

**Otago Regional Service Delivery Trial
Carpentry Level 4**

REPORT

2023

Work Based Learning (WBL)



Te Pūkenga

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Executive Summary

The Otago Regional Service Delivery Trial was established to address a response to the long-standing issue of competition between providers (now all under Te Pūkenga), and importantly test how ākonga and employers can be better served. The trial took place during the bedding in of multiple organisations into one, and it has provided an opportunity for past competitors to work together for the betterment of ākonga and industry. Whilst the concept is simple, undertaking this innovative trial in an uncertain environment was not without its challenges.

“Instead of using activities to drive collaboration, the trial has adopted collaboration to drive activities.”

The Otago Regional Service Delivery Trial was about local collaboration to deliver local solutions. Instead of using activities to drive collaboration, the trial adopted collaboration to drive activities. The hypothesis underpinning this approach is that successful collaboration creates successful outcomes.

Two key success factors are evident from this trial. First, it is critical to have people with the right skills, and the availability to contribute. Second, access to the same data and information enabled collective responses to ākonga and employer needs across the region, which allowed for access to a wider range of learning support and resources, and for feedback to be provided.

This report captures and highlights a collaborative approach undertaken in the Otago/Southland region for delivery of the Level 4 carpentry apprenticeship, where findings and recommendations may be applied to wider aspects of the integration of delivery and further afield.

Recognising that these learnings can and should be applied in a range of contexts is significant as we progress our unification programme of work and build a culture of collaboration, with a focus on better supporting ākonga and employers, and especially those underserved in previous environments. Ten recommendations are made which should be applicable in a range of contexts within work-based learning, with evidence to suggest that they support improved learning experiences and outcomes for ākonga.

Introduction

In what was previously a competitive environment, the merger of Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) and Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) into Te Pūkenga has presented opportunities for, and enabled, meaningful collaboration. This significant change has enabled providers to remove some known barriers for ākonga.

The Otago Regional Service Delivery Trial was established to provide an opportunity for our regional providers (now business divisions within Te Pūkenga) - BCITO, Otago Polytechnic (OP), and Southern Institute of Technology (SIT) - to work together in exploring ideas, testing initiatives, and implementing ways to align the delivery of their respective Level 4 Carpentry programmes.

Whilst the activities undertaken as part of the trial were implemented to support better ākonga and industry outcomes, they were not the reason for this trial. The trial was about understanding how local networks working together could better meet the needs of local ākonga (in this case apprentices) and their employers.

The trial commenced mid-2022. After an exploratory period, trial activity was re-assessed. In October 2022 trial activity was reset to re-emphasise learner-focused activity.

Trial completion was planned for 31 March 2023. This was extended to 30 June 2023, to allow for further activity and reporting.

The output of the trial was to report on its successes and learnings to provide recommendations that could be implemented in other vocations and regions, across the following three desired outcomes:

1. Community of Practice (Local Network Response),
2. Pastoral Care Services (Local Sharing), and
3. Improved School Liaison (Expanding the Talent Pool).

Problem statement

“Different providers (ITPs and ITOs) competing within the region resulting in a fractured and confused landscape for ākonga and employers to navigate”

Ākonga that sign into a Carpentry apprenticeship in Otago or Southland can choose between OP, SIT and BCITO – the programmes of any of which lead to the New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry Level 4. All three are apprenticeships. The BCITO programme is a New Zealand Apprenticeship¹, while OP’s and SIT’s are both Managed Apprenticeships (MAs).

All three programmes are reliant upon on-job teaching and assessment, which is led by the employer. OP’s and SIT’s programme offer off-job training at their campuses for some teaching and assessment. BCITO’s programme is all on-job teaching and assessment.

The confusion for Otago and Southland apprentices and their employers when engaging in a Carpentry apprenticeship include:

- Three different Carpentry Level 4 programmes

¹ All three programmes now fall under the definition of New Zealand Apprenticeships

- Three providers with different and independent learner management systems
- Varying pricing models, and levels of support offered.

These aspects were identified as key barriers at the start of the trial, and specific trial activities were subsequently developed to overcome them.

Scope

The trial covered the delivery of the New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry Level 4 in the Otago and Southland regions via the three providers' programmes. Other aspects of the programmes such as funding and resource development were not part of this trial.

External influences

The timing of the trial impacted on some outputs being realised. Workloads and uncertainty surrounding organisational changes at Te Pūkenga impacted the level of kaimahi availability and engagement.

Governance

The governance of this trial was via a steering group that consisted of senior management from the three business divisions (BCITO, OP, and SIT) and Te Pūkenga Work Based Learning ²(WBL). The role of the Steering Group was to provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure the trial met its intended objective and outcomes.

Original membership included Project Sponsor, Service Delivery Trial Manager, Otago Regional Trial Project Manager, Chief Executive Officer - Otago Polytechnic, Programme Operations Manager - Academic (SIT), GM - Customer Experience (BCITO).

Members of the steering group committed to providing support and guidance, key decision making and approvals, and maintaining oversight of progress. Early in the trial representatives from the ConCOVE and Waihanga Ara Rau Workforce Development Council were also invited to attend. These representatives attended for a while, however once it became clear that the trial was focussed on programme delivery matters internal to Te Pūkenga they resigned their involvement.

In this period of change for Te Pūkenga there was a reasonably high turnover of roles within the three business divisions. This resulted in several personnel changes on the steering group throughout the trial.

A working group of key stakeholders was established towards the end of the trial to bring focus and oversight to the trial activities that were being implemented via a Community of Practice (CoP) (see more detail in 'Discussion' regarding the CoP). The objectives of the working group were:

- Lead respective activities within the project plan (both CoP and Pastoral Care outcomes)
- Discuss/share progress of activities

² WBL was established as a (temporary) subsidiary which incorporated former ITOs

- Propose any enhancements to the activities
- Support measuring and assessing success of activities
- Review/comment on draft trial report.

