a study entitled "Enhancing Effective Practice in Special Education." [Curzon, 2008] This three-year research project focused on developing teacher knowledge and identifying effective teaching practice for students with special education needs hence enhancing the learning experience for these special needs students. The Enhancing Effective Practice in Special Education (EPISE) project was part of a broader Ministry policy focus on effective teaching to meet the diverse needs of all learners. Specifically, the project aimed to develop teacher knowledge and share ideas on how to support learners who required significant adaptation to the curriculum content in regular schools, school-based classes for students with special education needs, kura kaupapa Māori and special schools. The result of such professional input as reported below [Curzon, 2008] was to promote positive educational outcomes in each of the four settings.

The literature review and pilot study undertaken as part of this project strongly suggested that: [Curzon, 2008.]

*Those teachers need up to date knowledge and ongoing support to improve students' learning outcomes. The importance of the role of leadership was also identified as being vital in developing a culture of acceptance and increased participation of these learners. The relationship between whānau and the school was seen as the key ingredient for enhancing learning, social and cultural outcomes for all students in the kura kaupapa Māori settings.*

The outcome of such focused professional development was the enhanced positive outcomes for the students in question and this was shown by an enhanced learning experience for the special students as reported within the EPISE project.

### **Maori Education projects**

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

Through all components of New Zealand's education system, from the Government down, there is a desire to see improved achievement levels for Maori students. This is expressed clearly in the Maori Education Strategy 2008-2012 which states:

*The goals and actions in Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success are based on what can make the most difference for and with Māori students. Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success seeks to ensure that Māori youth, we know from the evidence that the following things make the particularly in Years 9 and 10 most difference: attend school, are engaged in learning and are achieving* [Ministry of Education, 2007]

The strategy defines the steps to be taken to achieve these goals, identifying that increasing professional learning and capability of teachers is vital because:

- *high quality teaching makes the most extensive difference to students*
- *research has identified the characteristics of high quality teaching and professional development that can foster this high quality teaching, hence improving Māori student outcomes*

Further to this, the 2007/08 Nga Haeata Matauranga [Annual Report on Maori Education] reported on this strategy initiative stating that student outcomes could be improved. This was based on a case study from Massey High School, Waitakere City, stating that within all three levels of NCEA results significant improvement in Maori performance had been identified [NCEA Level 1 improved from 35% to 51%, NECA Level 2 increased by 22% and NCEA level 3 increased by 30%]. [p 53] This improvement was the result of the teachers having the appropriate skill and experience to teach the class. Furthermore, the report noted that these skills and experience could be developed through structured and purposeful professional development. The professional development strategy adopted was illustrated in the Te Kotahitanga project, at Massey High School. [p 52]

Finally the Education Gazette of February 11, 2009 reported the same findings as introduced above. The Te Kotahitanga programme is based around a structured programme of teacher development. The programme utilises teacher observations, feedback, feed-forward and co-construction meetings. The report states that "the facilitation team works through this challenging professional development cycle with each teacher, each term". [p 2] This case study, as reported, outlines the direct connection between appropriate professional development and student outcome enhancement.

### **Miscellaneous Reports**

A case study [reported in TKI, 2008] from Hibiscus Coast Intermediate, within the "Planning for Better

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

Student Outcomes” project, showed that by adopting a system of planning, data collection and self review the outcomes of all students could be enhanced. Albeit this is not professional development as known traditionally as the teachers’ growth and learning in this project was a result of the data collection and self review activities.

Further to these examples, in 2008, the Auditor General reviewed Government expenditure on all “Ministry of Education Professional Development Initiatives”. Each of the current MoE funded projects was examined to ascertain whether the money invested had yielded the desired outcomes of improved student performance. The report presented the outcomes of this investigation demonstrating a strong connection between professional development and enhanced student outcomes. As with the BES research, the Auditor General also concluded that the key factor in enhancing student outcomes is in the type and style of professional development.

### **Conclusion:**

Within the New Zealand schools’ sector, based on the evidence available, we can conclude that professional development leads to enhanced student outcomes. The key to the success of these initiatives was in the style and implementation of the professional development experience.

