Cabinet Paper material
Proactive release

Minister & portfolio	Hon Penny Simmonds Minister for Vocational Education
Name of package	Proposed establishment or transfer of the remaining four polytechnics proposal
Date considered	30 Mar 2026
Date of release	4 August 2026

These documents have been proactively released:

Proposed establishment or transfer of the remaining four polytechnics proposal
Date considered: 30 Mar 2026
Author: Office of the Minister for Vocational Education

Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee Minute SOU-26-MIN-0022
Date considered: 25 Mar 2026
Author: Committee Secretary

Cabinet Minute CAB-26-MIN-0097
Date considered: 30 Mar 2026
Author: Secretary for the Cabinet

Material redacted

Some deletions have been made from the documents in line with withholding grounds under the Official Information Act 1982. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

The applicable withholding grounds under the Act are as follows:

Section 9(2)(b)(ii)	to protect the commercial position of the supplier of the information
Section 9(2)(f)(iv)	to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials

Some deletions have been made from the documents as the information withheld does not fall within scope of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities, and is not relevant to the proactive release of this material.

You can read the Official Information Act 1982 here: http://legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1982/0156/latest/DLM64785.html

In Confidence

Office of the Minister for Vocational Education

Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Proposed establishment or transfer of the remaining four polytechnics

Proposal

1. This paper seeks Cabinet's agreement to:
   1.1. the establishment of three of the four remaining polytechnic divisions within the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST) as stand-alone polytechnics
   1.2. the transfer of one polytechnic division to the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (the Open Polytechnic) to manage provision on an ongoing basis
   1.3. ongoing funding to ensure the viability of polytechnic provision in Northland and the West Coast of the South Island through to 2031
   1.4. funding for NorthTec to further rationalise campus properties to support viability
   1.5. in-principle funding for a proposed development of, and NorthTec's move to, a central tertiary education hub in Whangārei
2. It also seeks agreement to:
   2.1. provide support to the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) for its property re-build and improvements following Cyclone Gabrielle
   2.2. provide support to the Southern Institute of Technology (SIT) to address deferred maintenance at its Telford campus
   2.3. use underspends in the Workforce Development Councils appropriation to support strategically important provision.

Relation to Government priorities

3. These decisions build on earlier decisions by Cabinet to redesign the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system and support the roll-out of the redesigned system.

Executive Summary

Establishment/transfer of the remaining four polytechnic divisions

4. The Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Act 2025 came into force on 22 October 2025. In November 2025, Cabinet agreed to establish the first ten polytechnics by Order in Council [SOU-25-MIN-0076 refers]. Cabinet also agreed to receive a report back on the future of the remaining four polytechnic divisions within NZIST in the first half of 2026. These are Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT – Taranaki region), WelTec/Whitireia (greater Wellington region), NorthTec (Northland region), and Tai Poutini Polytechnic (the West Coast region of the South Island).
5. Work within these remaining divisions to improve their financial performance means that I can now recommend the establishment of WITT, WelTec/Whitireia and NorthTec as stand-alone polytechnics, and the transfer of Tai Poutini to the Open Polytechnic to manage delivery on the West Coast on an ongoing basis.
6. WITT can be established and will be viable without financial support, although its scale exposes it to some risk over time. WelTec/Whitireia can also be established without ongoing financial support, 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].

7. NorthTec will require ongoing funding of $1.3 million per annum over and above volume-based funding, to provide sustainable delivery in Northland. To enable the Open Polytechnic to manage provision at Tai Poutini on the West Coast will require $1 million per annum in additional funding. I propose to use strategically important provision funding on an ongoing basis to enable NorthTec, and delivery on the West Coast to remain viable.

8. Establishing a network of sustainable VET provision is particularly important in the regions to ensure relevant training opportunities are aligned with regional industry workforce needs, especially the health workforce, and to support the Government's targets to move people off the jobseeker benefit and into paid employment. Additionally, ensuring strategic provision in high economic growth sectors such as the primary sector, supports our Going for Growth targets.

9. Vocational pathways for young people, especially those not in employment, education or training (NEETs) are critical. Northland's NEET rate for example, is 15%, compared with a 13% national average demonstrating the critical need to ensure NorthTec can be established on a sustainable footing, and has the ability to develop fit for purpose facilities, with relevant programme offerings to attract young people into VET opportunities.

10. Providing strong Secondary-Tertiary pathways in the regions, through utilising VET facilities and resources can help to transform communities. We know that Trades Academies for example, help high school students envisage a future for themselves and lead to increased engagement, improved attendance, and the retention of learners in schools.

11. If Cabinet agrees to establish the three polytechnics of WITT, WelTec/Whitireia and NorthTec, [redacted] 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted] I will return to the Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026 seeking agreement to the submission of relevant Orders in Council to the Executive Committee. If Cabinet agrees to the transfer of the Tai Poutini polytechnic division from NZIST to the Open Polytechnic, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) will work with NZIST to develop a transition plan to support the successful transition of programmes, staff, assets and liabilities. 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]

12. As expected of the initial ten polytechnics, these polytechnics will need to operate on a financially responsible basis. They are being set up with high calibre, small and agile governance councils. The Education and Training Act 2020 also provides a monitoring and interventions framework, and the TEC will be monitoring these remaining polytechnics closely. If, despite intervention, a polytechnic becomes unviable in the future, mergers or closures may be considered.

Property support for NorthTec

13. I propose that $39.2 million of the Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition tagged operating contingency (the contingency) be set aside to assist NorthTec with property related issues. In particular, I seek agreement to $4.5 million to support property consolidation for NorthTec to support its viability. I also seek in-principle agreement to a further $34.7 million for the development of, and NorthTec's relocation to, a proposed Whangārei tertiary education hub, subject to approval by Joint Ministers of an appropriate business case. This proposal would provide fit-for-purpose VET learning facilities in Northland and support regional development.

Support for other polytechnic property issues from the contingency

14. I seek agreement to provide a grant of $10 million from the contingency to support EIT 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

15. I am also seeking Cabinet agreement to utilise $2.4 million of the contingency to provide a grant to SIT to address maintenance needs at their Telford campus, noting that both of these grants would represent a broader use of the contingency than originally envisaged.

Boosting strategically important provision funding

16. To avoid putting further pressure on core tertiary education delivery funding, I am seeking agreement to use $12.057 million from underspends in the Workforce Development Councils appropriation to top up strategically important provision funding to the full $15 million for four years from 2028 to 2031.

Background

Work has continued to ready the remaining polytechnic divisions for decisions

17. Over 2025, each Te Pūkenga polytechnic business division undertook significant rationalisation activity, including substantial reductions in programme delivery and staff.[1] In November 2025, decisions were taken on the initial ten polytechnics.[2] Each of the remaining polytechnic divisions has unique challenges, and work has continued to reduce their cost bases and explore sustainable operating models for them. They are now in a position where decisions on their future can be made.

Legacy property issues need resolving to set providers up to succeed

18. This paper addresses a number of property issues across the network, 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] The property maintenance issues at NorthTec are a result of poor performance for over a decade, leaving insufficient funds for property maintenance and capital investment. The Telford issues stem from the acquisition of Telford Rural Polytechnic by Lincoln University in 2011, when Lincoln inherited $10 million in cash reserves held by Telford. The Canterbury earthquakes occurred shortly after the merger, and these funds were directed to Lincoln operations. Due to ongoing poor performance at Lincoln, deferred maintenance issues arose at Telford that were not addressed.

Strategically important provision funding

19. In March 2025 Cabinet agreed to reprioritise funding from within Vote Tertiary Education to support strategically important provision in the VET system. For 2026 and 2027, $20 million has been allocated per year to support this provision in polytechnics during the system transition. From 2028 onward reprioritisation provides $11.956 million per annum to support strategically important provision, to be topped up to $15 million per annum from within Vote Tertiary Education. A long-term approach to the allocation of this funding has not yet been agreed.

Analysis - Proposed establishment of three polytechnics and the transfer of one

Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT) - establishment

20. WITT has undertaken significant financial improvement work and is forecasting to be in a surplus position over the 2026 to 2028 period, with no additional funding decisions required.

21. Jointly the Minister of Finance and I have agreed to one-off recapitalisation funding of $5.17 million for WITT, and additionally $2.94 million has been allocated to WITT so far from the funding for strategically important provision for 2026 and 2027. This puts them in a strong position to be viable for the next 2 years and ready for establishment now. I note there is some risk to WITT's sustainability if forecast enrolments are not met, 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]. The TEC will monitor its progress closely and report back to me regularly.

[1] A detailed report back to Cabinet on the implications of the VET redesign for learners was included as an Annex to the June 2025 Cabinet paper on the polytechnics [SOU-25-MIN-0076 refers].

[2] Further information on the wider system reforms and the background to the 2025 decisions is set out in the June and November 2025 Cabinet papers [SOU-25-MIN-0076 and LEG-25-MIN-0242 refer].

WelTec/Whitireia - establishment

22. WelTec/Whitireia has implemented a comprehensive financial improvement plan over the past year, considerably reducing staffing levels and adjusting its programme portfolio. The changes have resulted in WelTec/Whitireia now being forecast to break even in 2026 with the support of $0.9 million in strategically important provision funding. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

23. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

24. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

NorthTec - establishment

25. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] In 2026 with the inclusion of $3.65 million in strategically important provision funding, NorthTec is expected to report a surplus, 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].

26. Due to receiving strategically important provision funding for 2026 and 2027, NorthTec can be established and remain viable until 2028. From 2028, it will require ongoing funding of $1.3 million per annum to be sustainable.[3]

27. To ensure continuity of VET provision throughout Northland and to support the economic development of the Northland region, I seek agreement to progress the establishment of NorthTec as a stand-alone polytechnic, 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted] I also propose NorthTec receive $1.3 million per annum in addition to its baseline funding for the period of 2028 to 2031, drawn from the strategically important provision fund, to provide additional support.

NorthTec property consolidation to support viability post establishment

28. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

29. This approach would significantly improve the contribution margin of mid-North delivery and provide greater long-term certainty.

30. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] This would alleviate operating costs for

[3] $1.3 million is the amount required for NorthTec to meet the target of a 2 percent surplus, the TEC's low risk target as part of its financial monitoring framework.

NorthTec and assist with the financial sustainability of Far North delivery. I seek agreement to provide NorthTec with $4.5 million from the contingency 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]. Whilst this decision is separate from the establishment decision, this will significantly reduce the risk to NorthTec's financial sustainability post-establishment.

NorthTec – potential move to a Whangārei tertiary education hub

31. To improve learner access and ensure learners have fit-for-purpose facilities, I am seeking agreement to investment in the development of, and NorthTec's relocation to, a proposed central Whangarei tertiary hub, that will include a health simulation suite to support health training programmes - noting that the decision to establish NorthTec is not dependent on this decision.

32. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

33. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] NorthTec would require $34.7 million from the Crown to fund the hub project (further detail is set out in Annex 1).

34. I have received advice from the TEC that it will take 2-3 years before the hub is operational and the investment is not expected to provide any gain in terms of operating costs, or NorthTec's long-term financial performance.