Structure of report

The report is primarily focused on the three desired outcomes and the findings that emerged.

The first desired outcome, Community of Practice (local area response) reports on successes resulting from collaboration.

The second desired outcome, Pastoral Care Services (local sharing) reports on the viability and local network capacity to enable the use of OP support services by BCITO, as well as describing successes and experiences learnt in the trial process for use elsewhere in the network.

The third desired outcome, Improved School Liaison (expanding the talent pool) reports on the successes gained for ākonga through having meaningful information and engagement with Construction and Infrastructure pathways while at school.

The report also summarises the trial activities and their respective findings and successes.

Discussion

Establishment and original scope

The trial was an opportunity to consider several aspects related to the Level 4 Carpentry programmes. As well as collaboration relating to programme delivery, it initially considered links with schools, improved ākonga academic attainment, and a transformational project that covered the eight key objectives of the unified system.

The initial trial activity comprised many work streams and outputs, and involved various iterations. The table below shows how they mapped to WBL objectives in a unified system.

Project number	Mapped against Learner journey	Project brief	WBL objectives in a unified system						
			1 Expand the talent pool	2 Clear start, pathways and career	3 Respond to industry need	4 Learner agency	5 support national network	6 Shared staffing	7 Retain skill
1	Informed choice	Start your apprenticeship @ School	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	
2	Apprenticeship	Block provision		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
3	Engagement	RPL centre		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
4	Apprenticeship	Pastoral care			Y	Y	Y		
5	Apprenticeship	Itabs and Bcito qualification unification		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
6	Professional development	Map to diploma and degrees to map careers	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
7	Meta project	Transformation project	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	Informed choice and apprenticeship	Disadvantaged learners	Y	Y		Y	Y		

Activities established to support the trial included:

- the formation of the steering group, community of practice, and working group,
- problem scoping,
- mapping the apprentice learner journey,
- block course provision options,
- identifying pastoral care services,
- designing a solution for local responsiveness.

Reset

Due to the number of non-learner related aspects in the original scope and range of activities, and subsequent risk of non-completion of some objectives within the trial, all activities were reviewed in October 2022. Activities that supported theoretical programme aspects or programme alignment were discontinued, whilst ākongā-focused activities were retained and consolidated into a reset scope.

Post reset objectives and goals

Problem statement (unchanged) – different providers (ITPs and ITOs) competing within the region resulting in a fractured and confused landscape for ākongā and employers to navigate.

Key purpose – collaborative local/regional response of provision for the region using a ākongā and employer-centric approach.

Trial scope – carpentry pathways from secondary school/entry level to completion of the trade qualification.

Desired outcomes – collaboration between OP, SIT and BCITO at regional and local levels; use of respective systems to enable better ākongā support; engagement with secondary sector regarding pathways within Construction and Infrastructure.

The table below shows the three desired outcomes and their activities, post reset.

1. Community of Practice (Local Network Response)

- SIT/OP/BCITO – already set up and in-train, somewhat self-managing although some local coordination needed
- Learner-facing staff coordinating carpentry provision in a locally responsive way
- Local block courses for local need
- Combined forecasting for provision (shared planning)
- Polytech tutors delivery one-off short block courses
- Polytech tutors visiting apprentices outside of campus
- Sharing resources and digital platforms (following mapping of course content between ITO/ITP programmes)
- **Outputs** to be report on successes resulting from collaboration to inform desired outcomes of transformation project.

2. Pastoral Care Services (Local Sharing)

- OP learner support services opened to BCITO in Dunedin
- Trial scope of three TAs, approx. 100 learners
- OP delivering pastoral care training to BCITO staff
- **Output** to be report on viability and local network capacity to expand use of OP support services by BCITO, as well as successes and experiences learnt in the trial process for use elsewhere in the network.

3. Improved School Liaison (Expanding the Talent Pool)

- From a learner/customer perspective the trial scope for this outcome needs to be a Construction and Infrastructure Ako response (for synergies with Vocational Pathway)
- Target a local high school to deliver a local response
- Develop a combined C&I presentation that includes the full pathway of careers
- Start Your Apprenticeship at School Working Group to map and present how Trades Academies (and/or Gateway) can make use of existing technical unit standards to ensure learners gain 'usable' credits (transition trial phase)
- Engagement/collaboration with Waihanga Ara Rau WDC
- Ideal state would be to recommend targeted C&I learning and assessment resources for existing careers unit standards to help school students decide which C&I career path to follow (slow burn)
- **Output** to be a report on the successes gained for learners through having meaningful information and engagement with C&I pathways while at school.

Trial Activities

All the trial activities carried over from the reset aimed to either directly or indirectly create better ākonga and employer outcomes. Activities were grouped into their respective focus areas and are summarised in the following tables.

Community of Practice (Local Network Response)

Activity 1.

OP and SIT apprentices using myBCITO digital platform

Goal revised as trial progressed to 'Trial BCITO and OP platforms, and provide recommendation'

Why: One shared apprentice platform using agreed best platform to support learning delivery, ensures consistency and sound user experience for apprentices and industry.

Benefit: Consistency in industry training model. Easy transition to another programme and efficient capture of naturally occurring workplace evidence.

Progress: This activity was successfully actioned for SIT apprentices where they were migrated to their own separate part within the myBCITO App. SIT's use of the App was different to BCITO's, as they didn't use some of the reporting functions. OP have their own App that their carpentry apprentices and kaimahi use.

Revision: It was evident that the two Apps should be reviewed/trialled in the first instance before any commitment to adopting one. A summary of comparative findings could then be provided (refer below).

