



## **Research Report**

# Pacific learner success in workplace settings

Dr Debbie Ryan, Lisa Kitone  
and Racheal Fleming

# contents

1	<b>Executive Summary</b>
4	<b>1. Project Background</b>
4	1.1. Project partners
4	1.2. Limitations
4	1.3. Project purpose and objectives
5	1.4. Project design
6	<b>2. Pacific learners in workplace settings – background and context</b>
6	2.1. A youthful, urban, growing and diverse population
6	2.2. Tertiary education outcomes for Pacific peoples
7	2.3. Government response
7	2.4. The industry training sector context
9	2.5. Pacific learners in the industry training sector
11	<b>3. Thematic literature review</b>
12	<b>4. Evaluation priorities and methodology</b>
12	4.1. Evaluation priorities
13	4.2. Evaluation methodology
14	<b>5. Two pilot programmes: Peer Mentoring and Study Groups</b>
14	5.1. Rationale for the programmes
16	5.2. Peer Mentoring
16	5.3. Study Groups
18	<b>6. Findings</b>
19	6.1. Key findings – Learners
28	6.2. Key findings – Facilitators
35	6.3. Key findings – Industry Training Organisations
40	<b>7. Discussion and Recommendations</b>
45	<b>8. Conclusion</b>
46	<b>References</b>
47	<b>Appendices</b>
47	Appendix 1: Project team members
47	Appendix 2: Pasifika Learner Success in Workplace Settings – thematic literature review
48	Appendix 3: Pilot Logic Models

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# Executive Summary

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This is a study which focused on learners, learning facilitators and industry training organisation (ITO) staff engaged in improving Pacific learners' achievement in industry training. It brings a Pacific learner perspective to factors that influence their participation, achievement and continuance in ITO facilitated qualifications. Also included are the perspectives of ITO staff and facilitators who are working towards improving Pacific learners' success.

Four ITOs designed and implemented training pilots that focused on Pacific learners. The ITOs are:

- The Skills Organisation;
- Careerforce;
- ServiceIQ; and
- Competenz.

This research was undertaken by Pacific Perspectives Limited. The multidisciplinary research team included expertise in evaluation, cultural and qualitative research methods, and tertiary education.

The following are the key findings relating to Pacific learners, facilitators and ITOs.

## Learners

### Barriers

- Pacific workers are often unaware of the range of opportunities available for learning.
- Pacific learners have to prioritise learning, work, and family. Family is also a key factor for success.
- There are cost (economic) barriers to workplace learning for Pacific people. These include competing time demands outside of work hours.
- Pacific learners' self-perception of capability can be low – lack of confidence and language barriers based on earlier experience of education and training need to be overcome.

### Success

- Workplace context is important and requires a supportive employer to create the motivating learning support and learning contexts.
- Relationships with facilitators of learning support are important catalysts for participation and achievement, continuance and completion.
- Small learner support groups have worked well for Pacific learners, particularly where barriers impede learning.
- Personal motivations need to be explored/facilitated to establish and develop positive, future-focused goals.



## Facilitators

### *Characteristics of successful facilitators of learner support:*

- Facilitators who share their industry and work experience ensuring work context underpins learners' experience; and the relevance of learning and its contribution to career progression is understood, demonstrated and applied.
- Facilitators who understand learners' lived reality – the broad context of experiences and circumstances that impact learning and the values and drivers important to learners – help establish shared values and a supportive and empowering learning environment.
- Facilitators who address diverse barriers to engaging in learning and develop strategies to overcome these, will help build learners' confidence.
- Facilitators that incorporate practical learning and supportive learning environments.

### *Barriers*

- Generic rather than contextualised learning resources (workbooks).
- Work schedules during peak work periods.
- Finding ways to respond to an increasingly diverse and multicultural workforce.

### *Success*

- Facilitators have the authority in the workplace to validate learning.
- Facilitators have the experience and skills to contextualise learning through practice, communication, and ensuring its relevance to the learners' work role is understood (concepts are applied meaningfully to the learners' work role, workplace and personal home lives).
- Facilitators have a close relationship with the learner context and have the skills to create practical forms of learning including learners use of their language of choice.



## Industry Training Organisations

### *ITOs*

- Few senior Pacific roles in ITOs.
- ITOs could do more to strengthen their strategic focus on Pacific learners.
- Greater awareness about issues for Pacific learners in the workplace is needed – with employers and within ITOs.



## Employers

- ITO staff roles include engaging with employers and assisting the facilitators' learning support function.
- Engagement with employers about Pacific learner issues can be challenging with little evidence to support recommendations to employers about improving Pacific learners' participation and achievement.
- Businesses with high numbers of Pacific employees are more willing to engage.

## Design and implementation of pilot programmes

- Industries had their own approaches to learner support and ITOs struggled with implementing the proposed pilots.
- Programmes were labour- and time-intensive to set up for the ITO and progress was incremental.

## Recommendations

1. Engage with Pacific families and learner support networks to disseminate information about industry training opportunities, and information that addresses the misperceptions about the 'value' and requirements of workplace learning.
2. Create a 'culture of motivation'. Understand what motivates Pacific learners in industry training in order to establish and develop positive future-focused goals.
3. Implement learning support mechanisms that addresses learners' negative perceptions of their own capability and fosters confidence, engagement and motivation. Factors that are likely to work include: leadership by facilitators with appropriate skills, contextualisation of training materials, relevant content and delivery and positive learning environments.
4. Provide support for facilitators/learner support as key roles in industry training. Effective facilitators demonstrated understanding of the lived realities of learners and were able to establish a shared set of values to guide learning, create supportive and empowering learning environments for each learner.
5. Contextualise and tailor learning. Encourage facilitators to use creative learning support approaches based on an understanding of the strengths of the learners.
6. Take a broad view of Pacific workplace success. Build on the programme logic models already developed in these pilots to engage stakeholders in understanding the value of training interventions and the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes and indicators of success. Value 'soft skills' and transferable skills that 'spill over' into non-work settings and interactions.

# 1. Project Background

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*Pacific Learner Success in Workplace Settings* is an Ako Aotearoa supported project focused on better understanding interventions that support and improve the achievement of qualifications by Pacific learners in industry training.

The project consists of the design, implementation and evaluation of two industry training pilot programmes focused on Pacific learners.

This report provides a summary of the industry training sector and issues of relevance for Pacific learners; design and implementation of the two pilot programmes; evaluation methodology; analysis and discussion of key findings; and practical recommendations to guide further work in this area.

## 1.1 Project partners

The project is a collaboration between four industry training organisations (ITOs) that represent 75% of Pacific learners in industry training:

- The Skills Organisation: real estate, central and local government, emergency services, contact centres.
- Careerforce – Te Toi Pukenga: healthcare, community services, social services, cleaning.
- ServiceIQ: aviation, hospitality, retail, travel, tourism.
- Competenz: engineering, food processing, manufacturing, forestry.

A project team made up of representatives of the four ITOs provided oversight for project implementation. Pacific Perspectives Ltd (PPL), a specialist Pacific research and policy consultancy, were commissioned to carry out a utilisation-focused evaluation of the two pilot programmes. Together, staff from the ITOs and Pacific Perspectives made up the Project Advisory Group (see appendix 1 for further details on the project team members).

## 1.2 Limitations

Despite their central role in the industry training relationship, employer perspectives were not collected as part of this evaluation. Any discussion relating to employers within this report must be qualified by the fact that participating workplaces were not included in data collection.

The duration of the pilot programmes is a limitation of this study that reduces the ability to evaluate implementation of the pilots. The implementation timeframes were short and comparison of the impacts of the pilot programmes was not possible due to the varying timeframes of implementation. However, it is recognised that flexible start and finish dates of programmes are in the nature of industry training, which are learner-centric not calendar-centric.

## 1.3 Project purpose and objectives

The project builds on existing knowledge of what works for Pacific learners in tertiary education and improves our understanding of Pacific learner success in industry training. Particular consideration is given to how industry training can account for increasingly diverse Pacific learners across multiple industry contexts.

The aim is to identify factors that support successful outcomes for Pacific learners and improve Pacific rates of programme achievement in industry training. Optimising the utility



and applicability of research findings for ITOs and other stakeholders is a key objective of the project.

The research questions that guide this evaluation and directly address these objectives are:

- How successful were the two pilot interventions, that were implemented in the four ITO settings, at supporting achievement of Pacific learners?
- What were the enablers and barriers to success from the perspective of Pacific learners?
- What can be learned and what principles can be extracted from the pilots that will inform improved practice in ITOs in terms of responding to the needs of Pacific learners?

## 1.4 Project design

Key components of the project include:

- *Literature review and data analysis*

A thematic literature review was undertaken to provide an evidence base for the selection and design of pilot initiatives and inform the development of evaluation priorities. Findings of the review have been integrated throughout this report, in particular Section 3. The full literature review can be found in Appendix 2.

- *Pilot design, implementation and delivery*

A detailed description of the two pilot projects is included in Section 5.

- *Evaluation*

The evaluation approach and methodology can be found in Section 4. Key findings from the qualitative interviews with Pacific learners, facilitators and ITOs are discussed in Section 6, and recommendations are made in Section 7.



## 2. Pacific learners in workplace settings – background and context

### 2.1 A youthful, urban, growing and diverse population

The Pacific population in New Zealand is rapidly growing, and is projected to increase from 8 percent of the total population (as of 2013) to around 11 percent by 2038 (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). In contrast to New Zealand aging population trends, the median age of Pacific peoples is 22 years old – more than 10 years less than the total population (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). The population is highly urbanised, with a vast majority of Pacific people residing in the Auckland and Wellington regions. Significant Pacific communities, about 38 percent of the total Pacific population in New Zealand, are concentrated in the South Auckland area (Counties Manukau Health, 2015).

The project thematic literature review notes the complex and dynamic diversity within Pacific ethnic groups and communities. Our understanding of what being 'Pacific' in New Zealand looks like and means is constantly evolving. A high birth rate is driving Pacific population growth – a departure from migration driven increases of previous decades – and, as of 2013, almost two-thirds of the total Pacific population was born in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). New Zealand born Pacific people are extremely youthful and, for most, English is their first language. Intermarriage is blurring the ethnic-specific identities that have been traditionally examined in research and policy contexts – in 2013, 9 percent of Pacific people identified with more than one Pacific ethnicity and 32 percent identified with ethnicities outside the Pacific group (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). For many Pacific people, understandings of traditional cultural orientations, beliefs, religion, their place in relation to their Pacific Island 'home', as well as to NZ, are transformational (Grey, 2001; Macpherson, 1999).