In summary, this evidence answers several questions:

- Can professional development [PD] input enhance student outcomes – Yes? [See examples listed above]
- Does all PD input enhance student outcomes – No
- Therefore are enhanced student outcomes is dependent upon the type/quality of PD – Yes
- Can these examples [of structured professional development input] be applied to a tertiary setting – Yes, but depending on the tertiary setting [a homeroom setting similar to that of a PTE is most applicable]

Based on the research evidence, styles of professional development that yield enhanced student outcomes are:

- Ongoing reflection and feedback
- Ongoing input, co construction meetings, feed forward meetings
- Ongoing peer observation and support
- Enhancing content knowledge and teacher knowledge

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

- Enhancing pedagogy and enhancing the learning experience within a cultural framework
- Enhancing effective teaching practice
- Building learning communities

## **5. Literature from the International Schooling Sector**

The international schooling sector has also been subjected to a number of wide-ranging investigations into the value of professional development. The key drivers of these are the funding agencies [government] seeking to validate extensive ongoing staff development and training costs and the governing bodies seeking cost benefit strategies for improving student outcomes. These investigations have left little doubt of the importance of the role of professional development in the professional life of teachers. [McKenzie and Turbill, 1999] Several recent international studies into the place of professional development in a teacher's ongoing growth have affirmed this importance. [Ramsay, 2000; Vinson, 2001; Nelson, 2003 as cited in McKenzie and Turbill, 1999] However, these reports address the issue from a theoretical point of view rather than directly observing the student outcomes as a result of the professional development activity. However, within the international literature on professional development of teachers several other key themes emerge:

- The concept of dynamic and ongoing change [Guskey, 1994; Fullan, 1990,1991; Heckenberg, 1994; Sparks, 1994, as cited in McKenzie and Turbill, 1999]
- How professional development programmes can work as agents of change [Retallick, 1999; Rhine, 1998; Lasley, 1998, as cited in McKenzie and Turbill, 1999]
- The way professional development influences a teacher's belief and practices [Fullan, 1990; Guskey, 1986; Turbill, 1994; Sparks & Richardson, 1997, as cited in McKenzie and Turbill, 1999]
- The differing approaches to professional development and which are considered effective [Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Dadds, 1997; Renyi, 1998; Black, 1998; as cited in McKenzie and Turbill, 1999]
- The role that self-reflection plays in the development journey [Dewey, 1933; Schon, 1983, 1987; Brookfield, 1995, as cited in McKenzie and Turbill, 1999]
- The ongoing effectiveness of particular professional development experiences over time [McBride, Reed & Dollar, 1994; Rhine, 1998, Butler, 1996, as cited in McKenzie and Turbill, 1999]

However, again, there is limited physical data or other evidence that supports the research question.

### **Annenberg School Institute**

In addition to the BES undertaking an analysis of international research regarding the value of professional development for teachers, the Annenberg Institute for School Reform developed "Professional Development Strategies that Improve Education. [Annenberg Institute, 2006.] This Institute is based at Brown University and through working with urban school systems, has engaged in comprehensive school reform research targeting severely disadvantaged students. Professional

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

development through instructional coaching is used to build knowledge, improve practice and hence promote student achievement. The outcomes from this initiative are recorded direct improvements in student outcomes. [Annenberg Institute, 2006 p. 10-11] The Institutes' work shows that coaching teachers results in better performance amongst students.

### **The Australian Association of Research in Education [AARE] New Zealand Association of Research in Education [NZARE]**

McKenzie and Turbill's paper, [1999] introduced above, and presented at the 1999 AARE-NZARE conference in Melbourne detailed the work within the Broken Bay Catholic Diocese where teachers were given structured staff development for their literacy initiative. This development encouraged the teachers to explore their "beliefs and understandings" about teaching and learning literacy. The researchers reported that the intent was that by understanding their own beliefs and understandings about teaching literacy, teachers would in fact teach with a greater understanding of their students and hence the students would achieve at a higher level. [McKenzie and Turbill; 1999]