Outcome: OP reviewed the myBCITO App with a BCITO training advisor (TA) and determined that the current OP App achieved similar outputs with significantly less work required from kaimahi. Since then, OP have demonstrated their App to SIT including comparing it to myBCITO App. The findings were very different than the first comparison in the way that SIT was using the App; this created a lot less work for the SIT kaimahi

Findings:

- The BCITO system of recording milestone movements is very granular and requires significantly more work for the TA.
- The OP App had significantly more functionality for “back & forth” interaction between apprentice and kaimahi, steering to improve submissions and video/audio capability for both the apprentice and kaimahi.
- The OP App had progress views and capability to record the engagement in a log (faculty journal/history) capturing the ākonga journey along with the individual progress in each skill.
- The way an App is used has a significant impact on the workload of kaimahi. Service delivery varies between BCITO and campus-led programmes, impacting on the way an App is used. OP and SIT carry out 3 monthly face-to-face visits with their apprentices, whereas BCITO TAs do not have this requirement. As a result, the Apps tend to be used quite differently.

Activity 2.

OP and SIT apprentices using 'mapped' BCITO programme

Why: Ensures a joined-up approach to delivery from the apprentice and industry perspective.

Benefit: Consistency across teaching delivery. Ability for apprentice(s) to move across all three business divisions in terms of learning delivery. Employer has increased flexibility with apprentice learning - administration and support. Communication and assessment are joined up - faster, less risk.

Apprentices will not be disadvantaged if they transition into another programme.

Progress: The mapping of the three programmes (SIT and OP programmes to the BCITO programme) was undertaken by SIT at the beginning of the trial. A comprehensive spreadsheet was produced which accurately aligned the unit standards from the BCITO programme with course learning outcomes from the OP and SIT programmes.

SIT have adopted the mapped programme in their teaching and assessment. OP is yet to do so. SIT have sat with OP to run them through the programme mapping. OP is keen to adopt and use the BCITO programme in the future.

Outcome: SIT is underway with the mapped programme and planning to hold their first week-long joint block course for BCITO and SIT apprentices in September. This collaboration has ensured effective and fair merging of BCITO apprentices and MAs, ensuring that no ākonga would be disadvantaged in any shared delivery of programmes.

This activity has been successfully realised and progressing for SIT.

Findings:

- Where an MA has passed milestones in the programme, the mapping tool provides confirmation that comparable outcomes have been met. This change also allowed SIT to offer training sessions where any Southland carpentry apprentice could attend regardless of the programme they are enrolled into (BCITO or an MA).
- Mapping of different programmes can be effectively and readily undertaken leading to better local integration of delivery and improved ākonga outcomes.

Activity 3.

OP and SIT apprentices using BCITO learning resources

Why: BCITO and OP/SIT (MA) learning resources did not align

Benefit: Better ākonga outcomes. Consistent learning material, coordinated and focus support from employers, one place to update and manage

Progress: SIT adopted learning resources, where BCITO agreed to provide all Southland apprentices with:

- Hard copy training material
- Milestone sheets (developed by SIT but aligned to BCITO sheets).
- Access to MyBCITO app to access further training information, capture evidence and track progress.

Outcome: OP is looking to adopt the BCITO resources, but this did not occur during the trial period. This was partially due to the lack of a coordinator role being established for OP. This resulted in lags in communication between the two organisations. OP will be adopting the BCITO resources to ensure ākonga have a seamless transition between work-based learning and block courses held by OP. SIT is happy to work with OP on sharing their resources developed using BCITO materials.

Findings:

- This mahi has allowed SIT to offer training sessions where any Southland carpentry apprentice could attend regardless of the programme they are enrolled into (BCITO or MA). This has demonstrated that having access to a single version of the resources between the organisations is crucial to ensuring seamless experiences for ākonga.
- Adopting BCITO learning resources has afforded training equity for carpentry apprentices in Southland and Otago, regardless of the business division they are enrolled through. All apprentices had access to the same resources and were assessed to the same standard. This was able to take place despite the lack of a shared LMS.
- Having someone in a Coordinator role to facilitate collaborative activities is a key function.

Activity 4.

Day Release class, for BCITO apprentices (structured)

Why: More flexible learning options, additional learning opportunity where this is not covered in the workplace, and networking for BCITO apprentices

Benefit: More knowledgeable apprentices, less attrition, improved training progress and completion rates.

Progress: The first day release class was delivered by OP in November 2022. The course covered loads, weathertightness, energy efficiency in buildings (all topics from existing OP building science course) as well as drawings and specifications. It was run by two kaimahi, one in the morning and one in the afternoon and had 13 apprentices attend.

SIT ran its first day release class in May 2023 - Stairs and Ramps, and the second in June on legislation, finishing, trim, and hand tools. Topics were determined based on feedback from industry. Further day release class topics will include building principles, and others as determined by employers through a survey. SIT is also planning to introduce week-long block courses, and revolving practical assessment. OP will review the SIT schedule and topics with a view to be consistent with SIT when they relaunch their day release classes.

Outcome: Apprentices who attend off-job training are wanting to see achievement/progress in the movement of their milestones. Determining knowledge gain could be through a pre-moderated quiz at the end of the class which could satisfy the TAs' need for evidence. Being able to advance milestones would likely encourage other apprentices to attend these blocks/classes.

	<p>Apprentices from the OP and SIT day release classes were surveyed. In addition, SIT surveyed employers of these apprentices on the effectiveness of the day release class.</p>
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Findings:

- From SIT and OP’s perspective these day release classes were successful.
- Apprentices and employers provided excellent feedback on the benefits of this offering. All surveyed employers noted that their apprentices were more productive, knowledgeable, confident, and engaged. One employer commented that their apprentice was 5% more productive as a direct result of attending the SIT class.
- Many employers and apprentices value off job training. Generally, apprentices want to see that their learning also advances their apprenticeship.
- Collaborative activities such as this are made more straightforward through business divisions using the same learning material.

Activity 5.