Pacific family units reflect these transformations, complex identities, and shared and divergent values. Pacific households are typically larger than the NZ norm, are multigenerational, multilingual and can include a fluid range of extended family members, non-related family members and large numbers of children. Nonetheless, Pacific family units are often where decision-making and actions relating to income, financial and community responsibilities, housing, health, education and work, are made on a collective basis.

### 2.2 Tertiary education outcomes for Pacific peoples

While outcomes for Pacific people in New Zealand across the education spectrum can be characterised by gradual and encouraging improvements over time, more work is needed to address some persistent achievement disparities between Pacific learners and other New Zealanders. The research clearly shows that by the time Pacific learners arrive at tertiary institutions many have had less than optimal education experiences. Studies such as Chu et al. (2013) provide a summary of the factors that underpin this issue, including an over-representation in low-decile schools that may not have provided the same learning opportunities as other schools.

Pacific participation rates have remained relatively steady in comparison to other ethnicities and Pacific learners tend to participate in higher level qualifications (level 4 and above) at about the same rate as the total population (5 percent of level 4+ enrolments in 2014 were Pacific, compared to the Pacific population of 5 percent) (Tertiary Education Commission,



2015b). Furthermore, while completion rates are improving across all levels, much greater improvement is needed to achieve parity. In 2013, 64 percent of Pacific students completed a qualification, compared to 80 percent of the total population (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015a). This remained unchanged in 2014 (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b).

Educational outcomes for Pacific people are interconnected with a range of social and economic determinants relating to neighbourhood deprivation<sup>1</sup>, health<sup>2</sup>, housing<sup>3</sup>, and income and wealth<sup>4</sup>. These issues restrict options, shape decision-making and affect the ability of many Pacific families to undertake long-term planning. They affect stability, productivity and participation, and necessitate different ways of organising and prioritising daily responsibilities.

## 2.3 Government response

A long-term, targeted Government response to improve Pacific education outcomes reflects the association between higher levels of educational attainment and life expectancy, civic engagement, life satisfaction, better employment outcomes, and higher incomes (OCED, 2013; Park, 2014). In addition, the increasing importance of a growing and changing Pacific population that is available to fill the skill shortage gaps of an aging population, presents great opportunities for Pacific people's social well-being and economic growth, while also highlighting challenges and implications for our education system. Note also that the Royal Society's *Our Futures: Te Pae Tāwhiti* (2014) analysis of 2013 census data suggests that NZ should take advantage of the demographic dividend of large youthful Māori and Pacific populations; however, there should also be a focus on productivity, not just population, to meet these skills needs (p.13).

Government strategic priorities for Pacific people and the New Zealand education system (including tertiary) are set out in the Ministry of Education's *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017* (Ministry of Education, 2012), and the *Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2019* (Ministry of Education, 2014). The strategies emphasise the importance of putting Pacific learners, their parents, families and communities at the centre of the New Zealand education system, responding to the identities, languages, and cultures of each Pacific group, and delivering parity of achievement.

The Tertiary Education Commission specifically identifies the importance of effectively engaging Pacific learners, families and communities, setting challenging performance commitments in relation to participation and achievement, and clearly defining actions for obtaining educational participation and achievement parity (Tertiary Education Commission, 2014a).

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<sup>1</sup> Pacific peoples live in some of the most economically deprived parts of NZ. Around 76 percent of Counties Manukau Pacific people, many of them children, are concentrated in decile 9 and 10 areas and experience high socioeconomic deprivation and poverty (Counties Manukau Health, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Health inequalities affect Pacific people across a range of indicators, including a high prevalence of complex chronic conditions. High rates of hospitalisation for both adults and children suggest difficulties in accessing high quality primary health services (Ministry of Health, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Household overcrowding, poor quality housing and reliance on the social housing sector play a significant role in health outcomes for Pacific people, as well as in the financial circumstances and stability of families.

<sup>4</sup> The median income for Pacific peoples is \$557 per week, compared to a national median income of \$844. About 60 percent of Pacific people have an individual net economic wealth of less than \$16,000 and about 20 percent less than \$1,000 (Salesa, 2015).





## 2.4 The industry training sector context

There are 11 ITOs in New Zealand with the responsibility to:

- arrange workplace training within their industries;
- work with tertiary education providers to develop and deliver the skills that benefit trainees, employers and the New Zealand economy;
- set national skill standards, lead qualifications development; and
- play a central role in industry-related vocational education and training.

ITOs set skill standards and make arrangements for the delivery of industry training, but do not deliver training themselves. In meeting the objectives of the Tertiary Education Strategy, the Tertiary Education Commission notes that ITOs are expected to achieve a level of participation in their recognised industry, consistent with the scale and broad demographics of the workforce employed in that industry; and to achieve the same results for all participants in industry training, regardless of their demographic group (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015).

These roles and functions highlight the specific work context that ITOs operate within and the significant differences between ITOs and tertiary education organisations engaged in provider-based training. The thematic literature review notes that in contrast to a university model of classroom-based teaching and learning, the industry training system leverages the use of business resources (including labour profile) and capital assets, and manages relationships with employers to provide the training environment for learners. As a result, ITOs generally lack access to a critical mass of learners who are co-located for extended periods of time. This limits the direct capacity of ITOs to influence the day to day experience of learners compared to other tertiary education organisations.

These differences present challenges for ITOs to interpret and apply the results of most research about the experiences of Pacific people in provider-based training, particularly as the evidence base relating to ITO-arranged training is still developing. The challenge of meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse Pacific population, while contextualising new information about how people learn, introduces an additional layer of complexity.



Importantly, employers play a central role in industry training. While ITOs can directly influence their own institutional commitment to the success of Pacific peoples, their relationships with the deliverers of workplace training (employer representatives) are inevitably more diffuse.

Academic expertise in the area of industry training articulates a role for workplace learning that formal learning settings (such as universities) do not fulfil. This thinking emphasises the significance of the workplace as a setting where a vast bulk of adult learning takes place and where a genuine connection between skill acquisition and skill usage is achieved. A real employer commitment is essential to maximise the potential of this learning (Keep, 2014).

## 2.5 Pacific learners in the industry training sector

Pacific people engaged in industry training make up 21 percent of all Pacific learners in tertiary education. They comprise 7 percent of the total learners participating in training through an ITO (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b).

For Pacific learners in industry training, some notable performance gaps exist compared to other learners. For all ITOs, approximately 25 percent of Pacific learners are enrolled as apprentices compared to 39 percent non-Pacific. The rate of credit achievement (course completion) for Pacific learners in industry training is 71 percent, compared to 76 percent for all learners. In terms of programme achievement, 62 percent of Pacific learners in industry training complete their qualification compared to 72 percent of all learners (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b).

In terms of volume (actual student numbers), similar numbers of Pacific students are enrolled in industry training as in university study – 9,212 students and 10,550 respectively (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b). Table 1 shows the proportion and number of Pacific students by Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO) type.

**Table 1: Proportion and number of Pacific students by TEO type**

Tertiary Education Organisations	Proportion of Pacific in each TEO	Total students	Number of Pacific students in each TEO	Each TEO's proportion of all TE Pacific students
Universities	7%	150,712	10,549	24%
ITPs	10%	118,917	11,891	27%
Wānanga	10%	37,636	3,763	9%
PTE	17%	46,077	7,833	18%
ITO	7%	131,603	9,212	21%

Source: Tertiary Education Commission. (2015b). 2014 Tertiary Education Performance Report. Wellington, NZ: Tertiary Education Commission.

While differences in delivery have been noted (classroom and workplace based learning), as well as differences in qualification levels (typically Level 7+ for university study and Levels 1-4 for ITOs), some differences in Pacific achievement between ITOs and universities are useful to note. Credit achievement (course completion) rates are comparable in both TEOs (71 percent at both universities and ITOs). Programme achievement (qualification completion) rates are much lower for Pacific students in Universities than ITOs (55 percent and 62 percent respectively). Table 2 shows a comparison of credit achievement and programme



achievement rates for Pacific students and all Students. That a considerable volume of Pacific graduates is being produced within the industry training system indicates the importance of this sector and the potential benefits of further improving its effectiveness in meeting the needs of Pacific learners.

**Table 2: Comparison of credit achievement and programme achievement rates for Pacific students and All Students**

Tertiary Education Organisations	Credit achievement (or course completion)		Programme achievement (or qualification completion)	
	All students	Pacific students	All students	Pacific students
Universities	86%	71%	81%	55%
ITOs	76%	71%	72%	62%

Source: Tertiary Education Commission. (2015b). 2014 Tertiary Education Performance Report. Wellington, NZ: Tertiary Education Commission.



### 3. Thematic literature review

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The literature review identified the following key themes to help guide and inform the project:

- ***New approaches are required***

The evidence base about what works for Pacific learners in tertiary education is limited and mainly focused on the provider-based (predominantly university) sector which provides an imperative for industry training-focused study. Improved understanding is required for how best to configure industry training to meet the needs of Pacific learners.

- ***Context matters***

The evidence suggests that effective interventions for Pacific learners are multifaceted and coordinated. There is no 'silver bullet' or single approach that will deliver parity of achievement for Pacific learners. ITOs need to think about how they can align all of the areas of their operation to create an environment conducive to the success of Pacific learners.

- ***The role of employers and workplaces***

The role of employers and workplaces in providing culturally-appropriate environments for Pacific learners is not well-understood, but is likely to be highly influential.

- ***Internal change***

Current approaches for engaging with Pacific learners, their families, and communities reflect existing cultural norms within those organisations that do not include diversity. The literature suggests that making a meaningful and effective change to the context within which Pacific learners engage with and experience industry training requires attitudinal and behavioural changes for ITOs.

- ***Mentoring***

There has been some effort in recent years to understand what makes mentoring for Pacific (and Māori) learners effective. A number of practical steps are identified that ITOs can take to systematise the way in which mentoring is conducted, but care needs to be taken to integrate any interventions with other support systems and ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

- ***Improved measurement***

Quantitative data is underused in attempts to assess the effectiveness of interventions for Pacific learners, and there is scope to collect qualitative data in a more structured way. Improving the way in which information is collected and used, and engaging stakeholders in the design of appropriate measures, can help to ensure that interventions are appropriately designed and tailored.

The review took a broad view of the industry training sector and emphasised that, given their intermediary role, ITOs are well-placed to create sustainable systems of support. By extension, interventions should avoid 'bolting-on' to existing systems that are not optimally configured for the needs of Pacific learners. While there was a noted scarcity of evidence about what works for Pacific people in industry education and training, this creates opportunities to use pilot interventions, that are experimental and adaptive, to respond to changing expectations.

The full thematic literature review is referred to under Appendix 2 in this report.