### **PhD Thesis**

Nugent's recent PhD thesis entitled "A Narrative Inquiry of Teachers' Perceptions regarding their Professional Development Experiences" outlines the following findings: [2007; p. i]

- That teacher's value professional development experiences that improve their teaching strategies and offer relevant and practical knowledge
- To be successful, teachers believe that they need more time to conduct ongoing informal dialogue with colleagues while applying new learning
- In addition to support from colleagues, teachers benefit from the additional assistance provided by internal coaches
- Teachers experience barriers including a lack of time and sense of ownership, preconceived notions, insufficient training and management of non-compliant student behaviours

### **Australian Investments**

In a recent publication [DEEWT, 2008] from the Australian government, entitled "Teachers for the 21st Century - Making the Difference", it argues that highly effective schools "and" improved student outcomes are key objectives of the Commonwealth Government. The report states that:

- Education of the highest quality is the foundation for Australia's futures
- Education empowers Australians to rise to the challenges of social, cultural, economic and technological change that they confront daily
- Education of the highest quality requires teachers of the highest quality.

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

- Research both within Australia and overseas confirms that a highly skilled and professional teaching force does, and will continue, to make a difference

The reports also states that the goals outlined above are to be achieved by improving teacher quality and increasing the number of highly effective Australian schools in order to maximise student learning outcomes. This outcome will be achieved by: [p 5]

- Lifting the quality of teaching through targeted professional development and enhancing professional standards;
- Developing the skills of school leaders;
- Supporting quality school management; and
- Recognising and rewarding quality schools, school leaders and teachers.

In addition to this, the Commonwealth of Australia is going to provide some AUS\$80 million over the next three years to support this initiative. This includes \$74 million to support quality teachers, \$1.5 million for quality school leaders, \$2 million for quality school management and \$2.5 million for recognition of quality.

This multimillion-dollar commitment by the Australian government is based on the premise that professional development will enhance teacher quality, and by enhancing teacher quality, this will translate into improved student performance.

### **Improving Maths**

The International Bureau of Education, in a report entitled "Improving Student Achievement in Mathematics", [Grouws & Cebella, 2001] emphasised the critical importance of developing effective teachers. Effective teachers engage more effectively with their students, enhancing their performance. [p 8] Once again, professional development is cited as the way to achieve improved student performance. [p.9]

### **Professional Development Effectiveness**

In 1998, an investigation was commenced by a team of researchers who examined the state of professional development for K – 12 teachers in the United States. Their results painted a discouraging picture.

They reported: [Peck, 2005]

- Significant numbers of teachers had few or no professional development opportunities
- The opportunities that existed came in the form of workshops, courses, and institutes that

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

didn't necessarily offer appropriate information or ongoing support to apply what was learned in classrooms

- Professional development focused on individuals rather than organisational capacity

Furthermore, five years after the initial investigation a separate team of researchers re-examined the issues and reported that little had changed: They noted, "much of the current professional development is led by an 'expert' from outside the school district, presented to a few teachers who attend voluntarily, in a setting far removed from student learning". Susan Locucks-Horsley and her colleagues concluded, "the fact that these conditions persist and in fact still dominate practice is not just cause for concern, it is cause for alarm." (2003, p. xviii) This study provides the default setting, pointing out that not all professional development results in student enhancement. Poor professional development provides poor outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

International literature [cites] points to the theory that effective professional development should lead to enhanced student performance. However, it also noted that ineffective professional development could produce negative outcomes as opposed to the positive ones being desired.

However, the international literature cited only one source that actually recorded evidence of the outcomes of effective professional development that validated the theoretical position. This was the work of the Annenberg Institute and the programme of teacher coaching. Within the New Zealand literature, seventeen such examples were available. Therefore, the theoretical consensus arising from the international literature that focuses on the schooling sector mirrors the actual findings from New Zealand studies. Student outcomes can be enhanced by appropriate professional development. Specific types of professional development engender enhanced student outcomes while others do not. Again, the two key findings from the international school sector in the research to date are

- Student outcomes can be improved by giving their tutors appropriate development experiences
- The development experiences must be of a certain type and quality



## **6. Literature from the Tertiary Sector**

Accepting that the literature from the international schooling sector provides very strong theoretical connections between professional development and enhanced student performance, while the New Zealand schooling sector provides direct evidence of these connections, this paper will now review the literature focused on the tertiary sector.