Night school class option available for BCITO apprentices

Why: More flexible learning options, additional learning opportunity and networking for BCITO apprentices

Benefit: More knowledgeable apprentices, less attrition, improved completion rates.

Progress: SIT began offering night classes in Invercargill for BCITO apprentices (who had at least six months experience) in November 2022. Review from the feedback led to the topics for the 2023 classes. They have run many night classes since on a range of topics: site establishment, setting out slab, concrete floors, and others. The night classes are now also being run at the Gore campus of SIT.

OP is keen to offer night school classes to BCITO apprentices too, which could possibly be combined with Tuesday night OP classes. BCITO have been offering drop-ins for technical support to help ākongā upload data and this could also be combined in a night class session. BCITO TAs would likely attend the night classes to offer support.

Outcome: Apprentices who attended were surveyed.

SIT have undertaken surveys with BCITO employers. BCITO national office have been approached to consider how the effectiveness of such classes might be measured. This could be through MyBCITO data and employer surveys, and on metrics such as retention, completion, and achievement of milestones.

Findings:

- The evening classes were well attended however apprentices really want to see milestone movement based on successful completion of night classes.
- Nationally, BCITO are considering best approach to how topics are offered, whether they be industry driven or based on fundamentals. In many cases demand has outstripped supply for off job courses offered.
- Many employers and apprentices value off job training. The ability for apprentices to confirm learning through milestone movement will motivate better participation and promote training progress.
- Collaborative activities such as this are made more straightforward through business divisions using the same learning material.

Activity 6.

Collaboration for on job assessment of OP and SIT apprentices undertaken

Goal revised as trial progressed to 'Trial collaborative apprentice/employer site visits between BCITO, OP and SIT - including apprentice assessment'.

Why: Learn the advantages and challenges with this approach to establishing consistency with the assessment and on job support for apprentices.

Benefit: Consistent assessment and peer review, economies of scale. The three organisations (BCITO, OP, and SIT) gain better understanding of what each organisation has to offer and the shared skills and knowledge within the new organisation structure.

Progress: OP initially hosted the local BCITO team to make introductions to bring both teams together to build the relationship in the network. OP have ridden along with BCITO TAs during site visits. The face-to-face apprentice meeting frequency by OP and SIT differs to BCITO.

Revision: It was identified early on that on job assessment methods were consistent between BCITO, OP and SIT. Nonetheless this activity had wide and holistic benefits beyond assessment that needed to be captured.

Findings:

- Ride-alongs are a great way to learn the differences as well as similarities with on job assessment and site visits across work-based and campus-based business divisions. They enabled shared understanding of role requirements and competencies as well as challenging assumptions.
- In addition to assessment, ride-alongs support other activities such as relationship building, opportunities to gain and share information as well as demonstrate a consistent approach to industry training.
- There is already a consistent approach to on job assessment used across BCITO, OP and SIT. All business divisions using the same Apprentice Management tool which is flexible enough to respond to ākongā needs is the next requirement.

Activity 7.

Industry meetings to discuss delivery options

Why: Better connection with industry provides opportunity, support, and cohesion with delivery

Benefit: Improved understanding and buy in from industry for a single cohesive apprentice training model serving industry in the region.

Progress: SIT hosted BCITO TAs and the local presidents of Master Builders and Certified Builders with a view to form a partnership approach to industry training. SIT also presented at a Certified Builders and Master Builders meeting to outline the new initiatives and reminded them that employers need to communicate with them regarding what they would like apprentices to receive off job training in.

SIT obtained a wider industry perspective through on-site meetings with employers and apprentices to discover possible course content and general feeling. Feedback from these meetings will influence the material delivery content of future courses. This was undertaken in conjunction/support from BCITO TAs to ensure a collaborative approach.

OP met with local industry at a recent meeting.

Outcome: SIT along with local BCITO TAs are carrying out employer surveys. Two surveys are being done - one for determining ideas and subjects; the other as a feedback loop to review the success and effectiveness of the training.

Findings:

- Industry engagement has been very effective for SIT at building relationships and trust. There is a shared intent to work together at a high level followed by face-to-face employer meetings, and this is working very well.
- Industry wants off job training.
- For this exercise feedback was more effective one on one with employers, than with industry groups.
- Industry awareness of the new training initiatives was patchy, more could have been done to spread the word effectively.
- Not limiting industry engagement to the representative bodies, meeting as many employers as possible face to face to obtain their views. SIT relied on TAs to engage with industry and promote this training initiative, without acknowledging that they may only visit some employer sites once per year.
- A more proactive promotional drive would be needed to improve industry awareness of future changes.
- Face to face engagement with employers is vital in obtaining input.

Activity 8.

Coordinator role

Why: To identify pressure points in local training and assessment demand and ensure support is available to meet that demand. To support local BCITO staff in identifying and delivering targeted training.

Benefit: Having a part time dedicated resource overseeing trial activities ensures effective communication, delivery, and ownership for the activities through to completion.

Progress: SIT assigned their Programme Operations Manager (POM) to a Coordinator role. Some areas of the POM's regular portfolio were redeployed to allow them to undertake this role. The SIT Coordinator undertook a range of activities: industry liaison, developing and resourcing SIT training delivery, working with local BCITO staff, developing and running surveys. They were also a member of the Trial Working Group.

Findings:

- The Coordinator role proved to be a key collaborative element. Whilst SIT had a coordinator, OP did not, and the difference was evident in the OP/BCITO relationship which experienced delays in coordinating the collaboration i.e., block courses, LLN support, and resource sharing.
- Having a Coordinator with industry and technical experience and function as a link between the campus and work-based environments was invaluable and highly impactful.
- A Coordinator role has been the critical difference in OP and SIT have proceeded with the trial activities. This type of role should be considered in regional programme change management.