## 4. Evaluation priorities and methodology

The utilisation-focused evaluation approach used in this project enables tailored research design based on situational issues and a continued focus on the needs of the primary users of the evaluation. Therefore, while the independent evaluation contributes summative information for accountability and performance assessment, and, given the lack of current ITO-focused information and research, contributes knowledge generally about Pacific learners in the industry training setting (PPL, 2015), the focus remains on utility for the ITOs and their stakeholders.

### 4.1 Evaluation priorities

The results of the Project Literature Review (PPL, 2015) and the expertise and experience of the ITOs were drawn on to identify the priorities of the primary users of this evaluation. Table 3 summarises the priority themes identified by the Project Advisory Group.

Table 3: Priority themes of the evaluation

Participation	Educational Attainment	Employers	Learner Context
<p>Pacific learners are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• underrepresented in industry training (based on their overall demographic profile),</li> <li>• generally enrolled in programmes at lower levels,</li> <li>• concentrated in particular industries.</li> </ul>	<p>There is some variability in outcomes (credit achievement and qualification completion):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• among ethnic groups,</li> <li>• among industries, and</li> <li>• due to the nature of training delivered.</li> </ul> <p>There are persistent gaps between Pacific and non-Pacific learners.</p> <p>There is some evidence to suggest that the main drivers are due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• level of preparedness, and</li> <li>• enrolment choices.</li> </ul>	<p>There may be systemic and institutional factors that influence educational and training outcomes.</p>	<p>The Pacific population is a diverse one, including differences in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ethnicity (subnational cultural affiliation),</li> <li>• whether New Zealand or overseas born,</li> <li>• traditional and contemporary cultural norms, and</li> <li>• age.</li> </ul> <p>Family and community expectations and pressures may play a role.</p> <p>It is important to avoid stigmatising learners through 'special' approaches, but rather integration of good practice into business as usual is best.</p>



## 4.2 Evaluation methodology

Mixed methods were used to collect and analyse empirical information. The purpose of this approach was to broaden and deepen our understanding of the programme processes and outcomes and how these are affected by the context in which the pilots were implemented. Different types of evidence about the context and outcomes of the pilots were interrogated using system indicators of success and the perspectives of diverse Pacific learners, peer mentors, study group facilitators and ITO staff. To achieve this, qualitative descriptive approaches (Sandelowski, 2000) and Pacific research methods were used; complemented with quantitative methods.

The data collected included:

- a review of the literature on Pacific achievement in tertiary education (see Section 3 and Appendix 2);
- comprehensive descriptions of how the pilots were implemented in the four ITO settings;
- documentary analysis to understand the policy and implementation context of the pilots;
- collation of data about learners' characteristics; and
- focus groups and semi-structured interviews with Pacific learners, pilot mentors, study group facilitators, and ITO staff from the project team.

### *Qualitative description*

Qualitative descriptive methods were used to collect information about the pilots from the mentors and study group facilitators, and ITO staff from the project team. A semi-structured interview guide, based on the literature review and information provided by the ITOs, was developed and finalised by the project team.

### *Pacific research methods*

Qualitative research methods using in-depth interviews with Pacific learners were used to capture the richness and depth of their experience (Patton, 1990). The interviews were conducted, recorded, translated and transcribed by a team of experienced Pacific researchers. Pacific cultural research methods using the process of talanoa (Southwick, 2012) provided the overarching framework for engagement with Pacific learners. Talanoa in this sense is similar to qualitative methods for interviews and focus groups. However, talanoa is embedded in the context of ongoing relationships (or 'va') with communities, families and individuals. It is guided by the Pacific principles of respect for cultural protocols for engagement (codes of respect), and symbolic gestures of reciprocity and gratitude (for example, providing refreshments, and following up after the interview to provide further information or assistance). The semi-structured interview schedule to guide interviews was used to facilitate a narrative or 'story telling' approach about what matters to the learners. The aim was to enable learners to raise aspects of their experiences that were important to them, in their own voice. This can be considered part of an empowering approach used in education and health promotion research that emphasises personal experience and voice (Labonte et al, 1999). Our experience is that focus groups with a focus on empowerment and participation, using culturally competent, inclusive processes and talanoa, allow for greater reflection and discussion by participants. In addition, narratives are inclusive and assist with flexibility in responding to the preferences of diverse Pacific communities.



## 5. *Two pilot programmes: Peer Mentoring and Study Groups*

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The Peer Mentoring programme and the Study Group (learner-focused training) programme were the two models considered by the project team to be most appropriate and applicable to workforce training.

Guided by the findings of the thematic literature review, selection and design of the programmes involved an evidence-based analysis of the learning needs of Pacific learners (diverse in ethnicity, age, educational background and English language proficiency) and the specific context of training within a workplace setting. Government strategic directions and policies, and academic expertise were taken into account. Consideration was also given to the 'scalability' (potential to expand) of initiatives and the viability of applying the model across a range of industries.

The two Auckland-based programmes were implemented across 11 workplaces and nine qualifications. Careerforce and ServiceIQ were involved in the Peer Mentoring programme; The Skills Organisation and Competenz in the Study Group programme. A detailed description of each programme can be found below and in Tables 4 and 5.

### 5.1 **Rationale for the programmes**

Although the two pilot programmes were distinct, there were commonalities in the desired outcomes of each and the evidence-based assumptions that underpinned them.

#### *A better learning environment*

Study groups aim to create a sense of fellowship and family, and a safe, trusting environment where learners support each other to persist and progress with study. Allocated time for group/community building activities, such as shared meals and supplementary teaching and assessment, help to reinforce these aims. Learners are more likely to request support through others with similar experiences. Peer mentors aim to help learners to recognise their own skills and to have confidence in their ability. Both arrangements create a positive, constructive space for shared teaching and learning.

#### *A structured environment tailored to learners' needs*

'On the job' industry training uses workplace resources to provide a setting for skill and competency development. To keep learners 'on track' within this system, both programmes aim to develop a structured informality that is tailored to an individual's specific needs. Study groups intend to provide a consistent space for purposeful and collective action. Peer mentoring relationships aim to be trusting, respectful and generous, while still observing boundaries that are appropriate within a working environment.



### *An environment underpinned by Pacific cultural values and approaches*

Workplace and formal learning cultures are not well-attuned to the cultural norms of Pacific peoples. Pacific reticence in training settings may be culturally-driven and a sense of 'incongruity of culture' can distract from achievement goals. Culturally-based learning models, the embedding of Pacific cultural norms in teaching materials, and approaches that encompass Pacific values and principles among participants, can create a safe and more familiar environment that is conducive to achievement. The use of facilitators and mentors with strong cultural and relationship skills augments technical support and recognises and responds to the needs of Pacific learners.

### *An environment to engage and involve family*

Learner success requires creation of a strong environment of co-support among family and peers. Engaging family involves communicating the value of workplace training and how other obligations can impede a learner's success.

### *A focus on meaningful progress and better engagement with the workplace*

The programmes address the perceived lack of support and other barriers that can impede progress and lead to disengagement in workplace training and employment. Developing the confidence of learners and tapping into personal motivating factors, and encouraging self-directed learning habits, aim to positively impact training progress and ongoing engagement in the workplace. A positive side effect may be to create a self-sustaining culture of peer support.

### *A clear understanding of the desired positive outcomes for learners*

Improved engagement at work, technical competency and better qualifications will tend to make learners more employable, contribute to career progression and satisfaction and have positive long-term implications on economic, social and health outcomes of learners (and their families).

### *Models of learning support delivered through small groups*

Two types of pilots were designed for this project; peer mentoring and study groups (see the logic models in appendix 3). However, what we found were four types of learning support arrangements being implemented, typically in small groups. The four types were:

- an employer-appointed facilitator supporting learners to complete on-the-job learning outside of work hours;
- an employer-appointed facilitator supporting learners to complete on-the-job learning during work hours;
- an employee-driven facilitation of on-the-job learning, during work hours (one case); and
- an ITO-appointed facilitator and tutor to support students to complete theoretical components of qualifications in study groups, outside of work hours and outside of formal teaching.



## 5.2 Peer Mentoring

The thematic literature review identified a strong evidence base from the tertiary sector (including the industry training sector) for the effectiveness of mentoring as a tool to support Pacific learners.

Table 4: Peer Mentoring programme – basic data

ITO	Careerforce	ServiceIQ
Pilot description	<p>Different for different workplaces.</p> <p>No 'start and end' dates (leveraged existing arrangements).</p> <p>Two types of mentoring (not peer-specific):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer-appointed facilitator to support learners to complete on-the-job learning outside of work hours.</li> <li>• Employer-appointed facilitator to support learners to complete on-the-job learning during work hours.</li> </ul>	<p>No 'start and end' dates (leveraged existing arrangements).</p> <p>Two types of mentoring (not peer-specific):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer-appointed facilitator to support learners to complete on-the-job learning during work hours.</li> <li>• One example of employee-driven facilitation of on-the-job learning during work hours.</li> </ul>
Period of focus for pilot	Six months (November 2015 - May 2016)	Six months (November 2015 - May 2016)
Format	Flexible approach that responds to the need of each learner.	Flexible approach that responds to the need of each learner.
Qualification	Youth Work L3 & 4 Health and Wellbeing L2	Retail L2 Distribution L2
No. Workplaces	2	2



### 5.3 Study Groups

While there was evidence to suggest that targeted tutorial programmes for Pacific learners in provider-based tertiary settings can be effective, very little research exists about Pacific people learning in an industry training context.

This programme involved support for learners from different workplaces by an ITO-appointed facilitator to complete theoretical components of the qualification in study groups outside of formal teaching and outside of work hours (evening classes). Facilitators had relevant cultural expertise, as well as technical expertise and skills in adult education.

**Table 5: Study Group (learner-focused training) programme - basic data**

ITO	The Skills Organisation	Competenz
Pilot description	ITO-appointed facilitator and tutor to support learners to complete theoretical components of qualifications in study groups, outside of work hours and outside of formal teaching.	ITO-appointed facilitator and tutor to support learners to complete theoretical components of qualifications in study groups, outside of work hours and outside of formal teaching.
Length of programme	Seven weeks (March/April 2016)	At least four weeks (July/ August 2016)
Format	Two hour-long study sessions (per week) included:  Group/community building activities (e.g. shared meals).  Teaching and assessment.	Two hour-long study sessions (per week) included:  Group/community building activities (e.g. shared meals).  Teaching and assessment.
Qualification	Electrotechnology L3 & 4	Mechanical Engineering L4  Engineering (Fabrication) L4  Engineering (Heavy fabrication) L4
No. Workplaces	4	3



## 6. Findings

Thematic findings of focus groups and semi-structured interviews with learners, facilitators and ITOs are presented below, by group.