35. The new facilities in the centre of Whangārei will, however, allow NorthTec an opportunity to attract additional learners (including international learners) and will provide modern fit-for-purpose VET facilities in Northland which I consider essential to support regional development.

36. Therefore, I seek:

    36.1. in-principle agreement to draw down $34.7 million from the contingency to fund the project initiation costs, hub development and NorthTec's relocation to the hub, subject to the approval of an appropriate business case in the second half of 2026; and

    36.2. agreement to delegate consideration of a business case, and any drawdown of funding from the contingency, to Joint Ministers including myself, the Minister for Social Development, the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Regional Development.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic – options to ensure ongoing provision on the West Coast

37. Tai Poutini has no pathway to financial viability, and no level of savings will be sufficient to enable Tai Poutini to stand alone as a polytechnic given its small scale. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] Ongoing VET provision at Tai Poutini, however, is critical for the economic and regional development of the West Coast region.

38. In November 2025, after local stakeholder engagement, I requested an assessment of an option to transfer Tai Poutini operations to the Open Polytechnic (report attached as Annex 2).

39. The assessment shows that transferring Tai Poutini to the Open Polytechnic to operate as a physical campus delivers better financial outcomes relative to the previously presented learning hub and regional PTE models (see Annex 1). This is due to greater staff reductions and savings being able to be made, with more reliance on the Open Polytechnic's systems and resources.

Tai Poutini – upfront investment and ongoing additional funding required

40. The assessment report states an upfront investment of $2 million is required 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] during the transformation phase prior to 1 January 2027. This funding would be provided to NZIST to deliver the change and would be drawn from the contingency, along with recapitalisation equivalent to three months' operating expenses. Furthermore, given the ongoing forecast losses, I propose to provide $1 million per annum for the period of 2028 to 2031, to be drawn from the strategically important provision fund.

41. There has been ongoing engagement with the Open Polytechnic throughout this process. Its council has had the opportunity to consider the final report and weigh the risks and benefits of this option, and I have received a council letter providing formal agreement to the proposal. To ensure ongoing provision on the West Coast, the TEC will include as a condition of the West Coast funding to the Open Polytechnic, that it must retain physical operations on the West Coast.

42. If Cabinet agrees to the transfer of the Tai Poutini polytechnic division from NZIST to the Open Polytechnic, and the additional funding required as set out above, the TEC will work with NZIST on a transition plan to support the successful transition of programmes, staff, assets and liabilities.

Support for other polytechnic property issues from the contingency

43. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

44. I am also seeking Cabinet agreement to utilise the contingency fund to support SIT to address a range of deferred maintenance needs at their Telford campus. This unique, historic campus provides a residential agricultural learning facility and requires restoration to ensure a fit for purpose, fully functioning campus. A recent quantity surveyor report has estimated these costs to total $3.4 million. I propose $2.4 million be contributed as a grant to SIT from the contingency.

45. Both of these grants would represent a broader use of the contingency than originally envisaged, but these would be one-time grants, and I consider this investment in the network is important to ensure ongoing certainty for the institutions and fit-for-purpose facilities for learners.

Strategically important provision can still be supported with existing funding

46. Reprioritised funding provided $20 million per year for strategically important provision in 2026 and 2027. From 2028, reprioritisation totals $11.956 million per annum. I am seeking agreement to transfer $12.057 million from underspends in the Workforce Development Councils appropriation to increase this funding to $15 million from 2028 to 2031. This will provide support through the current high-demand period, without having to draw funding away from learners.

47. Committing $2.3 million per annum to support the viability of NorthTec and provision at Tai Poutini will then reduce the available funding for strategically important provision from $15 million to $12.7 million per annum for this period. This requires a trade-off against the needs of other strategically important provision. On balance I consider this to be an appropriate use of this funding, as there is strategic value in retaining VET provision in these regions and losing it would have a range of significant negative impacts. I expect improvements in viability by 2032, but ongoing strategically important provision funding will remain available should it be needed.

48. I am considering the long-term use of this funding from 2028 onwards, and options for this are briefly outlined in Annex 3, as previously invited by Cabinet. My intention is to keep this funding focused on supporting the public provision of vocational education in the long-term.

Risks and Mitigations

49. The key risks and mitigations for the proposals set out in this paper are included at Annex 4.

Implementation

50. If Cabinet agrees to establish the proposed three polytechnics, I will return to Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026, with proposed Orders in Council, which will formally establish each of the three proposed stand-alone polytechnics. The Orders will come into force in October 2026 to allow for establishment activities ahead of an operational start date of 1 January 2027.

51. Prior to October 2026, the TEC will appoint and support establishment advisory groups to undertake initial establishment work, including determining the constitution of each polytechnic and commencing recruitment for chief executives. As far as possible, I then intend for the members of these groups to become members of the first governing council for each polytechnic to ensure continuity of decision-making. Accordingly, it is my intention to notify the Appointments and Honours Cabinet Committee of my intended appointments prior to the appointment of these individuals as establishment advisory groups (further detail in Annex 1).

52. A full timeline, including implementation activities, is included as Annex 5. The process to transfer Tai Poutini's operations to the Open Polytechnic is also set out in this timeline.

Cost-of-living implications

53. The proposals in this paper have no immediate cost-of-living implications.

Financial implications

54. The proposals in this paper are being managed within the contingency ($157.449 million in total) and funding for strategically important provision. Table 2 sets out uses of the contingency to date and those proposed in this paper. Where proposals are outside the original scope, I seek to use contingency funding to support the public provision of vocational education for the future.

Table 2: Proposed uses of contingency funding (one-off expenses)

Use of funding	Amount required	Contingency scope
Already agreed		
Recapitalisation and other financial needs	Nil (NZIST reserves)	Within original scope
Remaining recapitalisation costs	$15.7 million	Within original scope
Support for federation development	$2 million	Within original scope
Redundancy costs for transfer of work-based learning	$10 million	Within original scope
9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]	9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]	Within original scope
Subtotal	**$57.7 million**	
Necessary for decisions on the remaining polytechnic divisions		
Transfer of West Coast provision to Open Polytechnic	$2 million	Within original scope
NorthTec property consolidation	$4.5 million	Within original scope
9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	Within original scope
Subtotal	**$52.5 million**†	
Further polytechnic investment and support		
NorthTec hub development and relocation (pending business case)	$34.7 million*	Outside original scope
EIT Cyclone Gabrielle rebuild	$10 million	Outside original scope
Telford campus maintenance	$2.4 million	Outside original scope
Subtotal	**$47.1 million**	
Total contingency spending	**$157.3 million**	

* Not yet appropriated; this funding remains in contingency until required.

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

55. In addition, I propose providing annual funding support to NorthTec, and to the Open Polytechnic for delivery on the West Coast, to be drawn from funding for strategically important provision for

the period of 2028 to 2031. I am seeking agreement to reserve $2.3 million per annum for that purpose now, before long-term decisions are confirmed for the rest of this funding.

56. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Legislative implications

57. This paper seeks agreement to policy decisions that will lead to the proposal of secondary legislation (Orders in Council) in May 2026, that are provided for under section 315 of the Education and Training Act 2020. This paper also seeks agreement to issue drafting instructions to Parliamentary Counsel Office for those Orders.

Regulatory Impact Statement

58. Regulatory Impact Statements (RIS) were provided for Cabinet to consider the policy to disestablish Te Pūkenga and replace it with a network of regional polytechnics.

59. A further RIS to support consideration of the Orders in Council, the transfer of Tai Poutini to the Open Polytechnic, and to support consideration of the funding decisions set out in this paper is attached for your information. The Ministry of Education's internal Regulatory Impact Assessment Panel has assessed this RIS as partially meeting the Quality Assurance criteria.

Climate Implications of Policy Assessment

60. The Climate Implications of Policy Assessment (CIPA) team has been consulted and confirms that the CIPA requirements do not apply to this policy proposal, as the thresholds for significance are not met.

Population implications

61. The population implications of the overall reforms were addressed in my December 2024 Cabinet paper [SOU-24-SUB-0076] and these remain current. This paper proposes to establish three polytechnics with responsibility to meet VET needs in their regions. The transfer of Tai Poutini operations to the Open Polytechnic will impact learners in that region due to the need to rationalise programmes and in-person delivery further. Learners with low prior achievement, disabled learners, and learners with barriers to relocating or studying online may be impacted. The TEC will monitor the new polytechnics and the progress of the Tai Poutini transfer to ensure learners impacts can be minimised, and regional workforce training needs can be addressed.

Human rights

62. These proposals do not have human rights implications.

Use of external resources

63. Volte consultancy were engaged by the TEC to undertake the assessment and business case for the transfer of Tai Poutini to the Open Polytechnic. Their final report is in Annex 2.

Consultation

64. Local stakeholders were consulted on the proposal to transfer the operations of Tai Poutini to the Open Polytechnic, including the West Coast Vocational Education Stakeholder group (which includes the Grey District Mayor) and Tai Poutini and Open Polytechnic representatives.

65. The following agencies were consulted on drafts of this paper: the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Treasury, the Public Services Commission, the Department of Internal Affairs, the Inland Revenue Department, the Ministry for Regulation, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Youth Development, Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry for Primary Industries, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Corrections, the Ministry of Health, Health New

Zealand, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, the Ministry of Disabled People, Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, the Ministry for Women, the TEC, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, the Office of Treaty Settlements and Takutai Moana, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, the Office of the Auditor-General and the Office of the Ombudsman.

Communications

66. Subject to Cabinet's agreement to the proposals in this paper, I will issue a press release outlining the polytechnics the Government has agreed to establish and the transfer of Tai Poutini's operations to the Open Polytechnic.

Proactive Release

67. I intend to release the material within this Cabinet paper within 30 days after decisions are made by Cabinet, subject to any redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

The Minister for Vocational Education recommends that the Committee:

Establishment of three of the remaining polytechnic divisions

1. **agree** to establish the Western Institute of Technology (WITT) by Order in Council to be progressed through the Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026
2. 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]
3. **agree** to establish WelTec/Whitireia by Order in Council to be progressed through the Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026
4. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
5. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
6. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
7. **agree** to establish NorthTec by Order in Council to be progressed through the Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026
8. **agree** to provide $1.3 million per year from funding for strategically important provision, for the period of 2028 to 2031, to NorthTec to support its viability
9. **agree** to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office for Orders in Council to establish WITT, WelTec/Whitireia and NorthTec.

Support for NorthTec's property consolidation

10. **note** that whilst the decision to establish NorthTec can be made separately from the property consolidation decision, enabling NorthTec's 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] will significantly reduce the risk to NorthTec's financial sustainability post establishment
11. **agree** to utilise $4.5 million of the contingency to support 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Support for NorthTec's proposed development of, and relocation, to the tertiary hub

12. **note** that supporting NorthTec to develop and relocate to the proposed Whangārei tertiary hub will help NorthTec to modernise its facilities and potentially attract new learners. This proposal is not without risk however, and may impact NorthTec's future viability
13. **agree-in-principle** to $34.7 million to be drawn from the contingency, to fund the project initiation costs, hub development and NorthTec's relocation to it, pending approval of an appropriate business case
14. **agree** to delegate the drawdown of funding for the NorthTec tertiary hub to joint Ministers, including the Minister for Vocational Education the Minister for Social Development and Employment, the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Regional Development pending joint consideration and approval of an appropriate business case in the second half of 2026.