### **Ministry of Education Research**

In 2005, the Ministry of Education [MoE] commissioned Massey University to undertake a review of research - "Impact of Student Support Services and Academic Development Programmes on Student Outcomes in Undergraduate Tertiary Study: A Synthesis of the Research". [Prebble et al, 2005] The first half of this evaluation examined 146 studies, of which 78 were from primary sources, investigated the hypothesis that positive student support practices would lead to a positive impact on student outcomes. The second half examined another 150 studies [inclusive of 33 empirical studies], which investigated the thesis that positive academic staff development programmes would enhance student outcomes.

Each of these lines of investigation were summarised in a report to the Ministry of Education by Janet Rivers [2005]. This report and the subsequent summaries' provide a comprehensive overview of the literature and its findings. The focus on the impact of student support services relates to enhanced student outcomes, while the section on academic development programmes directly answers the research question. Coolbear [2009] in his opening address at the AKO Aotearoa "Staff Developer's Conference" also outlined the findings of this research. In brief:

- 1. Extensive literature exists within the universities that connects the theory of professional development with enhanced student outcomes*
- 2. Direct evidence of this theory is very limited within the tertiary sector (as reported by Prebble)*

Coolbear named two issues that arise from this research:

1. Within the tertiary sector of New Zealand, further evidence is needed to validate the connections between professional development and student outcomes
2. Within these investigations the type of professional development that yields the most positive outcomes needs to be quantified

In detail, the key points within the analysis introduced above are summarised by Rivers [2005] as follows:

### ***The propositions – Student Support Services***

Based on the international literature, the review team [Prebble, et al, 2005] derived a series of 13 propositions which encapsulated the key features of effective student support services that created a resulted in improved student outcomes. The first 10 propositions as reported by Rivers, [2005] help diverse students integrate into the existing culture of an institution. The final three challenge institutions to adapt to the cultural capital brought by their diverse students, rather than focus on integration.

This analysis of the literature concludes that positive student support “should” lead to positive student outcomes. [Rivers, 2005] Although this finding is outside of the scope of this review, it is evidence that student outcomes can be enhanced by influencing factors external to the students. The same principle applies to that of professional development for tutors.

### ***The propositions- Academic Development Programmes –to respond to the research question***

This section, based on Rivers work, [2005b] is a summary of Prebble et als’ findings on academic staff development.

After analysing the international literature in relation to the impact of academic staff development programmes on teaching beliefs and practice, the review team concluded that:

- Good teaching should have positive effects on student outcomes
- Through a variety of academic development interventions, teachers can be assisted to improve the quality of their teaching

The second conclusion - that teachers can be assisted to improve their teaching by means of a variety of interventions - forms the core of Rivers’ study, and has been further divided into five propositions. These are: [Rivers, 2005b]

- Short training courses are unlikely to lead to significant change in teaching behaviour. They tend to be most effective when used to disseminate information about institutional policy and practice, or to train staff in discrete skills and techniques
- The academic work group is generally an effective setting for developing the complex knowledge, attitudes and skills involved in teaching
- Teachers can be assisted to improve the quality of their teaching through obtaining feedback, advice and support for their teaching from a colleague or academic development consultant

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

- Student assessments are among the most reliable and accessible indicators of the effectiveness of teaching. When used appropriately they are likely to lead to significant improvements in the quality of the teaching
- Teachers' conceptions about the nature of teaching and learning are the most important influences on how they teach. Intensive and comprehensive staff development programmes can be effective in transforming teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning and their teaching practice

The outcome and recommendations of Rivers' report will be detailed later in this review.

### **Teaching and Learning Research Initiative**

The Teaching and Learning Research Initiative is a government-funded project aimed at improving tertiary outcomes in the first year of study. [Zepke *et al*, 2005] One of fourteen findings of the Initiative states that "teachers do influence retention." [p. 2] The question that evolves from these findings is; if teachers influence retention, what must an organisation do [professional development] to ensure that the teachers' influence is positive?