Pastoral Care Services (Local sharing)	
Activity 1.	
BCITO wellness tool switched on to pilot group (3 TAs apprentices) to identify apprentices with needs.	
<p>Why: Apprentices that require support are receiving it. The comfort of knowing that it is available, more engaged, and resilient apprentices</p> <p>Benefit: Resilient apprentices, increased retention.</p>	<p>Progress: BCITO were intending to liven their new Wellness tool late in 2022 which the trial was going to pilot with three BCITO TAs and their apprentices. The hope was the tool could help identify ākongā with needs and be the starting point for the referral process.</p> <p>Despite best efforts, the App was not available for the trial.</p>
<p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The App wasn't considered ready for trialling, and coupled with uncertainty around how the App would fit into a nationally unified offering its further development was paused. • An App wellness tool likely has a place, judging by the perceived demand. 	
Activity 2.	
Develop and implement a referral system for apprentices	
<p>Why: Those apprentices that require support are receiving it. The comfort of knowing that it is available, more engaged, and resilient apprentices</p> <p>Benefit: Resilient apprentices, increased retention.</p>	<p>Progress: The referral system was linked to the BCITO Wellness tool. In preparation three Otago based TAs received Pastoral Care support training from OP staff.</p>

Findings:

- As the referral system was primarily dependant on the Wellness tool, this activity stalled.
- There are many great localised referral offerings around the country available for LLN support however not seemingly a consistent method.
- Having a referral system for apprentices is seen as hugely important.

Activity 3.

Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN) Support available to all apprentices in trial

Why: Those apprentices that require support are receiving it. The comfort of knowing that it is available, more engaged, and resilient apprentices

Benefit: Resilient apprentices, increased retention

Progress: OP learner support services were to be opened to BCITO apprentices in Dunedin in November. Unfortunately, this activity made limited progress. This was in part due to activity 1 (The BCITO Wellness App tool) not progressing and the lack of information received from the BCITO for at risk ākongas.

The campus based LLN support was limited during Semester 1 2023 due to other community commitments. The operating times and schedules of campus based, and work based kaimahi and ākongas are quite different for apprentices. To be successful, the campus based kaimahi would need to change their working hours to better suit work-based learning ākongas. In addition to this, any LLN support needs to be contextualised to the type of work the ākongas are doing, as this fosters greater buy-in of the LLN intervention for ākongas.

OP have been working with BCITO and Competenz to investigate and link into national initiatives and support the enhanced working relationships within the network. BCITO and OP are actively collaborating to support Painting and Decorating ākongas who attend block courses at OP. BCITO provide additional information to the OP kaimahi about students with identified LLN differences. This additional support is a direct result of the conversations between BCITO and OP as part of the trial, even though Painting and Decorating fell outside of scope. This provides insights into the potential wider benefits from the increased collaboration between the different business divisions.

SIT arranged a drop-in for those needing support in this area, however it wasn't well attended.

Findings:

- LLN is a specialist field that has extra challenges where those in need don't often know they need support as well as those that do not want others around them to know. Campus-based business divisions tend to have dedicated LLN support from student services and foundational learning departments which could be used to support work-based ākongā.
- Many stakeholders consider LLN support crucial in helping apprentices to progress in their apprenticeship and in life.
- The introduction of in person or online evening classes is likely to help apprentices who struggle to engage with text-based learning.

Activity 4.

Good Yarn available to Te Pūkenga apprentice support staff

Why: Support staff have a support network available to them.

Benefit: Resilient support staff, improved retention, better supported apprentices, and employers.

Progress: This support focused on supporting kaimahi to support ākongā with mental health needs, that they may encounter on site. The three organisations BCITO, Competenz and Otago Polytechnic, realised that they were all facilitators of the 'Good Yarn' mental health awareness programme. Meetings have been established for a regional working group for kaimahi mental wellbeing and the membership is continuing to grow as the Te Pūkenga organisational Health Safety and Wellbeing structure starts to embed.

Progress stalled for two significant reasons. Firstly, all organisations were impacted by the creation of Te Pūkenga which has led to the creation of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team within the structure. Over time, this will act as a regional enabler for sharing resources to support kaimahi across the regional network, but it did mean that the trial activities have been intermittently stalled as new staff members were appointed and needed time to settle into their roles. Secondly, there have been questions raised regarding the licencing of the 'Good Yarn' programme as all members of the working group hold individual licences that only allow them to deliver the programme to their employees. This is being addressed.

This activity was started towards the end of the trial. Whilst there is considerable good will to collaborate in this space, tangible outcomes have not been realised due to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team being in a state of flux whilst they were being established. The important work of pulling the various interested parties together is still underway.

Findings:

- The initial scope of this activity was to predominantly work with the BCITO and Competenz teams specifically with the delivery of the 'Good Yarn' programme. It has become apparent that there are many other programmes that could be beneficial to field staff, and these should be investigated further.
- This activity has a longer time frame than the trial.

Improved School Liaison (Expanding the Talent Pool)	
Multiple activities.	
<p>Why: Expand the talent pool, empower ākonga agency, attract underserved ākonga.</p> <p>Benefit: Create opportunities to increase awareness and encourage interested students to take up a carpentry apprenticeship.</p>	<p>Progress: This strand had many aspects. As time progressed it became evident that this strand was very complex, and to gain meaningful findings would require longer than the period of the trial.</p> <p>This activity was discontinued.</p>
<p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Academies and other secondary/tertiary initiatives may be seen as the interface between school and industry. With that in mind there is a lot to be learned from existing programmes and new initiatives being explored around the motu. • This activity had a longer time frame than the trial. 	

Analysis

Community of Practice (local network response)

The Community of Practice (CoP) involved all three business divisions.