Table 6 provides information about the interview participants from each group.

**Table 6: Interview participants from Learners, Facilitators and ITOs**

Learners	Facilitators (peer mentors and study group facilitators)	ITOs
<p><b>36 learners</b> in total were interviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 (69%) in peer mentoring</li> <li>• 17 Careerforce, 8 ServicelQ</li> <li>• 11 (31%) in study groups</li> <li>• 7 The Skills Organisation, 4 Competenz</li> </ul> <p><b>Age</b> 4 interviewees (11%) were 10-19 years old 11 (31%) were 20-29 years old 9 (25%) were 30-39 years old 6 (17%) were 40-49 years old 3 (8%) were 50-59 years old 3 (8%) age unknown</p> <p><b>Gender</b> 16 (44%) female and 20 (56%) male</p> <p><b>Ethnicity</b> 16 (44%) Samoan 7 (19%) Tongan 3 (8%) Cook Island Māori 5 (14%) Other 5 (14%) Unknown</p>	<p><b>6 peer mentors and facilitators in total</b> were interviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Careerforce peer mentoring facilitators</li> <li>• 2 ServicelQ peer mentoring facilitators</li> <li>• 1 The Skills Organisation study group facilitator</li> <li>• 1 Competenz study group facilitator</li> </ul>	<p>Data was collected from <b>7 employees of the 4 ITOs</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 from Careerforce</li> <li>• 2 from ServicelQ</li> <li>• 2 from The Skills Organisation</li> <li>• 1 from Competenz</li> </ul> <p>6 were ITO employees in the project team (2 of the 6 were members of the original project team of 5).</p> <p>Data collection from interviews (5 project team interviews), and project and evaluation-focused meetings.</p> <p><b>Roles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry Manager Electrical Technology</li> <li>• National Manager Pasifika</li> <li>• National Manager Māori and Pacific</li> <li>• Manager Support Services</li> <li>• Learning Engagement Advisor</li> <li>• Pacific Engagement Advisor</li> <li>• Training advisor</li> </ul> <p>All Auckland-based roles. Mainly national roles.</p> <p>Majority in their roles for less than 1 year. One person in their role for 3 years.</p> <p>Most had background in teaching or education.</p> <p><b>Gender</b> 4 males and 3 females.</p> <p><b>Ethnicity</b> 3 Pacific and 4 non-Pacific.</p>



## 6.1 Key findings - Learners

### *Learner access and participation*

Learners received information about industry training and apprenticeships through a range of family, social and community networks. For some learners, decisions to enter a certain industry were influenced by other family members and their family members' occupations.

*... all the men in our family are tradies ...*

*... my old man is a sheet metalist  
... he kind of pushed me to do it ...*

In other cases, sport, school or other networks provided opportunities.

*... our boss, his wife ... her friend works at [the school I used to attend] so she got me an apprenticeship.*

*[Tutor] coaches the rugby team for my nephew, so my sister got me in touch with [him] and ... he offered me an opportunity here ...*

**Family context and circumstances, particularly a responsibility to financially contribute to the family unit**, were important factors in the decision-making process of whether to pursue tertiary study (for school leavers and adult workers alike). For many, the time commitment required for courses was considered to be unrealistic and the immediate need to work and earn money outweighed longer term positive outcomes of gaining a tertiary qualification.

### *Barriers*

- Pacific workers are often unaware of the range of opportunities to learn.
- Pacific learners have to prioritise learning, work, and family. Family is also a key factor for success.
- There are cost (economic) barriers to workplace learning for Pacific people. These include competing time demands outside of work hours.
- Pacific learners' self-perception of capability can be low – lack of confidence and language barriers, based on earlier experience of education and training, need to be overcome.

### *Success*

- Workplace context is important and requires a supportive employer to create the motivating learning support and learning contexts.
- Relationships with facilitators of learning support are important catalysts for participation and achievement, continuance and completion.
- Small learner support groups have worked well for Pacific learners, particularly where barriers impede learning.
- Personal motivations need to be explored/facilitated in order to establish and develop positive, future-focused goals.



*... I thought of my family's financial weakness in [Pacific country], when I got here I thought of going back to school but we needed the money. So, I looked at our poor situation, and I was told that one can take a course in these kinds of trades. But I looked at the time spent on the course and the need to find a job to help my family ...*

In this aspect, the ability to 'learn while you earn' was thought to provide a better option.

*... I left studies to come work to help my parents and stuff, I would love to go back to uni if I could for the money, but you know you can't really go back to school when you need to pay bills and stuff, I think this is good for us ... there's heaps of young kids inside like Pacific Islanders, this would be good for them, they can't go to school because they have work to give money for the parents, these are good qualifications for them, it's good for them to have ...*

### **Motivations for completing a qualification**

A range of factors were motivating learners to complete their qualifications. These included using their skills to **help and benefit their family** ("... my long-term goal is to go back and change my grandparents' house ..."), having a **transferable qualification**<sup>5</sup> ("... that's the advantage ... you can go anywhere really ..."), **getting promoted** ("... I want to be qualified so I can give the orders instead of taking orders ...") and (for nearly all learners) **earning more money**.

Many learners were also aware that opportunities for further study could be hard to come by. Knowing that other people had missed out on the chance to train and upskill, made one learner mindful not to "waste the opportunity" and it served as a motivation to "stick to it".

*I looked at how difficult it was finding these kinds of opportunities to prepare one for these types of job, which helps our understanding with the rules and the requirements, it gets us out of our difficult situations. I can see that there will be few people that will get opportunities like this, and thank God that there will be opportunities at our place of work so that we can 'sharpen our pencils again as they have become very blunt'...*

A supportive employer is also important. Receiving training opportunities and being supported by an employer to complete a qualification made learners feel invested in, respected and encouraged – and in turn more motivated to succeed.

*... that's the positive thing with this place, they motivate you to become something or someone ...*

<sup>5</sup> This finding specifically relates to learners in the study group pilots



*... it's that relationship we have here ... is what helps, you know makes us want to come to work. You know cos they're not only helping us get our qualifications, but you know they really genuinely want ... they care about us succeeding ...*

*... when I first started here I do English course through here like a workplace course and then this course and a health and safety course, it's just like, I've never work in a company that offers heaps of, heaps of companies make you work and never give you opportunities ...*

### **Barriers to study**

Maintaining focus and motivation was difficult for many learners. One learner described being able to study at home for only a short time before giving up, another talked about 'getting lazy'. While these kinds of issues are common for many students, **managing work demands** (including overtime or night shifts) and **striking a work/life balance with other family, church and sports activities** had a compounding effect for many learners.

*... we are working overtime ... not time to study, sometimes we work in the weekends, just not feeling like studying anymore, there's also the night shift if there's work, go home, sleep and then come back again ...*

*I just go to church on Sunday, sometimes there's a family meeting ...*



*... our job's quite physical and after work, after training, [I] only have one night a week at home ... the weeks are pretty packed ...*

It should be noted however, that there were many instances in the interviews where learners described **family as a key source of support** for coping with these challenges. One learner, for example, described encouragement from his wife as being instrumental to completing his qualification

*... every time I go home I say I don't want to do it, I'm just nervous and I don't want to sit in front of everyone and trying to write something, she just pushed me to do it ...*

**Language** is a major barrier for some. Understanding course materials, writing in English and completing assessments can take significantly longer for Pacific learners for whom English is a second language.

*... its managing the time. Like the hours for work and also when you have the answer in your brain and you don't know how to explain it ...*

*... [find the] ... time to google the words and the sentences and try and finish my assessment.*

For others, **perceived weaknesses or doubts** about their ability to succeed in the course were based on previous experiences in school or formal study. Many learners felt unprepared to understand workbook material or deal with theoretical components of the course.

*... I think oh I want to give up ... you know my mind and my skills working on that book is not on the level of understanding it, so for me back in the island my school's not – I didn't do well in school ... when they first nominate me to come for this course last year, I was really nervous and scared because ... for me I dropped my school when I was year 11 so when I had this course it's kind of like struggle sometimes ...*

*... my strength is practical when I see things, I learn, watching that's my strength, when someone tells you to do the books, you just go huh?*



Many learners were **entering a formal learning setting for the first time in many years.**

*... I hadn't done any study or book work for like 10 years ... it's a bit of a shock and probably more theory than I thought to be honest ...*

The experience of many learners was that **classes are too rushed to understand topics properly.** They associated a formal learning environment with being lost and not keeping up.

*... we rush through everything ... they expect you to understand [and move on to the next topic but don't check that you have understood].*

These negative experiences were often magnified by the **teaching style and approach of facilitators in the workplace.**

*... at school, the teacher ... he sits there and opens the book and reads page after page and if you try and ask a question he shuts you off ...*

*... you know that the other tutor is not good like for example when [name] comes and that [other team leader] and just comes in open the book and read it to you ... without explaining every little word for us, I feel like sleeping ...*

### **Learner perspectives of the initiatives**

#### *Learning environment and teaching approaches*

Study group sessions were viewed as **a chance to reflect on and really grasp course material.** Learners spoke positively about the slower pace of the study groups and the opportunity to go through material “in more depth” and to let information “sink in”. The **small size of the study groups and the attention from tutors** felt “more personal” to one learner and promoted more participatory study sessions.

*... yeah, pretty good pace, once we all understand we move on ...*

*... for these [times] that's where we really put our minds into study ...*

*... if we didn't pass the assessment ... it gives us the opportunity to do it [before going back to the formal learning] ...*

*Study with the big group and one tutor some people are shy and can't ask question. They just quietly go home and don't understand what we did ...*



The facilitator used **inclusive discussions, questions, and the sharing of ideas and opinions** as ways to supplement book work and create a positive and encouraging learning environment. Creating a **small learning network** provided a chance for learners to learn with and from each other.

*... this place is choice, it gives you a good attitude on how to treat people ...*

*We share what we think. We explain it ... the question in [Pacific language] and then we all share our ideas and then we go from there.*

In some cases, this learning network created a momentum that extended into family and social circles.

*... We help each other, normally if you don't finish it you can take it home and your wife or your friends can help you, or your family can help you for this book and the assessment ...*

### *English as a second language*

For learners with English as a second language, this was especially valuable. For some learners, **learning strategies for dealing with language challenges and building the confidence to participate and interact** with others, had a significant impact on their enthusiasm and engagement for course study. The training was an opportunity to address language related barriers and build skills that can be transferred to other aspects of their life.