### **Teaching Excellence**

In the paper, "Towards excellence in adult education pedagogy," [Airini & Sauni, 2004] it is identified that adult learners deserve to be taught by excellent educator teachers. The paper goes on to report that the truly excellent educators understand and take into consideration that they are exceptionally influential on student learning. [Hattie, as cited in Airini & Sauni, 2004] After finding "that the tutor is influential on the students learning," Airini and Sauni report that to achieve these ideals of having excellent educators, teachers and tutors need training and ongoing professional development to equip them on a day to day basis. [2004]

## **7. Conclusions from the Literature Concerning Professional Development**

**From the MoE Report** [*A summary of research on the academic development programmes and their impact on student outcomes in undergraduate tertiary student*]:

The analysis relevant to this investigation as reported by Rivers [2005b] focused on the impact of academic staff development programmes on teaching practice and recommends institutions should continue to invest resources in assisting their staff to develop in the professional practice of teaching. The evidence, however, does not strongly favour one methodology over another. It suggests that focusing exclusively on short, skills-based courses is unlikely to lead to significant professional growth or change and the report supports a greater emphasis on assisting work groups to reflect collectively on their joint tasks as a more effective professional development method.

The evidence reported by Prebble [2005] and summarised by Rivers [2005b] for the long-term impact of in-depth teacher professional development programmes is promising but limited. It is reported that the evidence is not yet strong enough to justify a compulsory scheme for the entire sector. However, based on the initial outcomes, Prebble [2005] notes that staff should be encouraged to participate in training schemes.

The report concludes [Prebble, as reported by Rivers, 2005.] that while it is reasonable to expect that the findings of international research will have broad applicability to New Zealand, it also recommends that:

- more research be undertaken on academic staff development
- more research [including the PTE sector] be undertaken on how it makes a difference to teaching and learning in New Zealand
- tertiary institutions are encouraged to use their academic staff development units as centres for research on teaching and learning, as well as for training and development

### **From the Schools' Literacy Project**

Parr, Timperley, Reddish, Jesson and Adams identified three interrelated principles that were associated with teachers responding positively to the Schools' Literacy Project activities:

- The first was the principle of negotiation and co-construction as ways to promote engagement and learning. Whether it is the purpose of a particular activity, the form of the activity, the learning the activity was supposed to promote, or the meaning of particular data,

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

each aspect needed to be negotiated and co-constructed with participants

- Ongoing consultation with teachers was an essential part of the process. Associated with this is the second principle; that of engaging teachers' existing theories about students and effective teaching. This principle is important in the activation of prior learning so that new learning can build upon prior learning. In some situations, change may depend on challenging existing theories and creating dissonance with particular positions. In the absence of theory examination, new practices are typically overlaid on previous practice, with superficial, rather than substantive, change evident
- The third, related principle is that of promoting self-regulation. When teachers have participated in setting personal goals, understand how to monitor their own progress and have the support to make appropriate changes, they are more likely to engage at a deeper level and sustain change

The principles identified have direct correlation to the tertiary setting under investigation.

### **From the Schools' Special Education Project**

One of the findings from the Schools' Special Education Project was that for professional learning to be effective and sustainable it needs to be situated within the context of the teacher's school.

Teachers in this project [Curzon, 2008] also identified five key characteristics of effective professional development and learning:

- Professional learning opportunities must be based on immediate needs and build upon existing knowledge
- Teachers should become facilitators and begin owning the process of professional learning and development
- Support to meet the needs of diverse learners is required
- Support for teachers needs to be built into school-wide planning for raising student achievement
- Collaborative planning and goals require ongoing monitoring, adaptation and review

### **From the Schooling BES project**

Recent work undertaken by Helen Timperley [Timperley et al, 2008] investigating projects in New Zealand and overseas shows that the most effective professional learning occurs when it is connected to teachers' work in the classroom and derived from collaborative knowledge sharing amongst educators. These results have a direct application to PTEs [private training establishments].