Transfer of Tai Poutini Polytechnic to the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

15. **note** the Open Polytechnic council has formally agreed to the transfer of Tai Poutini operations to the Open Polytechnic (pending Cabinet's agreement)
16. **agree** to the transfer of the Tai Poutini polytechnic division from NZIST to the Open Polytechnic as per the process set out in this paper and the attached timeline, to be effective and operational from 1 January 2027
17. **agree** to utilise $2 million of the contingency to support the transfer of Tai Poutini operations to the Open Polytechnic
18. **agree** to provide $1 million per year from funding for strategically important provision, for the period of 2028 to 2031, to the Open Polytechnic to support the viability of West Coast provision.

Support for other polytechnic property issues

19. **agree** to utilise $10 million of the contingency fund to support EIT in rebuilding and improving its Taradale campus following Cyclone Gabrielle
20. **agree** to utilise $2.4 million of the contingency fund to support SIT to address a range of deferred maintenance needs at Telford campus.

Strategically important provision funding

21. **note** that ongoing funding has been reprioritised for the purpose of supporting strategically important provision, although its use from 2028 onward has not yet been agreed
22. **agree** to utilise $12.057 million from underspends in the Workforce Development Councils' appropriation to increase funding for strategically important provision to $15 million per annum for 2028 to 2031, as an alternative to transferring funds from core tertiary delivery funding
23. **approve** the following changes to appropriations to utilise underspends to increase funding for strategically important provision to $15 million per annum for 2028 to 2031, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and/or net core Crown debt:

	$m – increase/(decrease)					
Vote Tertiary Education **Minister for Vocational Education**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Non-Departmental Output Expense:						
Workforce Development Councils	(12.057)	-	-	-	-	
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:						
Tertiary Education and Training (MCA)						
Non-Departmental Output Expenses: Qualification Delivery	-	-	2.925	3.044	3.044	3.044

Fiscal impacts

24. **note** that on 29 April 2024 Cabinet agreed to establish a tagged operating contingency of up to the following amounts for the purpose of funding costs involved in the disestablishment of Te Pūkenga and transition to a replacement model [CAB-24-MIN-0148.81 refers]

	$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28 & outyears
Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition – Operating Contingency	-	-	147.449	10.000	-
Total	**-**	**-**	**147.449**	**10.000**	**-**

25. **note** that on 25 June 2025 Cabinet agreed to indicative uses of tagged contingency funding [SOU-25-MIN-0076 refers], and that joint ministers have previously agreed to appropriate $56.1 million from the contingency in line with those indications, $28.4 million of which remains unspent

26. **agree** to establish the following new appropriation:

Vote	Appropriation Minister	Appropriation Administrator	Title	Type	Scope
Tertiary Education	Minister for Vocational Education	Ministry of Education	Support for polytechnic property management	Non-Departmental Capital Expenditure	This appropriation is limited to supporting polytechnics to repair, build or acquire facilities for their operations.

27. **approve** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to recommendations 11, 17, 19 and 20, using funding already appropriated from the Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition contingency, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt:

	$m – increase/(decrease)					
Vote Tertiary Education Minister for Vocational Education	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Non-Departmental Capital Expenditure:						
Recapitalisation of the New Vocational Education and Training Network	(18.900)	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Departmental Output Expense:						
Re-establishing the New Vocational Education and Training Network	2.000	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Departmental Capital Expenditure:						
Support for polytechnic property management	16.900	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	**2.000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Total Capital	**(2.000)**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

28. **agree** that the proposed changes to appropriations for 2025/26 be included in the 2025/26 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply

29. **note** that the current balance of the Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition tagged operating contingency is $101.349 million, and this contingency expires on 31 December 2027

Hon Penny Simmonds

Minister for Vocational Education

Annexes

Annex 1	Further detail to support decisions on each of the remaining polytechnic divisions
Annex 2	Future of West Coast Provision – Volte final report Jan 2026
Annex 3	Further detail and options for strategically important provision funding
Annex 4	Risks and mitigations table
Annex 5	Timeline including implementation activities
Annex 6	Article from Southern Institute of technology website: North - South collaboration guides students into primary industry training – 10 March 2026
Annex 7	Regulatory Impact Statement - Policy decisions about the remaining polytechnic divisions of the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology, Ministry of Education, March 2026.

Annex 1: Further detail to support decisions on each of the remaining polytechnic divisions

WelTec/Whitireia

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Measures to reduce the risk of future property liabilities:

The TEC has amended its monitoring approach over recent years 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] This includes strong monitoring of commercial deals, particularly long-term leases and borrowings, and closer relationships and monitoring of high-risk entities. The TEC has also engaged with the new polytechnic sector on some of the issues that occurred under the previous system to help ensure they are not repeated. Nevertheless, while long-term leases require the approval of the Secretary for Education, and the TEC and Ministry of Education will be assessing these robustly, polytechnics do have the autonomy to make a range of operational decisions (including entering into leases for terms less than 15 years).

NorthTec

Tertiary hub development:

In Whangārei, NorthTec currently delivers from its Raumanga campus and the Dyer Street trades campus. The Raumanga campus comprises ageing and inflexible buildings, many over forty years old, with significant deferred maintenance. There is a view among key Northland stakeholders that NorthTec should exit Raumanga and move to the proposed central Whangarei hub, increasing accessibility for learners. The proposal includes a health simulation suite at the hub to support health training programmes.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic

Options for Tai Poutini

In late 2025, the TEC engaged consultants to work with key West Coast stakeholders to explore options to minimise the losses on the West Coast - specifically converting Tai Poutini into a regional Private Training Establishment (PTE) or operating a learning hub with other tertiary providers. Both options continued to show losses.

Transfer to the Open Polytechnic will require further rationalisation

Considerable work is required from now until 1 January 2027 to realise the proposed financial benefits of the transfer to the Open Polytechnic. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]. The proposal also includes a range of property changes. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

The mix of provision will be refined to minimise losses, 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]. The emphasis has been on ensuring the new mix of provision focuses on programmes that generate learners/revenue and meet workforce needs on the West Coast.

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Working Capital

To be established each polytechnic will need sufficient working capital

As part of the re-establishment of the vocational education and training network, each polytechnic will be established with three months of operational funding as well as any ring-fenced reserves they took into Te Pūkenga. Only NorthTec entered Te Pūkenga with ring-fenced reserves, of $4,691,187 which will be returned to NorthTec on establishment.

Implementation

Appointment of polytechnic council members in the pre-election period

To enable these polytechnics to be established and operational by 1 January 2027, the inaugural council members will commence their terms during the pre-election period. While appointments that commence during the pre-election period are generally avoided, that is not possible in this case. Consistent with the principles set out in Cabinet Circular CO(26)1: Government Decisions and Actions in the Pre-election Period.

Any impact of appointments commencing during the pre-election period can be mitigated by utilising some shorter-term appointments. This will, however, need to be balanced against the need to ensure newly established institutions have sufficient certainty and stability. Any risk associated with these appointments commencing during the pre-election period is further mitigated by the establishment advisory groups commencing their roles *prior* to the pre-election period, and continuing their roles once Orders in Council come into effect and they become inaugural council members.

Future of West Coast Provision

Open Polytechnic West Coast Campus Option Assessment

January 2026

Volte

Table of contents

Executive Summary

Background:

In October 2025, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) commissioned Volte to develop a high-level business case to assess options for future tertiary education provision on the West Coast to replace the current Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP) model (Future of West Coast Provision Options Assessment). At a high-level, the business case assesses two options - a Learning Hub model utilising existing TPP assets, and a Regional PTE model. The assessment outlines the high-level economics of the two options and quantifies the likely financial shortfalls due to the level of learner demand on the West Coast.

In November 2025, TEC commissioned Volte to develop a report for a physical campus of Open Polytechnic on the West Coast (this report). This report builds upon the Future of West Coast Provision Options Assessment, particularly the operating model that was developed.

This report provides details on the viability of a physical campus of Open Polytechnic on the West Coast, including which assets and liabilities would transfer to the new structure and provides options/strategies for the residual assets and liabilities. Indicative financial modelling is included on the economics of the option.

Overview:

This report has been developed through high-level analysis of current TPP operations alongside engagement with the Open Polytechnic, TPP, Ara, TEC and Development West Coast. A draft operating model has been developed including the key financial aspects to provide a reasonable financial picture of the option.

Key differences to previous options

This option would establish what is currently operating as Tai Poutini Polytechnic as a fully integrated West Coast campus of Open Polytechnic.

Establishing a physical campus of Open Polytechnic on the West Coast will enable further rationalisation of the TPP structure as Open Polytechnic resource can be leveraged. Open Polytechnic believe they have sufficient resource to incorporate back office services for TPP which improves the financials of this option relative to the previously presented Learning Hub and Regional PTE models. Essentially, the back office service costs can be borne by Open Polytechnic making the financials of the option more attractive to the other assessed options.

Way forward:

Government support will be essential for the option to succeed in the form of:

1. An upfront investment of $2.0m is required to cover 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted], transformation activities (including systems integration, infrastructure adjustments, and project management/implementation) [redacted] 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] during the transformation phase prior to 1 January 2027.
2. Seed funding (assumed at $1.0m) to support additional working capital.
3. Ongoing Crown support is required to make the campus financially viable. This has been estimated at $750k from 2028 onwards. This campus may grow into the future and the quantum of Crown funding will reduce correspondingly.

Executive Summary

Financial Summary

- **Learner Numbers:** A base of 162 EFTS is modelled on which future growth opportunities should be explored on a case-by-case basis. Although modelling has been based on 162 EFTS, the intent is to grow in future and minimise reliance on Crown support.
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- **Infrastructure and Administration Costs:** Consistent with the Regional PTE and Learning Hub models, it is assumed that approximately 75% of in-regional TPP costs will continue, reflecting the reduced asset base and organisational scale.
- **Ara Support Costs:** $530k has been budgeted in 2026 due to capacity and capability gaps, with Ara contracted to provide support for TPP with BAU activities. This is assumed for 2026 only.
- **Inflation:** Aligned with Budget Economic and Fiscal Update 2025 – Treasury Estimates. Inflation held at 2.0% per annum.
- **Interest Rates**: Based on BKBM (Bank Bill Benchmark) plus a small margin.
- **Ongoing Crown Support:** Ongoing Crown support is required to make the entity financially viable once Strategic Funding ceases in 2027. Approximately $750k in ongoing Crown support from 2028 will be required to ensure the campus remains financially sustainable and does not become a financial burden on the Open Polytechnic.

Property and Infrastructure Summary

- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- **IT systems:** TPP will adopt Open Polytechnic IT systems, including its HRIS, SMS, Finance, payroll and LMS systems.