CoP trial activities by and large became the focus of the trial and were made up of the following:

COP Trial Activities	Who	Reason
1. SIT apprentices using myBCITO digital platform	SIT	Addressing key barriers
2. Using mapped programmes	OP & SIT	
3. Apprentices using BCITO resources	OP & SIT	
4. Day Release classes	BCITO, OP & SIT	Innovative Service Delivery and Assessment
5. Night school class option available	BCITO, OP & SIT	
6. Collaborative apprentice/employer site visits	BCITO, OP & SIT	
7. Industry engagement	BCITO, OP & SIT	Employer engagement
8. Coordinator	SIT	Driver of activities within and across business divisions

A significant difference in the successful implementation across Activities 1 - 7, was the appointment of a Coordinator (Activity 8 - funded by the trial). The SIT Coordinator worked with local BCITO and SIT staff throughout all aspects of the trial. They assisted to identify areas of training demand, develop and resource training delivery, as well as liaise with industry.

SIT achieved success in delivering on all CoP Trial Activities.

OP did not have the services of a Coordinator, so whilst they had various levels of success across activities, they were not able to achieve the same level of implementation as SIT.

CoP/Local Network Response was prioritised as the first desired outcome where each of the CoP trial activities aligned with supporting better ākongā and employer outcomes, through collaboration.

CoP is commonly defined as *“a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly”*. CoP is a collaborative approach.

In the early stages of the trial there was a need for wide engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders. This helped promote the trial and receive feedback on activities and how to progress them. A CoP was established in August 2022 and was defined through terms of reference. Its objectives were to support integration of the local trial activities through sharing and reporting. The membership grew to include stakeholders from outside the region where they discussed trial activities as well as other nationwide initiatives.

Whilst CoP is an excellent way to collate ideas and share, with many people involved from outside the trial group, it started losing emphasis on localised trial activity. In the later stages of the trial, the focus was placed on quantifying and measuring the effectiveness of the activities. As a result, the wider CoP group was not continued in favour of focusing efforts on a smaller working group to progress the activities.

There is a place for using CoP to effectively understand key differences between campus-based and work-based business divisions. For example, considering such areas as programme delivery and assessment. Mapping and understanding all key differences across all areas of the trial in the first instance saves time. CoP also provided a mechanism for any ideas and initiatives outside of a trial to be raised by any practitioner for discussion and consideration amongst peers, which if suitable can then be carried forth to line management, with confidence.

Collaboration successfully occurred across all trial activities, and in addition across a wide range of stakeholders from both within and outside of the trial.

Pastoral Care Services (local sharing)

The Pastoral Care trial activities were undertaken predominately by BCITO and OP, and were made up of the following:

Pastoral Care Trial Activities	Who	Reason
1. BCITO Wellness Tool	BCITO & OP	Support addressing a nationwide concern
2. Develop a referral system	BCITO & OP	
3. LLN support available to apprentices	OP & SIT	
4. Good Yarn available to OP staff	BCITO & OP	Initiative

At the outset, OP was recognised as having sound pastoral care support, making them a good fit to partner with BCITO in trialling this strand.

This strand had high dependence on Activity 1, switching on the Wellness tool to BCITO apprentices. As this was not fully realised it heavily impacted Activity 2, and 3.

The fourth activity, making Good Yarn available to Te Pūkenga staff was created through the trial to test how OP and BCITO could leverage its resources to support the support staff. This required the need to expand the area of expertise outside of the local network.

As with the CoP trial activities, neither BCITO nor OP had dedicated coordinators that were able to drive the activities. Whilst there is no direct comparison to make, it seems likely that coordinator(s) would have made a positive difference to implementing the activities.

Local sharing was undertaken with OP upskilling BCITO Training Advisors in pastoral care.

Several key themes become apparent through undertaking this strand:

- LLN support was identified as crucial in helping many more apprentices achieve. There is also a growing consideration in programme design, where removing barriers to effective engagement and achievement, while still maintaining a national standard, requires a wider range of options and support.
- Whilst LLN awareness is improving, for many it is still not on the radar which can create barriers to trialling initiatives when it isn't that well understood across industries.
- This is an area that would benefit through a having a consistent approach to supporting apprentices.

Although not part of the pastoral care services strand, other local sharing initiatives took place during the trial. This included Cromwell OP Campus and the SIT Campus in Invercargill providing office space for local BCITO TAs to base themselves from.

Improved School Liaison (expanding the talent pool)

This strand of trial activities was undertaken by the Project Manager/BCITO.

Improved School Liaison Trial Activities	Who	Reason
1. Multiple activities	Project Manager/BCITO	Support addressing a nationwide concern

This piece of work was ambitious, complex, and multi-faceted.

The objectives were going to take longer to reach than the length of the trial.

There was no dedicated coordinator to help drive activities other than the Project Manager.

This third strand was to culminate in a report on the successes gained for ākongā through having meaningful information and engagement with Construction and Infrastructure pathways while at school.

Key insight gained through trialling this strand is Trade Academies and Gateway Programmes create the link between schools and apprenticeship. This area likely requires much wider engagement and support than a localised trial can provide.

It was also recognised that there were many secondary/tertiary initiatives underway around the motu, including those involving industry and WBL, that were constantly learning and evolving.

To prioritise the other two strands a decision was made by the Steering Group in March 2023 to step back from the Improved School Liaison (Expanding the Talent Pool) strand.

Conclusion

The level of engagement and support among participants from BCITO, OP, and SIT remained consistently high with a strong shared desire to create better ākongā and employer outcomes.

Having the right key people involved in the trial is crucial, those with the management oversight and authority to progress decisions plus those practitioners who in addition to having the technical knowledge understand their ākongā and employers, with industry connection. Great gains have been made by also having individuals involved who are experienced across all facets of the training environment, i.e. work based and on campus.

The trial has identified a desire from BCITO, OP and SIT to continue to be able to test ideas and run initiatives beyond the trial itself. An ongoing means to carry out this activity provides many benefits.

At the outset of the trial the following potential internal barriers were identified and considered:

- The long-standing competitive history between the three previously separate providers
- The previous funding model which in some cases limited new initiatives/methods, and a still-developing understanding of the opportunities under the Unified Funding System (UFS)
- Senior management commitment and support from within each business division.