The central questions asked by Timperley were "How do I, as a teacher, recognise the impact of my teaching on student learning, social and cultural outcomes?" and "What changes do I need to make to my teaching to improve these student outcomes?" These need to be central to any ongoing

*Does the provision of structured professional development to PTE tutorial staff result in the outcome of enhanced student performance?*

professional development endeavour [Timperly et al, 2008] and provide relevance to teaching within the PTE sector

**From the Annenberg schools project**

The international work of the Annenberg Institute points to the quality of the professional development as the key in whether student outcomes are enhanced. In this case, the practice of instructional coaching was the preferred method of professional development. This method could also provide a model for the PTE landscape. The paper [Annenberg Institute, 2006] provides a sound analysis of effective coaching and demonstrates how professional development strategies' can support this.

## **8. Conclusions regarding the connection between professional development and enhanced student outcomes**

The literature from the schooling sector identified in the previous section [as applicable to the PTE sector], clearly shows a strong link between professional development and enhanced student outcomes. The provision of this conclusion lies in the quality and style of professional development. The old 'teacher's-only day' or 'in-service training day' will not, on their own, yield the level of results desired. Rather, the professional development as discussed above must be structured, inclusive, ongoing and empowering.

The literature from the tertiary sector, in particular the work of Prebble [2005] as summarised by Rivers, [2005b] notes the strong theoretical link between professional development and enhanced student outcomes, but direct evidence is limited. Specifically there is a lack of direct evidence across the literature. Further, there is little consideration of the cultural implications for Maori or Pasifika tertiary students and there are gaps in defining effective professional development within the divergent range of tertiary provider types. Finally, there are also gaps in the literature when it comes to definitively stating which type of professional development yield best results. Within the tertiary sector, the mode of programme delivery from the tutor or lecturer is varied - from first year classes of 300+ students, to homeroom settings of 12 to 15 students. Therefore, what is good practice in a university is not necessarily the case for a PTE and although the research from the other sectors can be applied generically, it is not clear what specific type/s of professional development will enhance student outcomes for PTEs.

Further research, into professional development in the tertiary sector needs to be undertaken and within this research, the shape and size of the tertiary provider needs to be considered. The effectiveness of a professional development strategy is likely to be dependent on whether it is being applied to a PTE of 86 students in 7 home room settings with 25 hours of instructional contact per week or to a student in a History 101 class of 350 students that has 3 hours of lectures a week.

## **9. Proposed shape of future research.**

Rivers [2005b] within the MoE report summary highlights the paucity of New Zealand research, making “the link”, with only three New Zealand based studies that explore the relationship between academic staff development and outcomes for teachers or students and no studies that address this issue within tertiary Maori or Pasifika contexts. Further, no empirical studies have been undertaken in the PTE sector in New Zealand or internationally.

The School BES<sup>4</sup> [Timperley, 2008] also identified “gaps in the evidence,” [p xiv] stating, “few studies provided descriptions of the professional development, evidence of teacher learning and change, and student outcomes.” In other words, most investigations (including the internationals mentioned) did not provide direct evidence to show the connection between professional development and enhanced student outcomes. Hence, it is proposed that the research question below needs to be addressed in a private tertiary setting:

What professional development strategies are most effective in enhancing student performance outcomes within the PTE sector in New Zealand?

Hence, this research question will need to be investigated taking into consideration the diverse range of PTE’s as well as the specific nature of their students. This literature review has provided strong clues to the answer to this for both the generic schooling and tertiary [university] sectors and we know that specific, appropriate teacher/tutor professional development will enhance student outcomes. However, for the PTE sector, the questions<sup>5</sup> that arise are:

- What is the most appropriate form of professional development?”
- How does this change for different PTEs?
  - For those of Maori descent?
  - For those of Pacifica descent?
  - For those with special learning needs?

The investigation into the effectiveness of different professional development strategies in different contexts needs to be the focus of research going forward.

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<sup>4</sup> Senior Secondary School mirror the practice in PTE’s closely

<sup>5</sup> Also identified by Prebble, [2005]



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