*... it's just like discussing with the whole class, putting in ideas, like talking about health and safety and then [facilitator] just asks us questions, like what do you think about it, then you know everyone just says their ideas and she writes it on the board, and there's like different questions in the book, just answer it, she always says do it in your own words, if you don't feel comfortable writing it in English, write it in your own language ...*

*... I was hesitant because of the English language, I saw it as my (fili) weakness/ challenge. The language was like a wall that blocks my eagerness for the course. I was slow in picking up the content of the course in class ... I copy the talk of those who were born in New Zealand and from the teacher. That is the value of the course to me, learning is 100 percent useful to me, it is lessening my fear to talk. I think of the advice from [facilitator] '... don't be shy, I must remember that it is my second language'... even if it's a mish mash the main thing is the other person (listener) understands ...*



In the focus groups, these issues were discussed with humour and laughter, demonstrating the confidence learners with English as a second language have in working with their facilitator. The overarching tone described was an enjoyable learning environment.

*... You just let it out it's up to the teacher to make sense of the verbs and the nouns eh ...*

*... That's one of our assessments, getting to know our teammates, that was a good one, that was fun ...*

### *Facilitators and peer mentors*

The **facilitator is a role model**, who has the respect of learners. Having a facilitator who was **available, accessible and visibly invested in their progress and achievement**, motivated and inspired learners to also “put in the effort”.

*... what [tutor] does for us, he talks to us like, not as somebody lecturing you, but as somebody who says listen here, this is the way you've got to do this, it's not complicated, forget about the words ...*

*... The thing with [facilitators name] she's like really flexible, even though we just see her on Friday, we can go to her anytime of the week and just ask her about something in the book ...*

*... She's really enthusiastic when she's teaching us and she makes us like you know want to be there and want to learn ...*

### *Workplaces*

This was coupled with **support for learning in the workplace**. In one workplace, team leaders had all completed the qualification previously and were very supportive.

*My team leader actually pushed me to do this, he said it would be good for me. He's always like asking me how it's going and if I'm behind, if I miss a class, did you catch up, did you go see [the facilitator]. So, he's very helpful ...*

*... sometimes I don't understand something in the book so I always go up to my team leader and she always helps me, like if [facilitator] is not around so it's really good, she encouraged me too for this course ...*



### *New skills and knowledge*

The courses of study are providing a range of new skills and knowledge that many learners are immediately applying.

*... while the [qualification] is important, what I appreciate is the knowledge that you can put in practice straight away. It is a very good opportunity and to do this course and the use of English language ...*

*... it improves our communication and interconnections with other people it also opens one's understanding and one's thoughts to bring to you ... [understanding to share with the interviewer]*

For many learners, the qualifications that they were working towards opened a whole new set of possibilities and options for them. Many had developed a **future focus and were motivated to think about and set new goals** for themselves.

*... if you want to go higher, because this qualification can make you like, if you want to be an assistant team leader or team leader, this will help you ...*

*... for me thinking about getting the [qualification], get an opportunity to maybe not here but in the future and get a good job in the future, that's really makes me go forward and push myself to do that course ...*

### *Engagement in the workplace*

The course is giving learners a **broader perspective of their work roles** and their place within the company they work for.

*... I work in [team] ... I think what I learnt from the course is like the whole customer service thing ... we're not [other types of roles] but we still need to give customer service for our customers ... just being more mindful about how we are doing our work like sometimes we are in a rush we just want to go home and just do it and we just want to send it out the door, but what I learnt was just like what we do affects others, that's what I learnt like a domino effect sort of like we do something that will all go to custard, we lose business, stuff like that, I've never thought about that, I just think like 'that's just another order to do'...*



Course material was valuable and helped learners to **understand and engage with their roles and other people around them.**

*... the book, it's really understanding and the way for me to understand the English more and my culture, your cultures, how we respect each other in your workplace and also how to work safely in a workplace ... I don't know if there is any other thing to improve ...*

This included an increased awareness of **recognising and respecting the diverse cultural backgrounds** of others in the workplace.

*... It's different because everyone in here is from a different culture but this course makes us to go outside and ask your work mates that have a different culture, how do they say in respectful way ... I was like saying the words that is offensive and aggressive, but when I done this course it makes me realise I have to be respectful and all that about cultural thing ...*

*... Because it's so big ... everyone is separated so you only know your own team ... but this made us actually go and talk to other people and get to know each other, different team, different culture, it's really good ...*

*... I enjoy this workplace, is good to know other people and their cultures, we have to respect their cultures because sometimes when I talk to them they don't look at you in the eyes and you thought are they listening, but they are, it's just their way, their culture, we have to respect that, if we do that, I love [the course], I learned a lot, I learn how to respect and be patient ...*

In some cases, courses helped this learner draw a **connection between work and home life.**

*I have learnt the relationship with other colleagues is very important, understanding what they do, respectful within the workplace and also outside of work. For example, if you get upset from home and come to work unhappy, you could end up taking it out on someone else who has no idea why you are upset ...*



## 6.2 Key findings – Facilitators

This role was called different things in the pilot initiatives (peer mentor and study group facilitator). We saw no evidence of peer-specific support, and we see the roles in both pilots as being generally to 'facilitate and support learning' (as opposed to being employers, or teachers for example) so have referred to them here collectively as 'facilitators'.

Programme facilitators who were employed in the company were mindful of the **multiple roles** they were required to balance. This involved exercising leadership, while also 'being on the same level' as learners. While this was not seen as a conflict or as problematic, it was considered important to draw boundaries between their functions as a mentor or coach and as a senior member of staff or management.

*... If work needs to get done  
... it has to get done, there's  
no ifs or buts or I thought we  
were mates ... I try and tell  
them when we're working,  
well I am the boss, you  
work. When we're having a  
beer we're all at the same  
level. When we're studying,  
we're all at the same level.*

*We are running a business  
... and I guess helping them  
to understand where the  
business needs to draw the  
line, but also where we can  
actually come to the party  
... you've got to put the  
work in to understand the  
learners, where they are at,  
what's going to bring them  
out of their shell ...*

### *Characteristics of successful facilitators of learner support:*

- Facilitators who share their industry and work experience ensuring work context underpins learners' experience and the relevance of learning and its contribution to career progression is understood, demonstrated and applied.
- Facilitators who understand learners' lived reality – the broad context of experiences and circumstances that impact learning and the values and drivers important to learners, help establish shared values and a supportive and empowering learning environment.
- Facilitators who address diverse barriers to engaging in learning and develop strategies to overcome these and build the learners confidence.
- Facilitators that incorporate practical learning and supportive learning environments.

### *Barriers*

- Generic rather than contextualised learning resources (workbooks).
- Work schedules during peak work periods.
- Finding ways to respond to an increasingly diverse and multicultural workforce.

### *Success*

- Facilitators have the authority in the workplace to validate learning.
- Facilitators have the experience and skills to contextualise learning through practice, communication, and ensuring relevance to the learners' work role is understood (concepts are applied meaningfully to the learners' work role, workplace and personal home lives).
- Facilitators have a close relationship with the learner context and have the skills to create practical forms of learning including learners use of their language of choice.



One facilitator used their previous experience as a front-line staff member to emphasise that the jobs learners do within the company are valued and their participation is respected.

*... so, when I run the classes [I say] 'I don't have all the answers because you work out there and you are doing it all day, whereas I'm just sitting here and telling you how it is, but back in the day when I was [front line staff member]' and when I tell them that they're like 'wow you were...?' ... you'll find that when you come down to the learner's level, you respect their protocol, you respect how they learn, they will understand better and understand the book as well ...*

### **Addressing barriers to engaged learning**

All facilitators were aware that understanding the lived realities of learners was vital for developing strategies to support their learning progress and achievement. An implicit understanding of the cultural values and drivers that underlie barriers was evident in the way facilitators discussed the issues. One description of tailoring support to meet the diverse needs and abilities of learners summed up the challenge this often presented for facilitators.

*... that's probably one of the struggles I think, sometimes it's such a wide variety of people, for some English is a second language, for some people it's because they haven't been at school for some time, for some it's like they may be more advanced than other people, and it's trying to tailor it so that everybody feels like they are getting something out of it, but making sure they are keeping up to speed as well ...*

Prioritising work and learning while acknowledging and managing personal and family commitments and demands was important. This could include flexible and adaptable approaches to homework or work hours, engaging families or taking more time to explain a broader workplace perspective to learners.

*... most of us islanders, we value our religion and we value our culture and our family, so it's just working around that area because we seem to not pass because of that ... but when it comes to homework or something to get the head going ... there are more important things than homework ...*

*... one guy, he was in a custody battle for his son, we actually made it work, we changed his hours so he could be with his son ...*

*... the young ones, fresh off school and are trying really hard and all I'm doing with them is to try and talk to them and try to encourage them, if you've got some problems at home, do try and talk to us about them or come and see us. But I don't know, not trying to overpower them or try and be their Mum and Dad ...*



*... our Pacific island students [the workers], I would say that [absenteeism is] probably quite high, so giving them [the organisation's] side of the story, okay here's what we need to consider when asking for leave ...*

These flexible and supportive approaches recognise the **need for financial support** as a legitimate barrier. For many learners, it was the deciding factor between undertaking training or not.

*... when I was doing Level 2, I struggled because that was Monday to Friday for three months although I was on a benefit, but imagine someone that's not on the benefit and relying on their wages week after week without guaranteed hours, they are going to say no to training, and that's the first thing the [learners] asked, are we going to get paid for training?...*

*... all [of the course work is done] during work time, they do have the option to do some stuff at home ...*

**Recognising that prior educational achievements of learners may be limited** was important. As one facilitator described, for learners with English as a second language, it may be the “first certificate in their life” or for Pacific immigrants settling in New Zealand “it’s their first job from coming from the islands ...”. This also extended to dealing with (and overcoming) different norms of engagement relating to speaking and respect in a cultural context or learning context.

*I guess for me it's where it's limiting us from being able to open up ... at home you get taught when it's your turn to speak ... out in the real world, where even if it's not your turn to speak, you are free to speak and you are entitled to your opinion ... so if you are at home as a Pacific Islander, we are so limited in being able to come out of our shell and say what you really think ... how we feel ...”*

### **Transferable skills**

Facilitators were seeing **new skills being applied in the personal and home lives of learners**. This kind of broad and holistic development was important to one facilitator who argued that recruitment for successful employment is not solely about reviewing educational attainment, but looking for life experience, responsibility and practical management skills.