Initially trial activities fostered the collaboration between BCITO and OP, and BCITO and SIT. As the trial progressed, increased collaboration occurred between OP and SIT. It was clear throughout the trial that despite the competitive history, there was a strong desire to focus on how the new structure will benefit ākongā and employers.

The trial was well funded. Having a realistic budget to work with was not a barrier. Given the trial's 'try and see nature' it would have been difficult at the outset to draw up an accurate budget for the various activities. Connecting the funding to the delivery of trial activities (and beyond) is where careful thought was required.

Having commitment from senior management within each of the business divisions made a significant difference to ensuring the success of a regional trial.

Many people within Te Pūkenga had heard about the existence of the trial, which in addition to being a good news story, partially enabled activities to occur more quickly. Still, at times during the trial there were hold ups waiting on others outside of the key stakeholder group for answers or follow ups. A way to overcome this could be by having involvement from Te Pūkenga business support functions i.e., Finance, Marketing, PCW, and Digital. Whilst not necessarily having someone assigned from each unit to be on the Working Group, they would be aware of the trial and connected to it so can be brought in as required. Having direct and supported access to these functions will ensure faster response and more effective decision making.

Recognising and managing all interdependencies in the trial activities at the outset would have allowed for contingencies to be put in place meaning faster progress in some areas.

Key to enabling success was understanding and identifying all key differences across the participating business divisions early on in a trial. For example, a key barrier identified at the outset was the requirement for the business divisions to enable access for all learners to a range of learner management systems i.e., App for the apprentices in the trial, MyBCITO. However, it was not until well into the trial that it became apparent that the usage varies across the apps, such as recording of evidence in the learner management system.

Stakeholder interviews that were conducted post reset revealed the following themes:

- The preference for a demand-driven model to determine apprentice off job training topics
- Considering differences within regions, when thinking about what is local e.g., Central Otago ākonga and employer needs compared to Dunedin city apprentice and employer needs
- The use of online platforms for training support
- Identifying and responding to pinch points in the system
- Requiring permission is a barrier for implementing ideas
- Structure and certainty are required for fully realising off job initiatives.

This trial enabled business divisions to work together in ways few had done so previously, and in a way which required a broader view of objectives, and how they could be achieved. As Te Pūkenga becomes more established in terms of role and structures, the way in which we approach programme design and delivery will need to be considered in local, regional and national contexts. The trial enabled some success, notably the collaboration between providers who were previously in competition, and the demonstrated the ability to enable access to learner services and learning platforms. The trial also highlighted the need to apply proven project practices, including sound management of scope, budget, and reporting.

While acknowledging contexts of the trade/discipline, and geography, several recommendations are made which could readily be applied in other contexts be they discipline related, responding to other regions' needs, or to inform national approaches to delivery.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made as a result of the findings from this trial, which should inform future similar initiatives, irrespective of discipline or context.

1. Dedicated Coordinator

In addition to a Project Manager, role/s of coordinator be established to coordinate trial activities. There must be suitable and dedicated resource to carry out this function so not to rely on goodwill for time and skills. This role should carry a level of authority and accountability to ensure that barriers are removed, and progress is realised.

2. Collaboration

The value of collaboration to ensure successful outcomes across all areas cannot be overstated. A collaborative approach to working together allows for increased understanding of roles, responsibilities, and competencies. This should be a core focus in the establishment of any such initiative.

3. Apprentice Off Job Training

The offerings of night classes, day release, and block courses are highly valued by many apprentices and employers in improving learning opportunities, removing barriers to progress, and helping maintain industry standards. This is especially so when it leads to progress of apprentice training milestones. A broader range of delivery models should be fully considered to compliment traditional work-based learning.

4. Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice are an effective way to share, discuss and record ideas, and worthy suggestions can be further explored through research. CoPs are invaluable at the start of a trial where they can generate ideas, help to identify barriers, and understand differences. They can also provide ongoing support and two-way communication to the trial. They should not be used as a committee to run activities or for decision making purposes.

5. Regular and direct industry engagement

Speaking face to face, and individually with employers and apprentices/ākonga is the most effective approach for gaining insight. Gathering intelligence on apprentice training gaps, advising on new training initiatives and general feedback/communication. Building on existing networks is an effective way of doing this.

6. Structure

A clear project structure should be established and communicated. This should include a governance group, typically a steering group, which has project oversight and monitoring. Supporting project mahi is best done via working group/s, with representation and input from key project members/organisations. In the context of re-imagining vocational education this should include members with teaching and learning experience/skills, and management skills and perspectives. Project continuity should be a factor when considering the make-up of a governance group.

Future trials could consist of a Steering Group, Working Group, and one or more CoPs, as shown in the graphic below. The Working Group should include access to nominated Marketing, Finance, IT, and HR representatives.