People & Programmes Summary

Core delivery: Mix of provision will be refined to minimise losses and focuses on programmes that generate learners/revenue and meet workforce needs on the Coast. The West Coast Trades Academy delivery will largely be retained as is. Opportunities will be explored in 2026 to expand OPNZ provision with students accessing course materials and tutors from OPNZ while using local campus services. Similar "host campus" models will also be explored with others providers.

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] the core delivery is consistent with the Learning Hub/Regional PTE models which were constructed with the West Coast Stakeholder group.

Next Steps

Workstreams:

To establish an Open Polytechnic campus on the West Coast, the existing operations of TPP need to be rationalised. We have assumed that the Open Polytechnic Campus on the West Coast will be operational from 1 January 2027. Therefore, rationalisation would take place from the Cabinet decision assumed in March 2026 to the end of 2026. We note that Open Polytechnic will likely undertake a further integration phase once the campus is operational. Rationalisation includes:

- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].
- Discussion with other education providers, including NMIT and Ara, about opportunities to expand their provision on the West Coast where they can have a presence at the West Coast campus and pay a space charge to Open Polytechnic.
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- Adopt Open Polytechnic IT systems.

A time line is included on the following slide.

Governance:

An Advisory Group will be established as the governance group for the campus. We understand it is proposed the Chair of the Advisory Group will also sit on the Open Polytechnic Board. However, this has yet to be decided and would need to take into account the scale of the West Coast operation. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

We anticipate the Advisory Board being established in mid-2026. We have assumed the Advisory Group will comprise approximately 5 members. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

We recommend a Management Group be established to oversee the transition from TPP's current operations to the future operating model. The Management Group will include representation from OPNZ and NZIST.

We anticipate independent external advice will also be required for the transition. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

BACKGROUND

Overview

Wider Context

Post-election 2023, the newly formed Government confirmed its intention to disestablish Te Pūkenga and re-establish regional Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs).

In July, at the TEC's direction, Te Pūkenga engaged external advisors to assess and develop ITP financial viability plans as part of a Regional ITP Viability Programme. Volte was engaged to advise on what is required to support TPP on its pathway to viability, including giving consideration to understanding and confirming the financial position and profitability of TPP. In FY24, TPP had a budgeted deficit of $5.0m and a forecast cash shortfall of $4.3m.

Volte's findings showed that even with proposed financial improvement initiatives, TPP would not be viable as a standalone ITP by January 2026 or within the longer-term forecast to FY29. A merger with another ITP division was considered but found to offer only marginal savings, leaving TPP a significant financial burden on any parent entity. Closure was identified as the most financially sound option but may be politically unacceptable due to the social and economic impact on the West Coast.

Importance of TPP

TPP is currently the only physical institute of technology and polytechnic presence in the region. It has faced ongoing financial and operational pressures, including persistently low enrolments, a widely spread delivery footprint, high fixed costs, and declining viability across its programme offerings.

In October 2024, an external Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) was formed to ensure the West Coast community was heard and supported throughout the dissolution process. The SRG recognises that change is needed and strongly supports maintaining in-person tertiary education on the West Coast.

Currently, around 30% of school leavers leave the West Coast due to limited training and career pathways. Reducing access to further education options such as the WCTA and TPP would likely lead to even greater disengagement and youth migration, adding to the challenges of an already aging regional workforce.

Delivery Locations

TPP provides tertiary vocational education and training in:

- Greymouth - TPP's main campus, spans 23,671sqm, the majority of which is leasehold.
- Westport – TPP provides delivery in hospitality, horticulture, infrastructure works and business administration from a 900sqm Trades Building.
- Reefton – TPP's provides hands-on agricultural experience from a 62ha farm in Reefton.
- Christchurch – TPP provides advanced scaffolding training from part of SIT's site. This is subcontracted to EarnLearn.
- Auckland – TPP provides delivery of scaffolding, rigging, industrial rope access, height safety and crane programmes from the Unitec Mt Albert campus.
- Wanaka - Home to TPP's Ski Patrol programme.

The out of region provision (Auckland, Christchurch and Wanaka) was exited by TPP in 2025. Although this lowers revenue, it also lowers the cost base and significantly reduces the complexity of the business model.

West Coast Provision

West Coast Regional Profile

The West Coast is New Zealand's least densely populated region creating challenges to have concentrated delivery in one West Coast centre.

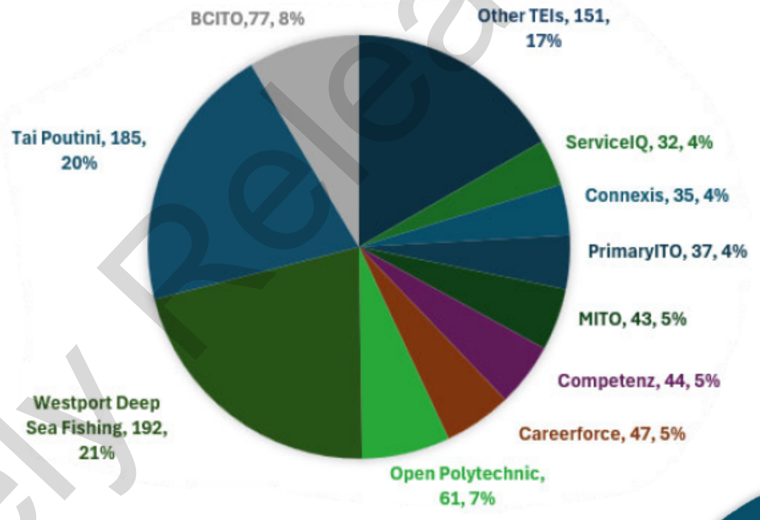
The West Coast Region is New Zealand's smallest market for learners. Based on Ngā Kete data, in 2023 there were an estimated 905 learners in the region (0.3% of all learners in New Zealand).

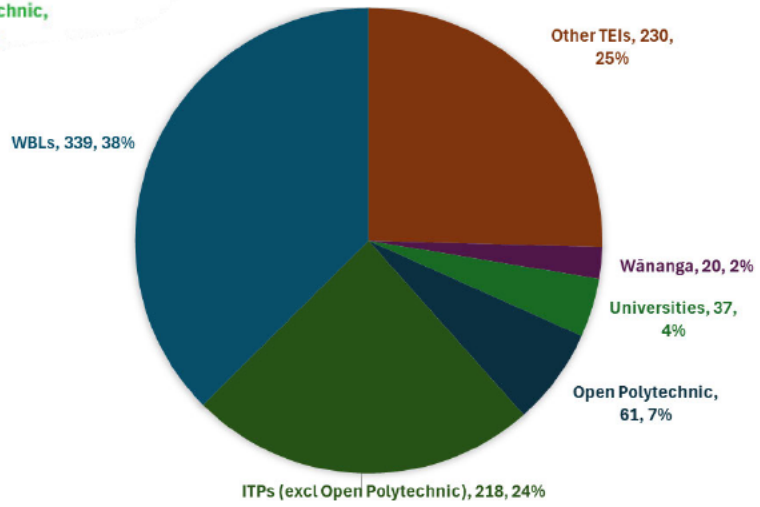
TPP is the only ITP physically based in the region and accounts for 20% of learners.

With regards to the West Cost Education market:

- 27 different tertiary education organisations (TEOs) operate within the region.
- Six of the other 15 former ITPs (Open Polytechnic, SIT, Otago Polytechnic, Ara, Wintec, and NMIT) have learners within the region.
- Universities (Massey, Otago and Canterbury) hold 4% of the market; a relatively small proportion compared to other regions.
- Proportionally, there are a large number of WBL learners within the West Coast region, at 38%.
- BCITO, Careerforce, Competenz and MITO combined account for 23% of work-based learning (WBL) learners.

West Coast 2023 Market by Provider (EFTS and % share)





West Coast Market by TEI type (EFTS and % share)

Investing in the Future

Vocational Education at Risk

As highlighted in the Vocational Education on the West Coast report, retaining young people on the West Coast is critical to the region's long-term social and economic future. Around 30% of school leavers leave the Coast due to limited training and career options, and most don't come back. That's compounded by low school attendance, with only 49% attending regularly in 2024.

A quarter of the West Coast communities are ranked among the most education-deprived in the country. With no solution the impacts are:

- Missed learning
- Increased anxiety
- Reduced motivation
- Long-term consequences for health, income, and wellbeing.

Vocational education offers a practical way to change this trajectory. Programmes such as the West Coast Trades Academy, Foundation Skills, and Youth Guarantee provide clear pathways from school into employment. The Trades Academy alone supports more than 200 students each year and consistently exceeds national benchmarks in NCEA achievement and successful transitions into work or further study.

Second chance education and short courses play a critical role, especially in a region where many learners are unable to relocate. Without a future-focused solution, there is a serious risk of losing the next generation.

Future Trends & Key Programmes

The current provision on the West Coast report highlights that the West Coast economy is entering a period of accelerated growth, driven by expansion in mining, construction, and infrastructure. Between 2024 and 2026, the mineral sector workforce is expected to grow from 728 to over 1,150 jobs, with 26% turnover requiring both replacement and new hires.

The report points to an urgent need for skilled workers across multiple sectors and vocational education is the pipeline that will supply them. To meet this demand, the West Coast must prioritise high-impact, regionally aligned programmes.

- Outdoor Education continues to attract strong employer support and delivers consistently high learner completion rates.
- Quarry and Mining training plays a vital role in regional development and is closely aligned with industry demand.
- Automotive, Carpentry, and Engineering programmes contribute directly to local infrastructure and construction capability.
- Training in Digger Operation and Heavy Machinery helps address critical workforce shortages in civil works and mining.
- Foundation Skills and Youth Guarantee remain key pathways for learners at risk of disengagement, helping bridge the gap from school into employment.

These programmes are not just educational offerings they are potential investments in the region's future workforce and economic stability.

FINANCE

Developing Op Model and Financials

Approach

Developing the operational model and financials is based on inputs from stakeholder meetings. A lean approach is required to reduce costs and improve efficiency. This will support a complete shift in both the operational model and the underlying culture from the current to the future model.

Future Provision

Given the realities around economies of scale on the West Coast and the cost of delivery, the mix of provision needs to be further refined to minimise losses. Once a stable base is established, future growth opportunities should be explored on a case-by-case basis (see slide 23).

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] Accommodation is required in the future entity to enable outdoor education provision into the future (see slide 15).