*... that's success for us, taking what they are learning and applying it, not just at work but for home. [learner's name] I think is a fantastic example, I met with his wife last year and she was saying you know before he did the course he didn't actually read to his kids, he was really shy about his English and how he sounded and that people would think he wasn't smart enough ... and since doing the course, it became a thing for him and his son reading to each other, that's what you want to see out of it, not just that it's helping us in the workplace setting but that it's carrying over to people's lives ...*



## Teaching approaches

Ensuring that study books and materials are accessible, understandable and relevant is a key function of learner support. Facilitators noted that learners often report negative and demotivating experiences from traditional teaching approaches. Moving quickly through course materials, adhering strictly to workbooks and leaving little time for questions or to ensure understanding, were criticisms that strongly aligned with findings from learner interviews.

As a result, facilitators had put a lot of time into making practical connections between workbook theory and aspects of learners' jobs or experiences. In one case, a facilitator made a glossary for the existing glossary in the workbook, that linked technical terms to tasks learners do in the workplace.

*... I guess it's just about breaking it down for them to understand and using what they do out there with our clients ... once you explain their job, what they do every day, they tend to understand what the book is asking them for ... experience that they've gone through is better learning than what they're going to read in a book ...*

*... so, you've got a course book and it's pretty stock standard across lots of different workplaces. I actually relate it back to what we do here and [tell the learners to] think about the time you did this, it's the same thing ...*

*... what I do is a definitions list, they've got a basic set in front of each section, they have the words that's terminology for the section, I know many people won't go and look it up [even though they don't understand the words], I actually go and find the dictionary definition and write it out ... it's funny since working with [ITO staff] it's actually made me go back and look at the definitions and I think oh gosh, that actually makes it more confusing so I've gone back and made them simpler to understand and linked it directly to a task [the learners] have to do [in their workplace] ... so when it says this, this is the task that you do here and this is what it means so it has more relevance ...*

Other **practical forms of study** were incorporated to engage learners and contextualise what they are learning.

*... this year I got one of our managers to take them through [the company] tour, so it's like you're a visitor, these are the things I want you to look at, come back and we'll have a talk about it and that made a huge difference because they were actually experiencing it rather than reading it from a book ...*



*... in the past, a lot of [our training] has been paper-based, so manuals and procedures and processes ... what we are looking at now is more digitised training and we are starting to make our own videos because people learn a lot more by actually seeing how it's done ... not everyone learns the same way ... just that variety of material. I think we are getting a better result rather than just here's your workbook, here's your training document, learn it and expect people to understand ...*

*... yeah and it's good that I have recognised that they're getting bored ... not too many people like PowerPoints ... I normally have theory, practical, theory, then practical in the afternoon ...*

### **Learning environment**

A combination of factors was thought to maximise the effectiveness of initiatives. Small study groups (around six members) were preferred for creating an environment where participants were “free to talk about whatever [they] want to” and not worry about “getting it right or wrong”. In bigger classes people tended to “back off and just sit in the corner ...”.

Mixed learning environments have mutual benefits for new learners and those who have previously completed the qualification. Those who have already completed the qualification are able to “share [learnings] back to the other fellas ...”. In turn, new learners help to refresh and remind those who have completed the course previously “all about what's been done [before] ...”.

The approach was motivating for those involved and enabled people to take ownership of their learning.

*... they actually met on lunch breaks or before work, they set up their own little study group and that was motivated by themselves and that wasn't me saying they should do that, that was them organising themselves and sort of encouraging each other ...*

Supportive learning communities developed that were widely accessible and not limited to learners in the current study group.

*... one of the really nice things is that often [the current learners] will go back to past students ... [in the organisation who have completed the qualification] ... they've got quite a good group, the support group they can go back to, you know [and ask] 'what did you do, how did you get through this part' ...*

While this shared and inclusive approach overcomes the cultural norms of not speaking up, it was recognised that working with a buddy can also have limitations.



... you know if you've got somebody that you are really comfortable with training you, you are kind of more receptive to it, but there's a fine line, sometimes if it is your buddy, you may not take it seriously ... so it really depends on the type of training that it is ...

### Values that underpin a positive learning environment

Facilitators were aware of the learners' vulnerabilities and things that affected confidence. Leadership was shown to **establish a set of values and norms to create a supportive learning environment.**

... we kind of have a thing you know, we don't laugh at each other, don't have a go at each other because someone asked a question, we can have fun in here but make sure it's a supportive environment ... and if they do give an answer that's not right, I always try to sort of answer it with okay, that's a really interesting way of looking at it, what if we look at it this ... so they are not actually feeling like I'm wrong or it's a bad idea [and] they are actually getting some encouragement and moving in the right direction ...

... it's about connecting and understanding rather than judging ... I'm not going to say this one can't write, so we're going to have to draw pictures ... I think it's important building that bond [with each learner] so they can share ... it's about trust because they don't want you to go to the next person 'oh you know [learner's name] can't read'... so it's about encouraging and empowering them ...

... [the learners] are like 'oh I don't want to do it, you know I am old, I can't understand English that well' ... because they're quite scared ... some can't write ... I won't say they can't write but they just don't know how to do it, and I tell them as long as they understand, just put little bullet points, things that you think are correct because we'll come back and look to see if it's correct and add more information ...

### Supporting learners with English as a second language

Facilitators constantly engaged in finding ways to provide language support to learners. This sometimes involved **drawing on the resources and capabilities that exist within the workplace.**

... we have Samoan, Tongan, Fijian, Cook Islands [coordinators] and that's a bonus as well ... and I can say 'hey, can you help, I'm trying to explain but I'm not sure if they've got it' and that's when they come in as well and we can do one on ones, and if [the learner] is struggling, I sit with them and I say if you have any time available and you can't get through your [workbook] just come and see me or if you would rather see someone who can translate in your own language then come and book a time with a coordinator ...



Facilitators thought about **supportive combinations of people** when recruiting for each cohort of learners.

*... I try and pick two of each culture, two Tongans, two Samoans, two Cook Islanders, like that in case one does not understand what I'm saying then the other one will translate for him or her, and it helps, it's working ...*

*... I know that [learner's name] English isn't as good as someone else's, so I will put him next to someone who I know will be very patient with him, like [other learners] who will be really good with him, sort of talking to him ... Just thinking about how they interact with each other and what's going to be the best fit and what's going to help them learn ...*

Learners can use their first language or language of choice.

*... if it's the language that's the barrier because they are unable to read the book, ... get the learner to explain in their language and she [coordinator] will write it for them ...*

*... that was actually [ITO staff name]'s idea and I really love it ... write it in your own language because you will be a lot faster writing than you are in English and you can always transcribe it later ...*

*... [learner's name] when he first started writing in English under the table, then in the next class ... the idea was to write in his first language and then he had the pad out furiously writing ...*



## 6.3 Key findings – Industry Training Organisations

### *ITO commitment to Pacific issues*

There were few senior roles held by Pacific people within ITOs. Some interviewees described being a sole Pacific presence and feeling personally responsible for taking on 'Pacific specific' work. The strategic focus on Pacific learners in the organisations was considered to be lacking, despite a long-term Government prioritisation of this group.

*... so far, I have a team of me, myself and I, all on my own ...*

*... my involvement was by default because when I started, I was the only Pasifika person in the organisation ... so while it's not part of my role, it's something I'd like to see the [ITO] do well ...*

*... there was meant to be a Pasifika strategy in place, but there's nothing ...*

*... Pasifika are not a priority [in industry training] even though they are called priority learners ...*

One interviewee found support through other Pacific staff, mainly in administrative roles, within their organisation.

*... yeah it was just showing the organisation, there are different ways to operate. I created within our organisation a Pasifika Committee, working with different Pacific people within our organisation, most are operational level, admin people ... [to run Pacific language week and other campaigns] ... it was just about growing awareness, engaging other staff, sharing Pacific culture, but also*

### *ITOs*

- Few senior Pacific roles in ITOs.
- ITOs could do more to strengthen their strategic focus on Pacific learners.
- Greater awareness about issues for Pacific learners in the workplace is needed – with employers and within ITOs.

### *Employers*

- ITO staff have a role to engage with employers and helping the facilitators' learning support roles.
- Engagement with employers about Pacific learner issues can be challenging with little evidence to support recommendations to employers about improving Pacific learners' participation and achievement.
- Businesses with high numbers of Pacific employees are more willing to engage.

### *Design and implementation of pilot programmes*

- Industries had their own approaches to learner support and ITOs struggled with implementing proposed pilots.
- Programmes were labour and time intensive to set up for the ITO and progress was incremental.



*underlining some of the things, for example outcomes for Pasifika within our organisation ... so it was a whole communication strategy and we tried to tag on stats, there's low participation in this area, what can we do or do things differently?*

ITOs are not training providers and, as such, ITO Pacific staff do not have regular or direct contact with learners. A central part of their work involves engaging, informing and influencing employers about workplace training issues for Pacific learners. A key challenge for Pacific staff is a lack of evidence to back up recommendations to employers about improving participation and achievement in training programmes.

*... we don't have access to the trainees, we are not doing the training or the teaching or facilitating, that's done in the workplace and so our [work] is with the educators, assessors and trainers...*

*... we can't influence the environment that the teaching or learning or the training or assessment is going on in ... we are one step removed from the trainers and at times a lot of the recommendations that come out of university research is hard to apply [to the ITO context] ...*

*... I think part of the work as an ITO is to inform employers, you know these are the strengths of taking on a Pacific workforce ... [a common response from employers is] I'd just like to see those findings, those recommendations [from this research] that I can take back to our organisation and say this is something that can actually work, you know how can we invest into this type of project and resource it ...?*

There was recognition that alongside employer engagement, awareness raising about Pacific issues also needed to be a focus within the ITOs (their own organisations).

*... and probably our biggest challenge is to get our own house in order ...*

*... it's quite new [in the ITO] for Pacific to be visible ... [my advice is] ... let's look at, is this a better way to engage with this type of community? ... but it's a bit overwhelming for [the ITO] ...*



Pacific staff work to **raise the profile of Pacific issues within their organisations.**

*... [promote understanding of] skills and competencies [in Pacific communities] that are largely unrecognised by society and traditionally by the education system ... where an ITO is interested and motivated to recognise those competencies, to capture them and disseminate them wider ...*

*... When I came into the organisation it was pretty much like a traditional sort of organisation with very little diversity ... We've put in place things to try and change the culture and some of the things we have implemented are around Pacific language week campaigns ...*

The significant Pacific population in Auckland is an important driver for action.