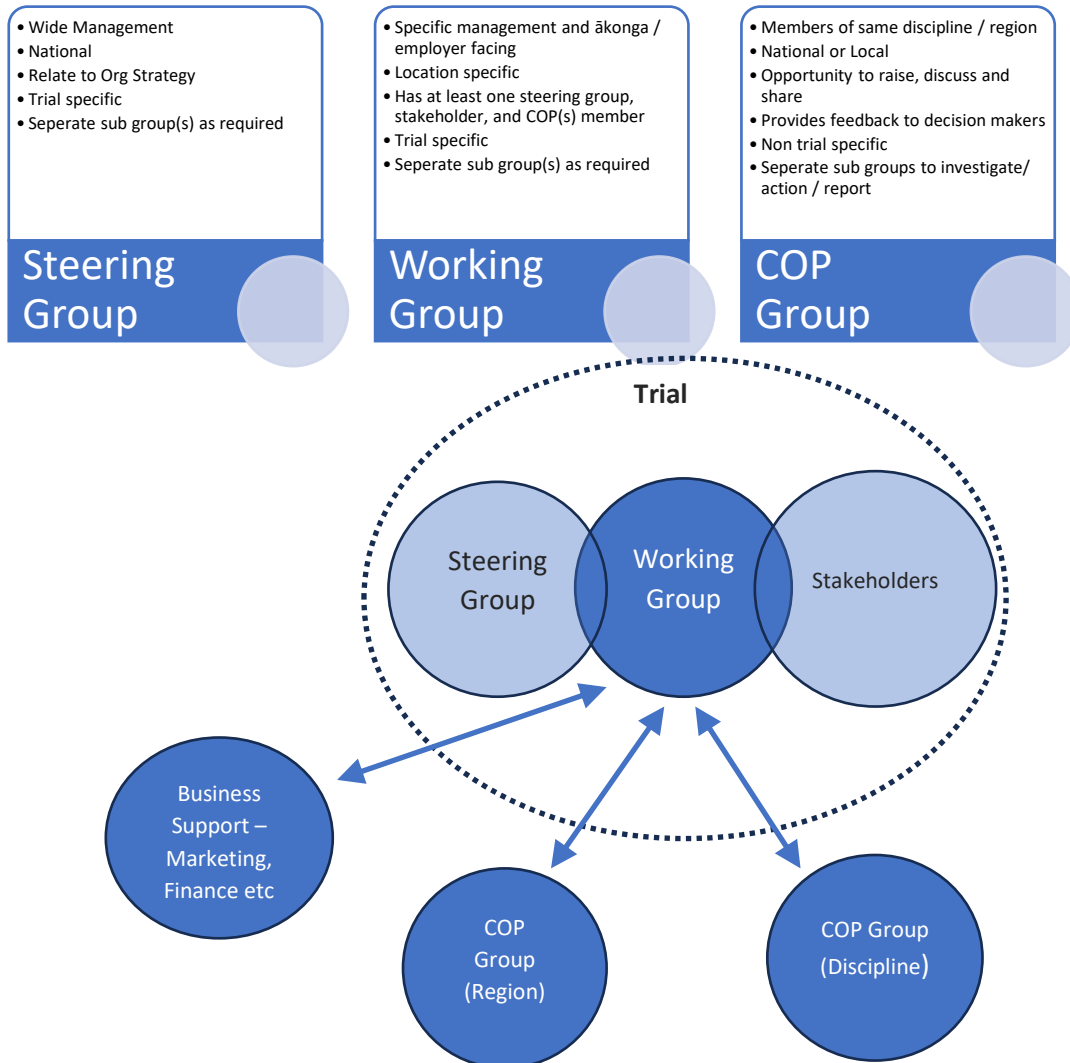


Figure 1: Recommended trial structure and relationships

7. Finances

A detailed and well-structured budget should be established at the outset and include any contributions from individual parties. Processes for budget variations need to be clear and well understood, and the steering group must have oversight of this.

8. Programme mapping and shared ākongā resources

Where there is more than one programme leading to the same qualification, mapping the content and outcomes is invaluable to support integrated delivery. Training sessions can then be tailored to suit the apprentice.

Where an ākonga has passed milestones in a programme, a mapping tool provides confirmation of achieving comparable outcomes. This approach allows business divisions to offer training sessions where any apprentice could attend regardless of the programme they are enrolled into. This part of the trial demonstrated that having access to a single version of the resources across business divisions, is crucial to ensuring seamless experiences for ākonga.

9. Continuing initiatives

Initiatives that prove worthwhile as part of the trial need to be maintained beyond the length of the trial. There needs to be a mechanism for this to occur, which may help inform new and different approaches to supporting better outcomes for in-work ākonga.

10. Scoping and plan

Scoping needs to be realistic in terms of what can be achieved within time and resource constraints. This should be rigorously tested before the trial proper starts, with the steering group playing a key role.

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Original Trial Sponsor - Toby Beaglehole

Original Project Manager - Kelly Gay

Original Service Delivery Trials Manager - Lindy Martins

Steering Group: Di Lithgow, WBL; Glenn Duncan, BCITO; Katherine Hall, ConCOVE; Mark Cartwright, OP; Megan Potiki, OP; Mike Grumball, Waihanga Ara Rau; Russel Finlay, SIT; Liz McKenzie, WBL.

Trial Sponsor - Di Lithgow

Service Delivery Trials Manager - Liz McKenzie

Working group - Alan Fraser, OP; Kelly Gay, BCITO; Mark Cartwright, OP; Russel Finlay, SIT; Terry Brunel, BCITO; Tony Lemin, SIT.

Project Manager – Carl Rankin

Also, the following stakeholders who supported with interviews:

Stakeholder meetings	Organisation	Date	Type
Tracey McLennan	OP	19/01/23	Phone
Neville Ward	BCITO	01/02/23	Phone
Hayden Burmeister	BCITO	08/02/23	Face to face
Steph Hartel	BCITO	13/02/23	Teams
Andrew Donohue	BCITO	13/02/23	Teams
Russell Finlay and Tony Lemin	SIT	14/02/23	Face to face
Ceri Macleod	Southland RSLG	14/02/23	Face to face
Nick Fifield	SIT Queenstown Campus Manager	15/02/23	Face to face
Geoff Martin	SIT Programmes Manager	15/02/23	Face to face
Kelly Gay	Previous Trial Manager / BCITO Southern Lakes Regional Manager	15/02/23	Face to face
Andy Kilsby	Otago RSLG	15/02/23	Face to Face
Jason Barry	OP Cromwell Campus Manager	15/02/23	Face to Face
OP facilitated (delivery support meeting)	Meeting - next steps one day block course for BCITO	16/02/23	Face to Face

Nicki Alori	BCITO	03/05/23	Teams
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