Key Financial Assumptions

- **Learner Numbers:** A base of 162 EFTS for 2027 is modelled on which future growth opportunities should be explored on a case-by-case basis. Although the modelling has been based on the 162 EFTS, the intent is to grow in the future and minimise reliance on Crown support.
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- **Capital Expenditure Allowance:** Given the scale of the future business and the current state of the asset base a 9(2) [redacted] per annum capital expenditure allowance has been made in the modelling.
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- **Infrastructure and Administration Costs:** Consistent with the Regional PTE and Learning Hub models, it is assumed that approximately 75% of in-regional TPP costs will continue under both models, reflecting the reduced asset base and organisational scale.
- **Inflation:** Aligned with Budget Economic and Fiscal Update 2025 – Treasury Estimates. Inflation held at 2.0% per annum.
- **Interest Rates**: Based on BKBM (Bank Bill Benchmark) plus a small margin.
- **Ara Support Costs:** 9(2) [redacted] is required to support capacity and capability gaps, with Ara contracted to provide support for TPP with BAU activities during 2026 only.
- **Strategic Crown funding:** TPP expects to receive $3.1m per annum in 2026/2027 in strategic funding from the Crown. It is assumed that the conditions of this funding are met.
- **Opening Cash:** $3.0m will be required from the Crown to support the initial transformation and working capital requirements. This funding will cover 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted], transformation activities (including systems integration, infrastructure adjustments, and consultancy), and 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] provisions. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- **Ongoing Crown Support:** Ongoing Crown support is required to make the entity financially viable once Strategic Funding ceases in 2027. This is estimated at $750k. We have assumed no negative impact to TPP's strategic funding in 2026 or 2027 from the closure of some of this delivery. If there is a reduction in strategic funding, this would increase the ask from the Crown.

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE & SYTEMS

Building Requirements

Background

The Greymouth campus serves as the main hub for TPP and includes 58 student accommodation units. It spans 23,671 square metres, divided into 14 parcels of land, with 6,841 square metres owned by NZIST and the remainder under leasehold agreements. These leases have expiration dates from 2026 to 2057 and an annual rental cost of approximately $100,000. TPP's Westport campus includes a 900 square metre Trades Building on a ground lease with the Buller District Council. The current lease expires in 2028, with five renewal options of 15 years each. TPP also has a 62-hectare agricultural training farm in Reefton.

The footprint is too large for the scale of current and future delivery. Maintaining underutilised or ageing buildings adds unnecessary cost and complexity. 9(2)(b) [redacted].

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Property Implications

Building	Status	Title
Greymouth Main Campus		
Driver Education (6-14 Chapel Street)	Keep	On leasehold land 683332. (Freehold title 480643)
Carpentry Workshop (6-14 Chapel Street)	Keep	On leasehold land 683332. (Freehold title 480643)
O'Sullivan Building - Outdoor Education (6-14 Chapel Street)	Keep	On leasehold land 683332. (Freehold title 480643)
Nun's Music Building (Convent Lane)	Keep	On leasehold land 253135. (Freehold title WS5D/501)
Campbell Building (Convent Lane)	Keep	On leasehold land 731092. (Freehold titles WS3B/447 and WS3B/448)
Trades Building (67-71 Tainui Street)	Keep	On leasehold land 731092 and 853319. (Freehold titles WS3B/442, WS3B/443, WS3B/444, WS3B/445, WS3B/446)
Room B6, B7 and Library (Tainui Street)	Keep	On leasehold land 748471. (Freehold titles WS3B/994, WS3B/995, WS3B/446)
Beaumont Building (81-87 Tainui Street)	Keep	On leasehold land 748471. Instrument 10389211.1 (Freehold titles WS3B/994, WS3B/995, WS3B/446)
Hatherley Building (81-87 Tainui Street)	Surplus	On leasehold land 748472. Instrument 10389211.2 (Freehold titles WS3B/996, WS3B/997, WS3B/1000)
Nimmo Building (81-87 Tainui Street)	Surplus	On leasehold land 748472. (Freehold titles WS3B/996, WS3B/997, WS3B/1000)
Caretaker Shed (7 Puketahi St)	Surplus	On leasehold land 748472. (Freehold title WS3B/1000)
[illegible] Puketahi St)	Surplus	On freehold land WS5D/1297.

9(2)(b)(ii)

Property Implications (Continued)

Location	Status	Title
Greymouth Student Accommodation		
23-25 Alexander Street	Keep	On leasehold land 906876.
19-23 Puketahi Street	Keep	On leasehold land 749256 and 169230.
47-49 Alexander Street	Keep	On leasehold land 275096
Greymouth Staff Accommodation		
24 Puketahi Street	Surplus	On leasehold land 1072977. (Corresponding freehold title WS3B/486)
Greymouth Lombard Street		
4, 6 Lombard Street	Surplus	On leasehold land 1047210. (Corresponding freehold title WS3B/225)
Reefton Campus – 51 Soldiers Road		
62ha Farm	Surplus	NL12C/593, NL133/77 and NL12C/594. All freehold owned by Te Pūkenga.
Westport Campus – 2 Coates Street		
Trades Campus		

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

Infrastructure Implications

Approach:

A high-level, desktop investigation was undertaken to ascertain the service infrastructure implications of reducing the 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

The investigation was based on a review of the Grey District Council's Property Files for Tai Poutini Polytechnic (81-87 Tainui Street, Greymouth) and files requested from Tai Poutini Polytechnic itself.

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Infrastructure Implications (Continued)

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

Systems & Fixed Assets

Systems:

TPP IT systems, including its SMS and Finance systems, are out-of-date and close to end-of-life. TPP does not have one dedicated LMS. TPP is part of the WiseNet adoption programme, however this programme has been problematic. This option provides an alternative way forward by utilising the existing Open Polytechnic system.

Open Polytechnic has confirmed that TPP would be able to use its IT systems, including its HRIS, SMS, Finance and LMS systems, in the proposed future model.

To simplify the migration process, we recommend historical data is not migrated onto Open Polytechnic systems and TPP instead adopts use of the Open Polytechnic systems from a set day e.g. in time for 1 January 2027, where practical.

We have made provision of (2)(b) [redacted] for IT licensing, IT support and storage, configuration, and possible migration of historical data.

Fixed Assets:

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

A summary of the fixed asset register is in the table, right.

Category	Number of line items	Total book value	Items for disposal	Disposal value (based on NBV)
Land	15	9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]		
Buildings	95			
Computers	155			
Plant	772			
Heavy Machinery	23			
Outdoor Recreation	183			
Furniture	385			
Library	88			
Vehicles	58			
Computer Software	13			
TOTAL	1787			

PEOPLE & PROGRAMMES

Current Programme Delivery

Current Programmes

The programmes TPP currently delivers are set out in the table to the right. The indicated EFTS and Revenue are based on an optimistic scenario for 2026. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Programmes	Revenue ($000)	EFTS
Jade & Hard Stone Carving (Diploma)	$68	4
Jade & Hard Stone Carving (Certificate)	$168	12
Outdoor Instruction and Guiding (Diploma)	$503	27
Outdoor Education (Certificate)	$773	40
Certificate in Automotive Trades	$245	14
Certificate in Carpentry (Residential and Commercial)	$234	14
Mining & Quarrying Supervision L4/5	$168	10
Digger School Westport	$330	18
Digger School Greymouth	$330	18
New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2)	$157	16
NZ Study & Career Preparation L3	$96	6
Trades Academy	$384	-
Other Non-Government Funded Programmes	$320	-
Certificate in Ski Patrol	$170	11
Business Admin & Comp Level 3	$37	3
Certificate in Hospitality	$67	5
NZC in Skills for living for supported learning (level 1)	-	-
National Certificate in Motor Industry (Tyre Servicing)	$72	5
Agriculture	$88	5
Certificate in Horticulture	$74	4
Scaffolding (Earn Learn) – non TTP EFTS	$950	-
Cert Backcountry & Predator Elimination Skills	-	-
Unadjusted FY25 Budget	**$5,235**	**212**

Future Programme Delivery

Future core provision on the West Coast should concentrate on financially viable, workforce-aligned programmes delivered from Greymouth, leveraging OPNZ and selected partners for scale.

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Online and blended delivery

Open Polytechnic already provides online learning to West Coasters with on-campus support at TPP facilities, demonstrating a proven blended model that can be expanded. Future core programmes should use OPNZ online delivery wherever possible, with 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] providing supervised study spaces, learner support, and limited face-to-face components.

Partnership opportunities

Existing arrangements show that Greymouth can host learners enrolled with OPNZ, with students accessing course materials and tutors from OPNZ while using local campus services. Similar "host campus" models could be explored with others, for example NMIT delivering outdoor education or adventure tourism qualifications while paying a facilities/service fee to use West Coast sites and infrastructure.

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

West Coast Trades Academy

The Trades Academy is a key part of the future of tertiary education on the West Coast, providing workforce aligned pathways and supporting regional skill retention. In addition to the organisation structure on the following slide, casual resources have also been allowed for in Trades Academy delivery areas (and outdoor education) to ensure enough resource has been allowed for to achieve successful delivery of these programmes.

Programme	FTE	Current Delivery Location	9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	Comment
Carpentry	9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	Greymouth	[redacted]	9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
Farming	[redacted]	Greymouth and Reefton	[redacted]	[redacted]
Mechanics	[redacted]	Greymouth	[redacted]	[redacted]
Engineering	[redacted]	Greymouth or Westport	[redacted]	[redacted]
Computer Programming and AI	[redacted]	Greymouth	[redacted]	[redacted]
Café Skills	[redacted]	Greymouth	[redacted]	[redacted]
Cheffing and Bakery	[redacted]	Greymouth	[redacted]	[redacted]
Hair and Beauty	[redacted]	Greymouth	[redacted]	[redacted]
Trades Digger School	[redacted]	Greymouth	[redacted]	[redacted]

Indicative People Change

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

Current and future staffing

- Tai Poutini Polytechnic currently employs 51 staff in permanent or fixed-term roles, split between 26 non-teaching roles (22.5 FTE) and 25 teaching roles (23 FTE).

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

Indicative People Impact

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

2026 Workplan

2026 Workplan

NZIST 2026 Workplan

NZIST's role through 2026 is to maintain continuity of delivery while progressing core decisions that enable the transition to a sustainable West Coast operating model. Key responsibilities include:

- Delivering the approved 2026 Funding Agreement with BAU leadership support from Ara.
- Working with Open Polytechnic, TEC and community stakeholders to confirm the 2027 Programme Portfolio.
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- As SMS and TechnologyOne migration will not occur during 2026, TPP will continue to use its existing systems until transition to Open Polytechnic platforms from 1 January 2027.

Open Polytechnic 2026 Workplan

Open Polytechnic's focus in 2026 is preparing operational systems, governance and planning for the establishment of the West Coast campus in 2027. This includes:

- Providing formal advice to NZIST and TEC on the 2027 Programme Portfolio.
- Rolling out the LMS across TPP, preparing the SMS for 2027 enrolments, and updating payroll.
- TechnologyOne and Adaptive systems to ensure TPP staff transition seamlessly from 1 January 2027.
- Open Polytechnic will complete the 2027 Investment Plan and Budget for the West Coast campus and establish the Advisory Group to ensure strong regional representation and oversight.