*... we are in Auckland, it's the biggest population of Pacific people here, we need to do something to help support them ...*

*I think one of the main drivers has been the population growth of Pacific, especially here in Auckland ...*

### **Employers**

Interviewees reported **difficulty engaging employers** and dealing with diverse industries. **Businesses with high numbers of Pacific workers were generally more willing to engage.**

*... we as ITOs need to put a lot of work into convincing employers that getting a workplace qualification is good [for them] ... there is not that much buy-in ...*

*"... we can't really go in until we are invited ... and it's only when they get stuck or a crisis happens that they contact us, and the businesses are very diverse and some of them don't want to focus on Pacific ... the industry that's actually signalled us for help has a predominantly Pacific workforce ...*

*... we do have some very high performing Pasifika providers who can act as exemplars for us [to other businesses] ... when we look at our Pasifika providers there is a much stronger emphasis on the overall development of the people, the communities ...*



### *Experience of setting up the two pilot programmes*

ITO staff described the multiple layers of engagement required for different industries and the **difficulty of gaining industry buy-in** for the two programmes. Within ITOs, Pacific staff relied on industry advisors to make connections with industry.

While experiences of implementing the two selected pilots varied, a common observation was that **industry was resistant to external models** and wanted to **tailor pilots to fit the culture of different workplaces**.

There were long delays, and communication [with industry] was challenging.

### *Pilot design*

**Two approaches were used to design the pilot programmes.** In some cases, programme design was based on staff experience and located 'offsite' from the workplace. For other programmes (such as the peer mentoring programme described in the quote below), an 'organic' process was employed that responded to what industry was already doing with an expectation of using the evaluation to capture learnings.

*... when we started planning for our [programme] we were pretty much going to tell them [employers] how we want it to run, but ... [then I realised] we were approaching it the wrong way, let's have a look and talk to [organisations] and find out what they're doing and how they're doing it. So, we went in and talked about their qualifications, and how it's run and how they do their training and how they support their trainees and it just kind of fell into place really ...*



Study groups were designed by ITO staff. Relationships with key stakeholders, such as employers and learners were important while establishing the programmes. However, even with these in place, **programme setup was described as very labour and time intensive from start to finish**. When pressed, staff estimated that about a third of their work week was spent working on the programmes during this period.

*... what we've seen is the value of study groups, and having a champion and having institutional buy-in.*

*... it was intensive sitting down with [names], coordinating, also coordinating the trainees, the [training provider], setting up meetings, going to meetings, yeah from go to woe, it was really intensive ...*



## 7. Discussion and Recommendations

Both pilot programmes have articulated an intervention logic model (refer appendix 3), which show how activities undertaken to support Pacific learner achievement were planned to lead to improved learning, results and life outcomes. These intervention logic models were adapted in some cases to meet workplace and employer priorities.

Given the duration of the project, the evaluation was focused on assessing the short-term (and to an extent the medium-term) outcomes of the programme. Ongoing tracking of learners will be required to make an assessment of whether the longer-term outcomes are achieved or realised.

Analysis for this study focuses on success and good practice with a strength-based approach for Pacific learning within workplace settings. The findings from interviews with learners and facilitators, in many ways align with and confirm well-recognised Pacific learning theories and pedagogical approaches (for educational success generally and tertiary education success specifically), which are discussed below. They also offer a valuable Pacific perspective to emerging theories of workplace learning, an area where little knowledge exists.

### Recommendation One: Better engagement

Engage with Pacific families and learner support networks to disseminate information about industry training opportunities, and also information that addresses the misperceptions about the 'value' and requirements of workplace learning.

Interviews suggested a common lack of awareness about the range of learning opportunities available within a workplace setting. Learner perception that tertiary education would affect immediate financial stability and income is indicative of broader economic barriers for Pacific participation in tertiary education. 'Learn while you earn' training opportunities appeal to Pacific people as a way to minimise financial barriers to further learning.

Families had significant impacts on the experiences of Pacific learners. The interviews suggested families, and social and community networks, were often pivotal in decision-making processes and pathways to work (e.g. interviews showed that family role models influence entry into some industries). Providing better information about training opportunities, not only to Pacific learners, but also their families and broader support networks, may positively impact participation. The effectiveness of Pacific interpersonal relationships and networks for sharing and obtaining information has frequently been noted in research and policy settings, and shown to be effective in practice (see MPIA, 2010 for a discussion in an educational context).

The chance to use work skills to benefit the family was a motivating factor for many Pacific learners and further confirmation of how personal and family motivations are very closely linked. The interviews described the complex ways family (and by extension community) commitments can create a barrier to training, but also be the central supporting role of Pacific families for completion and success in an industry training context. While education is



undoubtedly important in a Pacific family context, the evidence suggests that apprenticeships or industry training are not given priority (despite the fact that many Pacific adults participate in industry training) (MPIA, 2010). Vaughan (2012) notes that industry training tends to be held in 'lesser esteem', partly because qualifications are generally at a lower level than in other kinds of tertiary study and partly due to a misperception that workplace learning is just 'doing the job'. Better communication with families about the increasing value that is placed on industry training may change these perceptions. Furthermore, innovative and flexible strategies by ITOs and employers that enable Pacific learners to manage and prioritise learning, work and family commitments (e.g. flexible approaches to homework and work hours that were discussed in the interviews) may impact participation and success.

## Recommendation Two: Culture of motivation

Create a 'culture of motivation'. Understand what motivates Pacific learners in industry training in order to establish and develop positive future-focused goals.

The interviews offered an insight into key motivations for learners that drive progress and completion of qualifications. Many of the motivations – the possibility of attaining a qualification that was transferable to other career pathways, the prospect of promotion and greater earning potential – were positive, future-focused and orientated toward further progression and self-development. For learners, many of whom did not have prior positive experiences of formal learning, this suggests both an engagement in, and increased confidence for, further learning, and a disposition to keep learning – a key element commonly identified in successful workplace learning (Vaughan, 2012).

Employers, programme mentors and facilitators played an important and influential role in enabling learners to tap into these motivations. This is consistent with prevailing understandings of Pacific educational success – that expectations of student's achievement, coupled with encouragement, support and teaching will impact learner engagement and achievement (Alkema, 2013). The effectiveness of workplace learning is reliant on the workplaces' readiness to provide opportunities for learners to engage (Vaughan, 2012). Having a sense that employers were willing to invest in, offer help and genuinely encourage their success, particularly for learners with prior experience in workplaces that had offered few or no opportunities, fuelled learner beliefs about themselves personally. Similarly, the relationships learners formed with mentors and facilitators, characterised by care, respect, and being available to invest time and expertise, had the same effect.



## Recommendation Three: Implement support mechanisms

Implement learning support mechanisms that address learners' negative perceptions of their own capability and that foster confidence, engagement and motivation. Factors that are likely to work include: leadership by facilitators with appropriate skills, contextualisation of training materials, relevant content and delivery and positive learning environments.

Learners who have poor or low perceptions about their own capability impacted on their confidence and were demotivating barriers to study. These doubts were often connected to deeply entrenched previous experiences of formal learning at school or study, because a person was entering a learning situation for the first time in many years, or because of English as a second language issues. Entwined with this were struggles with theory-based training, feelings of being 'left behind' in class time and a sense of alienation from the teaching style and approaches. The pilot programmes encompassed a range of interrelated, dynamic strategies to address these issues, including: through the skills and leadership of facilitators and mentors in the learner support role; the contextualisation of training materials, content and the teaching approaches for delivery; and the creation of a positive learning environment – all can be linked to reported observations of improved confidence, engagement and motivation from learners and facilitators. This provides an interesting insight into the potential of melded pedagogical approaches that work for Pacific learners and to workplace learning theory to guide interventions for Pacific learners.

## Recommendation Four: Facilitator support

Provide support for facilitators/learner support as key roles in industry training. Effective facilitators demonstrated understanding of the lived realities of learners and were able to establish a shared set of values to guide learning, and create supportive and empowering learning environments for each learner.

Interviews with facilitators and mentors demonstrated an understanding (or at the very least, an openness to understanding) of the 'lived realities' (the broad context of experiences and circumstances, both positive and negative, that impact their learning journey) that underpinned their relationships with learners and their approach to learner support. As noted in the interview findings, when dealing with a diverse group of Pacific learners this involves understanding the values (including the specific cultural values, beliefs and drivers) that are important to individual learners. These understandings were reinforced through the establishment of a shared set of values to guide learning and create a supportive and empowering environment for each learner.

The validation of cultural values and norms was described by learners, facilitators and mentors as a valued part of the learning process as it confirmed a sense of identity and belonging. For learners with English as a second language, this was especially valuable.



Learners reported that the accessibility, availability and investment in their success motivated them to 'be there' and 'want to learn'. This broadly aligns with the Pacific research messages that caring, respectful relationships and the cultural awareness, empathy, knowledge and responsiveness of teachers are all important factors for Pacific tertiary success (Alkema, 2013; Chu et al., 2013).

## Recommendation Five: Contextualise learning

**Contextualise and tailor learning. Encourage facilitators to use creative learning support approaches based on an understanding of the strengths of the learners.**

The barriers relating to workbooks and the theoretical components of training described in the interviews, both by learners and facilitators, are also commonly identified in the literature about workplace learning. Vaughan (2012) argues that theory components of apprenticeship schemes are often regarded as difficult or less relevant by all learners. Facilitators and mentors employed a range of creative strategies to contextualise learning and incorporate practical learning to increase the relevance and accessibility of course material. Facilitators supported Pacific learners to recognise their existing skills and knowledge (most acquired on the job) and apply them to their study. Learners with English as a second language found theoretical language was complex and time-consuming and facilitators offered them strategies for dealing with this. In some cases, additions were made to workbooks to help learners better understand and relate to the content. These creative teaching approaches required a significant level of extra work and effort from facilitators and a deep understanding of the strengths of the learner group, particularly in relation to what would generate interest, engagement and motivation.

### *Positive learning environment*

Learner interviews identified the safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments that were created in the programmes as being important to them understanding training materials, getting involved in discussions, contributing ideas and opinions, and asking questions. For learners with English as a second language, the small learning support groups provided a space to build their confidence and abandon fears and self-consciousness of speaking English. The value of these processes is recognised in workplace learning theory. Creating a space for learners to understand and foster discussions of theoretical ideas can improve confidence, provide a safe practice area and allow sets of shared meanings and behaviours to develop (Vaughan, 2012).

A wide body of educational research also notes the importance of social interaction, sharing, and enjoying the company of others in enabling the understanding and application of learning. Indeed, the small sized learning support groups seemed to optimise a range of positive social aspects of learning. The example of learners organising extra study groups during lunch breaks and before work echoes research that learning relationships between students – the sharing of knowledge and mutual learning – can create a culture of motivation and enable learners to facilitate their own learning communities (Chu et al., 2013).



## Recommendation Six: A broader view of success

Take a broad view of Pacific workplace success. Build on the programme logic models already developed in these pilots to engage stakeholders in understanding the value of training interventions and the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes and indicators of success. Value 'soft skills' and transferable skills that 'spill over' into non-work settings and interactions.