These activities lay the foundation for integrating academic delivery, learner support and corporate functions into Open Polytechnic systems and governance structures.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Assessment

Key Transition Risks:

Risk	Mitigation
Capability and capacity gaps Adequate capability and resource are required to successfully execute the transition. Multiple stakeholders are involved (TEC, OPNZ, TPP, NZIST), however have limited capacity to manage the transition. Due to the people impact, TPP staff should not manage the work.	Provision has been made for additional resource to manage the transition.
Strategic misalignment The intended outcome of the transition is to enable a viable West Coast campus (with the associated assets and liabilities) to be operated by OPNZ. The extent and form of this may change through the transition period.	Campus viability will be continuously re-assessed and communicated to relevant stakeholders throughout the transition.
Loss of stakeholder confidence Lack of consultation with internal and external stakeholders on the decision and process may negatively impact reputation and engagement.	Decisions will be communicated as early and as clearly as possible to stakeholders. The Advisory Group will be established as soon as possible, with strong stakeholder representation.
Operational fragmentation The transition may disrupt 2026 operations, leading to inefficiencies and lessened service delivery.	Workstreams will be actively managed to identify and manage dependencies and operational impacts.
Unforeseen transition cost Transition costs could exceed contingencies.	Workstreams will be actively managed to identify and manage any cost escalations.
Staff uncertainty, morale and retention Transition uncertainty and change may lead to decreased morale and loss of talent.	Allow sufficient time for staff consultation and communicate clearly and regularly with staff throughout the transition.

Operating Model Key Risks:

Risk	Mitigation
Poor strategic outcome Without clear governance and expectation, the strategic intention of the campus may be undermined.	Clear expectations regarding the campus are communicated from the Crown to Open Polytechnic.
Loss of stakeholder confidence Poor outcomes for the campus may erode trust among staff, students, and external partners, impacting reputation and engagement.	Regular reporting from the Advisory Group must be provided to and considered by the Open Polytechnic Management/Council.
Unforeseen operational cost Operational costs of the West Coast campus may exceed forecasts.	Robust delegations and regular financial reporting and forecasting for the West Coast campus must be provided to the Advisory Board, and the Open Polytechnic Management/Council.
Integration failures Synergy and growth opportunities may not be identified and acted upon which could increase costs and/or reduce potential revenues.	Regular reporting from the Advisory Group must be provided to and considered by the Open Polytechnic Management/Council.
Strategic misalignment The differences in the campus and Open Polytechnic's existing operating models may limit overall progress.	Open Polytechnic will dedicate resources to understand these differences and develop strategies to ensure the risk is managed. Regular reporting to the Advisory Group and the Open Polytechnic Management/Council will ensure progress is made as scheduled.

Disclaimer

This report is issued pursuant to the terms and conditions set out in our Letter of Engagement and has been prepared solely for the purposes stated herein and within the terms of the Letter of Engagement. This report should not be relied upon for any other purpose.

This report is strictly confidential and (save to the extent required by applicable law and/or regulation) must not be released to any third party without our express written consent which is at Volte's sole discretion.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, Volte do not accept a duty of care to any third party in connection with the provision of this report and/or any related information or explanation (together, the "Information"). Accordingly, regardless of the form of action, whether in contract, tort (including without limitation, negligence) or otherwise, and to the extent permitted by applicable law, Volte does not accept liability of any kind to any third party and disclaim all responsibility for the consequences of any third party acting or refraining to act in reliance on the Information.

Volte has not independently verified the accuracy of all information provided during the course of the review. Accordingly, Volte expresses no opinion on the reliability, accuracy, or completeness of the information provided and upon which Volte has relied.

The statements and opinions expressed herein have been made in good faith, and on the basis that all information relied upon is true and accurate in all material respects, and not misleading by reason of omission or otherwise. The statements and opinions expressed in this report are based on information available as at the date of the report.

Volte reserves the right, but will be under no obligation, to review or amend its report, if any additional information, which was in existence on the date of this report was not brought to attention, or subsequently comes to light.

Annex 3: Further detail and options for strategically important provision funding

This funding was reprioritised from within Vote Tertiary Education for the purpose of supporting strategically important provision in the vocational education and training system [SOU-25-MIN-0027 refers]. While $20 million per annum was provided for the initial transition period,[1] reprioritised funding reduces over time:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29 onwards
Reprioritised funding ($m)	$7.797	$15.000	$15.000	$12.075	$11.956

I am proposing the use of underspends in the Workforce Development Councils appropriation to increase this funding to the intended $15 million per annum for 2027/28 through 2030/31, as an alternative to drawing on other funding in the Tertiary Tuition and Training Multi-Category Appropriation as originally proposed. During the current period of unusually high demand for tertiary education, the previous approach would be likely to reduce the number of learners who could be funded in the overall system. Use of underspends avoids this negative impact.

Funding for strategically important provision is therefore available as follows:

Period	Use of funding	Total available (per annum)
2026 and 2027	Transitional support for strategically important provision in polytechnics	$20 million
2028 -2031	Support for NorthTec and West Coast provision viability	$2.3 million
	Support for strategically important provision	$12.7 million
	Total	**$15 million**

From 2031 onward $15 million will be available to support strategically important provision. I expect that NorthTec and Open Polytechnic provision on the West Coast will be more viable after this point, but ongoing support for these institutions can be considered as part of strategic importance at that time if needed.

9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]

9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]

[1] $15 million reprioritised funding was supplemented with $5 million reserved from general volume funding for this purpose, by Cabinet agreement [CAB-25-MIN-0085.01 refers].

9(2)(f)(iv)

[redacted]

Annex 4: Establishing the four remaining polytechnics – risks and mitigations

Risks	**Mitigations/ trade-offs**
Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT)	
• While it is still early in the enrolment cycle, domestic EFTS at WITT are currently down 8 percent in 2026 (6 percent below forecast) while full-fee international EFTS are down by 47 percent (15 percent below forecast). • There is therefore a risk that domestic enrolments will fall by more than forecast in 2026 and/or that international enrolments do not stabilise in 2027 and 2028. This would result in financial performance being worse than forecast.	• WITT will need to carefully manage its enrolments to deliver this forecast.
• WITT is forecasting to be in a surplus position over the 2026 to 2028 period. However, WITT's small scale and history of financial viability issues means it faces considerable risk to its ongoing sustainability.	• Being designated as a federation polytechnic may help manage some risk and will provide access to additional resource and shared services.
• WITT will remain vulnerable to external shocks or any large declines in enrolments, and membership of the federation is unlikely to deliver additional cost savings given the cuts made at WITT to date, even if it has access to additional resources and shared services.	• WITT's council and the TEC will need to carefully monitor its financial position, identify risks early, and act appropriately.
WelTec/Whitireia	
• While WelTec/Whitireia is forecasting to return to financial viability in 2027, it faces considerable financial challenges and has been performing poorly for nearly a decade. There remains a need to address considerable deferred maintenance at its Petone campus, to stabilise (and grow) enrolments, and rebuild linkages with stakeholders in the region.	• Being designated as a federation polytechnic may help manage some risk and will provide access to additional resource and shared services. • WelTecTec/Whitireia's council and the TEC will need to carefully monitor its financial position, identify risks early, and act appropriately.
• 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	• 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].

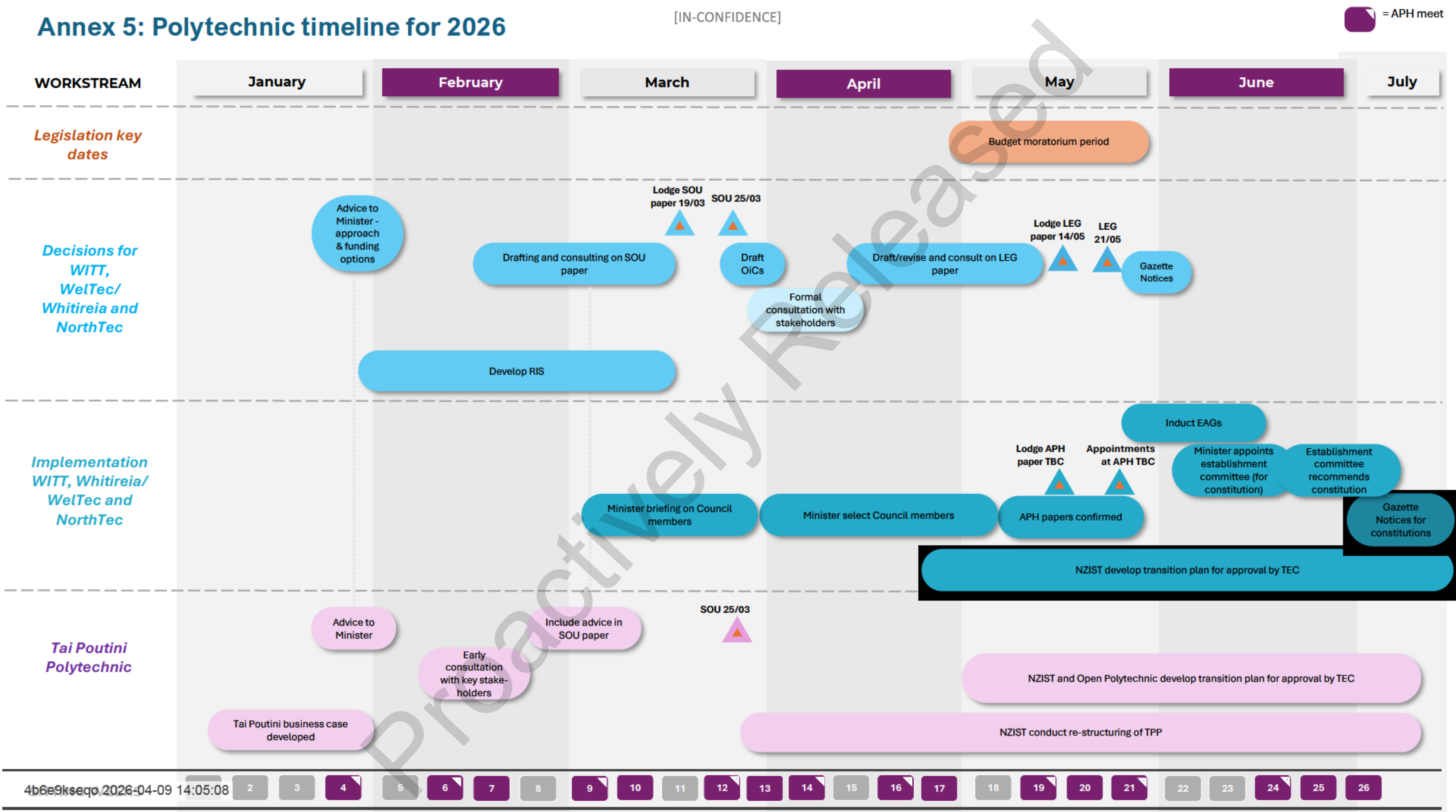
• 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] • 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	• 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].
NorthTec	
• NorthTec has historically struggled financially given its small scale and the dispersed region it delivers into. It has reported a surplus only once over the past 20 years. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] • There a risk that underlying performance is worse than expected if enrolment projections are not achieved and/or the full benefits from the planned financial improvements are not realised. NorthTec could remain at high risk of being unviable. • Changes to academic programmes and associated staffing have not yet been successfully delivered, and need to occur to support NorthTec's financial performance.	• Providing NorthTec with $1.3 million additional funding per annum from 2028 and on an ongoing basis from the funding for strategically important provision, will support NorthTec to remain viable. • Being designated as a federation polytechnic may help manage some risk and will provide access to additional resource and shared services. • NorthTec council and the TEC will need to carefully monitor its financial position, identify risks early, and act appropriately. • A draft strategic improvement plan has recently been developed to support Norther to move further towards financial sustainability. Once the plan is finalised, it will be critical that NorthTec successfully implements the required changes, although it will be reliant on domestic enrolment levels improving.
• The campus consolidation to reduce the number of sites that NorthTec operates, 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	• 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] and the consolidation is necessary to support the financial viability of NorthTec. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted], which is a high number for a small polytechnic, but given Northland's geographical difficulties will be necessary for the foreseeable future. This may create transport issues for some learners. • Three Joint Ministers will consider a business case to be developed later in 2026 and ensure all risks and benefits have been carefully

• Moving to the hub campus model is unlikely to make NorthTec financially viable. Any savings in operating costs will be more than offset by an increase in depreciation meaning this investment is likely to have a negative impact on NorthTec's financial performance. While the new facilities in the centre of Whangārei may enable NorthTec to attract additional learners, this is an untested proposal and comes with considerable risk. It will also take several years before the hub is operational. • The proposed $34.7 million sought to fund the hub development (including the business case and specialist nursing simulation facilities) is outside the original scope of the tagged contingency, and is a significant investment in an untested proposal.	considered before the investment in the overall project can be approved.
Tai Poutini	
• Tai Poutini has no pathway to financial viability and no level of savings will be sufficient to enable it to stand alone as a polytechnic.	• Tai Poutini can be transfer to the Open Polytechnic to manage its operations and campus on an ongoing basis. • Staff reductions and savings can be made and more reliance on Open Polytechnic's systems and resources, including back-office services. • Providing the Open Polytechnic with $1 million per year as additional support for provision on the West Coast will help to manage the costs of delivery.
• To transfer Tai Poutini to the Open Polytechnic will require considerable changes prior to 1 January 2027 to realise the proposed financial benefits. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] the refinement of programme offerings may create risk to provision and risk to learners' access to educational opportunities when campus sites are closed and some programme offerings are either closed or moved online. • 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	• Further opportunities will be explored in 2026 to expand Open Polytechnic provision with students accessing course materials and tutors from Open Polytechnic while using local campus services. Similar "host campus" models will also be explored with other providers. • The emphasis has been on ensuring the new mix of provision focuses on programmes that generate learners/revenue and meet workforce needs on the West Coast. Some provision will be lost in order to ensure viability and continued polytechnic provision on the West Coast.
• The Tai Poutini proposal also includes a range of property changes. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	• An upfront investment of $2 million is proposed to cover 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted], transformation activities (including systems integration, infrastructure adjustments, and project

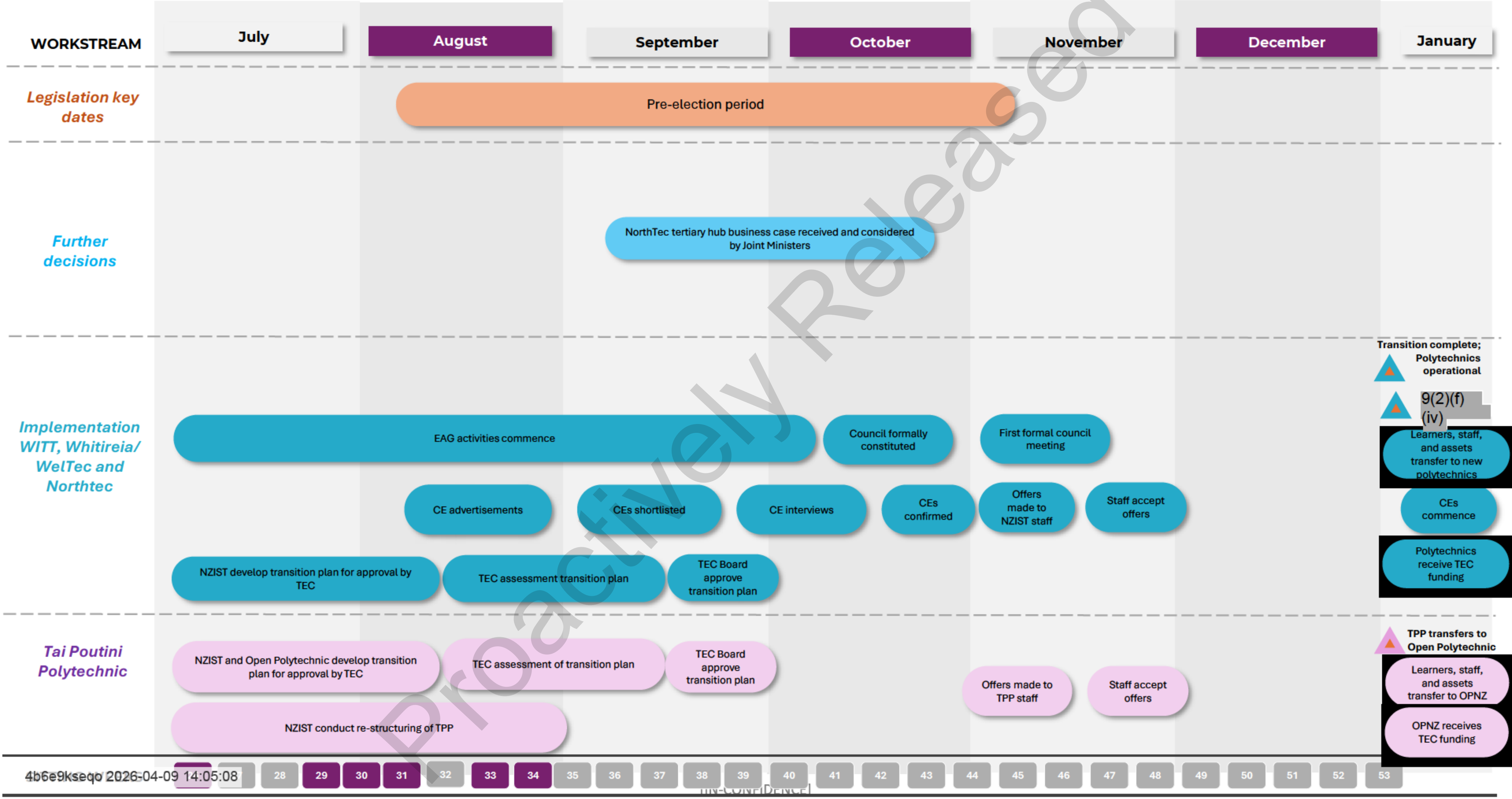
9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] • 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] This will result in ongoing property costs to the Open Polytechnic that it can't sustain.	management/implementation) and 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] during the transformation phase prior to 1 January 2027. This funding would be provided to NZIST to deliver the change. • 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
Implementation and ongoing risks	
• The work required for the polytechnics to begin operating on 1 January 2027 is not sufficiently advanced.	• Agreement in-principle in this Cabinet paper allows preparatory work to begin quickly, e.g. setting up Establishment Advisory Groups.
• The federation is not able to deliver all the cost savings needed for members to be financially viable.	• Federation membership provides further cost saving options that will need to combine with changes in provision and capital, and work on long term funding options to retain strategically important provision.
• Newly established polytechnics are financially vulnerable to shocks and the government may need to provide emergency support within the first few years.	• 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]. • The TEC will monitor the polytechnics and applies graduated risk intervention levers if necessary.
• There is a potential risk to the reputation of New Zealand's tertiary institutions and the ability to attract international students if any of the polytechnics fail to remain financially viable. Media coverage has highlighted the focus of some polytechnics on recruitment of international students to support viability, potentially resulting in an additional risk to programme quality and/or system integrity.	• The TEC will monitor the balance between remaining viable and attracting international students, and any impacts on programme quality (with the support of NZQA) and system integrity. The TEC will apply graduated risk intervention levers if necessary.

Transitional risks	*Mitigations*
• The required strong leadership for polytechnics is not found.	• Establishment Advisory Groups will have skills required to establish the Polytechnics and are intended to include people who can transition onto Polytechnic Councils. • The Council members will be appointed on the basis of the skills they bring and their experience with governing organisations in transition. A search is underway for suitable candidates.
• Underserved learners including disabled learners are unaware of changes to programmes or may not be able to access their first-choice programmes.	• Underserved learners will be included in communications strategies on the change. NZIST and future polytechnics will put in place support for learners affected by the changes.

Annex 5: Polytechnic timeline for 2026



Annex 5: Polytechnic timeline for 2026



Annex 6: News item from Southern Institute of Technology website:

North - South collaboration guides students into primary industry training

Publish Date: Tuesday, 10 March 2026

Northland College students complete their fencing skills assessment at Telford in November 2025. Every year their class of Agriculture students come south for one week to be assessed on all their practical farm skills and gain NCEA credits to pass the programme.

- ***News, Articles, Agriculture & Horticulture, Telford***

#News #Telford #Agriculture

Northland College agricultural students took an end-of-year trip to Telford for a week of skills assessments to meet the practical skills of their vocational programme, as well as gaining a taste of student life on SIT's agricultural campus.

The students, accompanied by their teacher, Geraldine Tilly, made the long journey from Kaikohe to Telford in early November to spend a week demonstrating their practical skills in end-of-year testing, to meet the requirements of their Agriculture programme.

Northland College established three **vocational programme**s – Agriculture, Hospitality and Carpentry – more than 20 years ago, to introduce real-world skills training to the school. They first visited Telford in 2005. “A lot of our students are practical learners,” Mrs Tilly explains.

Northland College is in the unique position of having a **460-ha dairy farm attached to the school**; it includes a forestry block, with 175 ha effective for dairy. Agriculture students have access to learning the skills necessary in operating the farm, where 300 cows are milked once a day. “The students do everything,” says Mrs Tilly, “milking cows, calf rearing, farm maintenance, fencing, water reticulation, weed spraying, and quad, LUV and tractor driving. Our seniors study soils and pasture management.”

“Students practise throughout the year; they cover a theory paper for each task, then spend the year working towards their week at Telford.” The goal for the week is to achieve their practical credits; students are tested on their skills and prove they can achieve each task to gain their credits.

Mrs Tilly says a small but steady flow of Northland College students choose to train at Telford; she saw the week as highly beneficial, as **Telford provided her students with the experience of farming on a larger scale**. “Telford has a rotary shed and milks 600—700 cows. Everything is so much bigger than what we have here. The tractors are huge.”

Spending the week at Telford also gave the students the opportunity to get out and experience another area of the country they might otherwise never see. And they made the most of their week; every year Mrs Tilly takes the students sightseeing in the evenings to well-known tourist spots, such as Nugget Point lighthouse and Purakaunui Falls.

The final night is always a trip to Dunedin. “I make them walk up Baldwin Street,” Mrs Tilly says, adding it’s always the highlight due to its international status as steepest street in the world. “… I rotate the sightseeing to keep it interesting, but we always do Baldwin Street. It’s the only one we do every year. There’s a bit of a competition among the students; they have a race.”

The overall level of care received on campus is also a new experience for them. “Hostel life at Telford is a bit different … they have their own room.” Mrs Tilly explains students are more accustomed to communal living, so having their own space happens, perhaps, for the first time at Telford. They must **navigate being out of their comfort zone, away from familiar surroundings**. “At home in Northland the students know everybody … they stick together like a swarm of bees when they come to Telford.”