The learning taking place in the programmes was broadly impacting on all aspects of learners' work, and in many cases, home and personal lives. Vaughan (2012) notes that documented capabilities developed during workforce learning include "soft skills" in communication and negotiation, literacy and numeracy skills, increased confidence and motivation — all of which 'spill over' into non-work settings and interactions. The increased confidence to speak English, a new broader perspective of a work role or workplace, new habits or routines at work and home, increased interaction with work colleagues and peers, and a willingness to engage and contribute to the workforce are some of the wide and varied examples of what learners were getting from their learning experience.

These examples point to the forming of a 'disposition for learning' and 'culture of motivation' discussed above – a success in itself when related to individuals with less than optimal education experiences or English language challenges. Considering the findings in this way is consistent with recent work in the area of lifelong learning and workplace learning that seeks a wider perspective of how people 'learn by becoming' (Chan, 2011). Keep (2014) emphasises moving beyond a focus on courses and qualifications to a more all-encompassing understanding of the skills that are created in day to day work and how they can be used productively. Other research notes workplace learning as 'essential learning experiences in their own right' and worthy of integration into a formal curriculum (Vaughan, 2012).



## 8. Conclusion

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This study focused on two pilot programmes that engaged learners, learning facilitators and industry training organisation (ITO) staff in improving Pacific learners' achievement in industry training.

The study builds on existing knowledge of what works for Pacific learners in tertiary education and improves our understanding of Pacific learner success in industry training. In this study, a Pacific learner perspective was specifically sought to explore factors that mattered to the learners regarding their participation, achievement and continuance in industry training.

The utilisation-focused evaluation approach used in this study allowed the research design to be tailored based on situational issues and with a focus on the needs of the primary users of the evaluation. Optimising the utility and applicability of research findings for ITOs and other stakeholders was a key objective of the study and six recommendations have been made.

The findings of this study highlight that there are many positive 'take-outs' from these relatively short and discrete programmes. Reports from learners and facilitators alike conveyed an optimism about continuing to progress in their training and completing their qualifications. Ongoing monitoring of this cohort and collection of course and qualification completion data will enable a more in-depth analysis of these outcomes.



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# Appendices

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## Appendix 1: Project Advisory Group

Membership for the Pacific Learner Success in Workplace Settings project advisory group was fluid over the course of the project and included the following ITO and Pacific Perspectives Staff:

Organisation	Advisory group members
The Skills Organisation	Issac Liava'a, Martin Draper
Careerforce	Joel Rewa-Morgan, Sarah Goff, Laloifi Ripley
ServiceIQ	Jenny Connor, Doris Kaua, Glen Keith, Peter Scanlan (Chairperson) Caroline Harris
Competenz	Kate Thompson, Iani Nemani
Pacific Perspectives	Dr Debbie Ryan

## Appendix 2: Pasifika Learner Success in Workplace Settings – thematic literature review

Authors: Dr Debbie Ryan, Lisa Kitone and Racheal Fleming  
March 2015

Download from the Ako Aotearoa website at:  
<https://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/pacific-learner-success-in-workplace-settings>



## Appendix 3: Pilot Logic Models

### PEER MENTORING LOGIC MODEL

#### Theory of Change

- Industry training uses the resources of the workplace to provide the context within which skills and competencies are developed. It is more challenging to create a formal and structured learning environment as may be found in provider-based training.
- Peer mentoring in workplace training involves the development of a structured informality.
- The use of peer mentors is intended to address factors that discourage training (such as perceived lack of support and encouragement), and encourage employees to develop the self-confidence to assume more accountability and responsibility for their work.
- The use of mentors with strong relationship skills is augmented by support services to recognise and respond to the needs of Pasifika trainees so that trainees feel safe and understand their own psyche and that of others. It also reduces the sense of an 'incongruity of culture', which distracts from a focus on achievement.
- Trainees will progress more quickly through their training, and develop higher levels of self-confidence. This self-confidence will translate into better engagement in the workplace, and, in the context of Careerforce, a willingness to report issues relating to patient safety. This higher engagement and technical competency will tend to make the trainees more employable, have positive impacts on the trainees' life outcomes, and help to create a self-sustaining culture of peer support.

Input	Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<p>Mentors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 from each ITO who have previously graduated with a level 4 or above qualification</li> <li>• May be outsourced, employed in the same organisation, or operate with a cluster of employers</li> <li>• Have good relationship skills</li> </ul> <p>Training materials and resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefings and training plans for mentees and mentors</li> <li>• Expert peer review</li> </ul> <p>Trainees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careerforce and ServiceIQ</li> </ul>	<p>Contact between mentors and mentees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and proportion who have contact at least once per fortnight</li> </ul> <p>Training of mentees and mentors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of training sessions</li> <li>• Feedback on training sessions</li> </ul> <p>Approach is responsive to the needs of employers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers demonstrate a willingness to support the intervention</li> </ul>	<p>Mentoring undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of interactions reported</li> <li>• Type and status of interactions reported</li> </ul>	<p>Trainees make faster progress in their training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees record higher rates of credit achievement</li> <li>• Facilitators and employers report better engagement</li> </ul> <p>Mentees and mentors develop strong relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of quality of relationships</li> </ul> <p>Trainees demonstrate higher levels of self-confidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that trainees are more likely to put what they are learning into practice</li> <li>• Trainees report lower levels of self-doubt</li> </ul> <p>Better access to support services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate and type of support services accessed</li> </ul>	<p>Trainees are more likely to obtain a qualification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualification completion rates increase</li> </ul> <p>Workplaces are more welcoming of and value diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees' perceptions of their value to the workplace</li> </ul> <p>Trainees are more engaged in their workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More reporting of issues of patient safety (Careerforce)</li> <li>• Increased levels of work satisfaction</li> <li>• Evidence of increased participation with peers and managers</li> <li>• Evidence of willingness to contribute to the organisation</li> <li>• Evidence that trainees are taking on leadership roles and are more self-directed</li> </ul>	<p>Trainees are more employable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees have the technical skills that employers want</li> <li>• Trainees are employed at more senior levels</li> </ul> <p>Trainees and family have better life prospects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees record higher incomes, better health and well-being, living conditions and nutrition</li> <li>• A mentoring culture is created:</li> <li>• The number of mentees who become mentors</li> </ul>



## Assumptions

- Training for both parties is needed to ensure that the employment relationship is not impeded and the limits of any support are understood
- Mentoring will be narrowly defined, focusing on the relevant training arrangements
- Mentors may need training in the cultural aspects of their role
- Mentees need to understand their contribution in this mentee-led process

- The workplace provides opportunities for interaction between peers
- Employers welcome the service

- Increasing the number of first points of contact for referrals to ITO 'additional' services will generate more referrals to and uptake of those services
- Trainees are more likely to request support through a trusted partner (e.g. a mentor)
- Peer mentors can help trainees to recognise their own skills and give them confidence in their own abilities

- Strengthening relationships between peers will help to make the workforce more proactive, and change the expectations of employers

- Better qualifications contribute to career progression, and to better economic, social and health outcomes

None identified

## STUDY GROUP LOGIC MODEL

### Theory of Change

- The study groups will create a fellowship among trainees and a structure through which momentum for success can be created.
- The fellowship is obtained through a fanau-like environment that binds trainees together. This binding in turn creates a safe environment where trainees can teach each other.
- The structure of a study group provides a space for purposeful and collective action.
- The embedding of Pacific cultural norms in teaching materials and approaches helps trainees to feel safe, to understand their own psyche and that of others, and reduces the sense of an 'incongruity of culture', which distracts from a focus on achievement.
- Engaging fanau in the programme provides a mechanism to communicate to fanau about how other obligations can impede a trainee's success, which will in turn contribute to a more conducive learning environment for trainees.
- Trainees will progress more quickly through their training, and develop higher levels of self-confidence. This self-confidence will translate into better engagement in the workplace. This higher engagement and technical competency will tend to make the trainees more employable and have other positive impacts on the trainees' life outcomes.

Input	Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<p>Study group facilitator and tutor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two hours per week of staff time</li> <li>• ITO staff used as assessors</li> </ul> <p>Training materials and resources</p> <p>Venue and catering</p> <p>Trainees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10-15 each from electrical and engineering apprentices</li> </ul>	<p>Learner support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning for delivery of unit standards</li> </ul> <p>Building of a learning community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of culturally appropriate teaching and learning methods</li> <li>• Facilitated debriefing of approaches</li> </ul> <p>Develop learning plans and document learning outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans developed and outcomes documented</li> <li>• Observational assessment</li> </ul>	<p>Study group sessions delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of unit standards assessed</li> <li>• Number of study group sessions</li> <li>• Trainee participation rates</li> <li>• Trainees undertake self-directed learning</li> <li>• Trainees' perceptions of study groups</li> </ul>	<p>Trainees experience validation of their culture(s) and associated norms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainee engagement with the programme</li> </ul> <p>Trainees make faster progress in their training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees record higher rates of credit achievement</li> <li>• Facilitators and employers report better engagement</li> </ul> <p>Trainees develop networks with peers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of camaraderie among participants</li> </ul> <p>Trainees demonstrate higher levels of self-confidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that trainees are more likely to put what they are learning into practice</li> <li>• Trainees report lower levels of self-doubt</li> </ul>	<p>Trainees are more likely to obtain a qualification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualification completion rates increase</li> </ul> <p>Trainees are more engaged in their workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of increased participation with their peers</li> <li>• Evidence of willingness to contribute to the organisation</li> <li>• Evidence that trainees are taking on leadership roles and are more self-directed</li> </ul>	<p>Trainees are more employable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees have the technical skills that employers want</li> <li>• Trainees are employed at more senior levels</li> </ul> <p>Trainees have better life prospects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees record higher incomes, better health and well-being, living conditions and nutrition</li> </ul>



<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workplace and 'classroom' cultures are not well-attuned to the cultural norms of Pacific peoples</li> <li>• There are limited opportunities to influence the workplace culture</li> <li>• A tuakana teina relationship among participants creates a safe environment that is conducive to trainee success</li> <li>• Fanau need more information about the value of workplace training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study groups and peer support create a positive feedback loop encouraging trainee success</li> <li>• The peer network makes it harder for trainees to withdraw from their training than continue</li> <li>• Reticence of Pasifika trainees in training and study groups may be culturally-driven</li> <li>• The peer group created within the study group can be an effective counterweight to fanau pressures and expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainee success requires the creation a strong environment of co-support among fanau and peers.</li> </ul>	<p>None identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better qualifications contribute to career progression, and to better economic, social and health outcomes</li> </ul>	<p>None identified</p>
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