Mrs Tilly acknowledged the whole experience of the Telford week is a high point of her year. "And the look on [the students'] faces when they pass their fencing, their driving…" The relief is unmistakeable.

Peter Barnett visited Telford for two consecutive years – Years 12 and 13 while he attended Northland College. His first impression of Telford campus was "it's fancy", however, it was the opportunity to immerse himself in the farming in general which helped him to choose Telford for his training.

It also provided a way to live outside the North Island and have a change of scenery. "Telford seemed like a good place, and I like dairy farming, [it's] second nature to me, I've been doing it for years," he says.

Peter spent 2025 completing the **Certificate in Farming Systems (Level 3)**, which covers sheep, beef and dairy farming. It was the work experience placements he particularly enjoyed - "going to different farms and seeing the countryside" - and he was pleasantly surprised to discover he had a talent for handling sheep as well. As an outdoorsy person, Peter loves working on the land; his future in the agriculture sector ensures this preference. Before completing his studies, Peter had a job confirmed on a local dairy farm in the Clutha – Clinton area. "After graduating I walked straight into my job."

Peter advised prospective students to be **prepared to do the coursework** which informs the practical component. "There's paperwork; invest in pens. I don't know how many times my pen ran out of ink halfway through an assignment."

Telford Tutor Andrew Thompson has been assessing and marking Northland College students since the partnership began and says the students are "very keen" to get to Telford for assessment week. "Fencing is the first activity … it takes a couple of days. It's quite physical work, and the students put in full days – you see their characters; they don't give up," he says.

"It's confidence building for them being in a new situation; they're being assessed by different tutors," which helps the students to grow. The unit standards they gain at Telford count towards their NCEA results.

Mr Thompson says in the milking shed, the students are very competent and very much in their comfort zone. "They get the opportunity to show the skills they know. They're proving to us and themselves they can be a success story."

And coming to Telford helps to provide a pathway for students who may want to train there after college. "The week down here breaks the ice for them. They're experiencing what it will be like. We've had [Northland students] on the Equine course, Rural Animal Technician course, Farming Systems course and the Diploma in Agriculture course."

Mr Thompson points out another big plus is the general safety and security of Telford; **students are on campus 24/7 with good accommodation, meals, laundry facilities** and more – everything they need to live comfortably – as well as wraparound support from caring staff. “I think it’s a big thing for them as well. They come down, they’re rotated around farms, so that by the time they finish, they have the skills and confidence to enter the workforce.”

And although it’s a long way to travel each year, Mr Thompson thinks the partnership has stood the test of time due to the quality programmes Telford delivers. “We’re not the only choice; they have other places they can go closer to them, but they choose us.”

Over the last few years Northland College Principal, Duane Allen, and other senior management from the school have visited the students during their Telford week. “They’re always impressed,” says Mr Thompson. It’s a good partnership that provides good outcomes for the students.

Mr Thompson, who is a soils specialist, has been teaching for more than two decades at Telford. “What I love is having the opportunity to pass on the opportunities I’ve had. I enjoy passing on the skills and knowledge… We make sure the students are well set up for success.”

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Regulatory Impact Statement: Policy decisions about the remaining polytechnic divisions of the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology

Decision sought	*Cabinet policy decisions on the remaining polytechnic divisions within NZIST*
Agency responsible	*Ministry of Education*
Proposing Ministers	*Hon Penny Simmonds, Minister for Vocational Education*
Date finalised	*16 March 2026*

The Minister proposes options for the future of the four remaining polytechnic divisions within the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST).[1] In June 2025, Cabinet agreed to establish the first ten polytechnics by Order in Council [SOU-25-MIN-0076 refers], and that Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT), WelTec/Whitireia (combined), NorthTec, and Tai Poutini Polytechnic would remain within NZIST until further financial improvement work was completed. Cabinet also agreed to receive a report back with options on the future of these polytechnics in the first half of 2026.

Summary: Problem definition and options

What is the policy problem?

In December 2024, Cabinet made substantive policy decisions on the objectives and structure for the Vocational Education and Training (VET) redesign, which included the establishment of stand-alone regional polytechnics, the establishment of Industry Skills Boards (ISBs) to replace Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), and the disestablishment of NZIST by 31 December 2026 [SOU-24-MIN-0174 refers] (subsequent decisions changed this date to 31 March 2027). To complete the implementation of the reforms outlined in the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Act 2025, decisions about the future of the four polytechnic divisions remaining within NZIST need to be made or programmes delivered by these divisions will cease. To minimise any risk to the continuity of education provision, assets and liabilities remaining under NZIST will need to be distributed, and a smooth transition of programmes and

[1] Te Pūkenga has been renamed the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology from 22 October 2025. Te Pūkenga/NZIST is used in this document for clarity.

functions is required. Updated financial analysis on the polytechnics has been completed to support the consideration of these options.

What is the policy objective?

The policy objective of the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Act 2025 is for vocational education and training to reflect local and regional education, training, and industry workforce needs. The preferred options for the future of the four polytechnics remaining within NZIST support continuity of provision and the completion of the key implementation stages of the VET system reforms.

What policy options have been considered, including any alternatives to regulation?

Previous Cabinet decisions to disestablish NZIST and establish stand-alone regional polytechnics means that keeping the remaining four polytechnic divisions within NZIST is not a plausible option if the overall policy objective is to be met.

There are no non-regulatory alternatives to the proposals in this paper that would allow the policy objectives to be met.

The four polytechnic divisions have different pathways to establishment and/or VET provision in their regions continuing. Disestablishment, mergers, establishment, and establishment with ongoing additional funding to support viability have been considered as options.

What consultation has been undertaken?

Public consultation and engagement on the VET redesign in general occurred throughout August and September 2024. This consultation reported support for the re-establishment of regional polytechnics. The Education and Workforce Select Committee also engaged with the public on the overall redesign through the legislative process.

Additionally, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) commissioned Volte consultancy in November 2025 to develop a business case for the future of Tai Poutini Polytechnic and consult with relevant stakeholders on the options for West Coast VET provision. Ministerial engagement also occurred with West Coast and Northland stakeholders to consider potential options.

For the polytechnics that will be established, in line with requirements under sections 315 and 362 of the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act), formal statutory consultation will be undertaken in April 2026 with relevant stakeholders on the proposed Orders in Council to establish those polytechnics.

Is the preferred option in the Cabinet paper the same as the preferred option in the RIS?

The Ministry's preferred options for each polytechnic are consistent with the Ministers proposals to:

- Establish WITT by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027.
- Establish WelTec/Whitireia by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027.

- Establish NorthTec by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027, with ongoing additional funding.
- Transfer the Tai Poutini Polytechnic campus and programme provision to the Open Polytechnic (working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027) should the Open Polytechnic formally agree and with any risks to the Open Polytechnic being managed e.g. through ongoing additional funding.
- 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted].
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- Provide funding support to NorthTec for campus property consolidation to help improve its future viability.

The Ministry notes the risks in the underlying financial positions of the polytechnics that are being established and the need for careful monitoring of their progress after establishment.

Summary: Minister's preferred option in the Cabinet paper

Costs (Core information)

The Ministry has estimated overall funding that will be required for the transition, and in some cases ongoing support, for the four remaining polytechnic divisions of approximately $140.39m, which will be funded from within Vote Tertiary Education:

- $37.69m to recapitalise the polytechnics, from Te Pūkenga/NZIST's existing cash reserves of $529.8m (recapitalisation funding).
- $101.348m of funding from the Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition – Operating Contingency funding (the contingency) [CAB-24-MIN-0148.81 refers].
- $2.3m per annum of ongoing additional funding support for NorthTec and the Open Polytechnic post-2028, intended to come from ongoing strategically important provision (SIP) funding [SOU-25-MIN-0027 refers].

WITT

- WITT will receive $5.17m for its recapitalisation, which is equivalent to three months of operating expenditure.

WelTec/Whitireia

- WelTec/Whitireia will receive $19.29m for its recapitalisation, which is equivalent to three months of operating expenditure.
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

NorthTec

- NorthTec will receive $11.44m for its recapitalisation, which is comprised of three months operating expenditure ($6,75m) and its opening ring-fenced reserves balance ($4.69m).
- $4.5 million from the contingency for property consolidation to support NorthTec's viability is being considered.
- $34.7m from the contingency to support NorthTec's tertiary hub development in Whangārei and relocation to it is being considered.
- NorthTec will need ongoing support of $1.3m per annum post 2028 from SIP funding.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic (provision and assets to be transferred to the Open Polytechnic)

- The Open Polytechnic will receive $1.79m (one off) in upfront support on transition for recapitalisation, which is equivalent to three months operating expenditure for Tai Poutini Polytechnic, to ensure sufficient working capital for the West Coast operations.
- NZIST requires $2m from the contingency to cover 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] transitional costs.
- The Open Polytechnic requires ongoing support of $1m per annum post 2028 to manage delivery on the West Coast from SIP funding.

Benefits (Core information)

The benefits of the regulatory changes include:

- strengthening regional decision-making and industry involvement, to improve responsiveness to local communities, conditions, and workplaces,
- supporting learner success, career pathways, and equitable access to all forms of VET and,
- continuity of provision for learners in the regions these polytechnics serve.

Balance of benefits and costs (Core information)

Establishing the new polytechnics is expected to cost the Crown $140.39m over the two-year transition period. Further operational funding may be needed if some polytechnics are not financially viable by the end of the transition period and the Government prioritises maintaining all regional coverage. The Government has signalled this would not be forthcoming and that polytechnics will need to make changes to maintain their viability.

Implementation

The TEC will lead the operational aspects of establishing the three polytechnics that will become stand-alone entities. Establishment Advisory Groups, comprised of relevant stakeholders, will be appointed to complete the detailed work required to stand up each entity by 1 January 2027, subject to Cabinet approval. The proposed transfer of Tai Poutini to the Open Polytechnic will be made through a transition plan to be developed by NZIST and approved by the TEC, as per the Act.

A governance group with representatives from the Ministry, the TEC, the Treasury, Public Service Commission and the Ministry for Social Development was convened in 2025 to monitor and manage the transition risks. The Ministry of Education already monitors and reports on overall tertiary learner participation and achievement and will include reporting on system performance through the VET redesign as part of the regular cycle of publishing data on Education Counts.

Limitations and Constraints on Analysis

All analysis has been carried out in the context of previous Cabinet decisions to disestablish Te Pūkenga/NZIST and establish independent polytechnics. Ministerial priorities have limited the range of potential options for each polytechnic division included in this analysis.

This RIS supports a Cabinet paper that includes decisions on funding the development of, and NorthTec's relocation to, a central tertiary education hub in Whangārei, subject to Joint Ministers approving an appropriate business case later in 2026. The tertiary hub decision is a separate property investment decision that is not required for the establishment of NorthTec by Order in Council. Therefore, we consider this decision to be outside the scope of the analysis required here, as it will not have a regulatory impact. A cost-benefit analysis for the property decision is expected to be included in the (yet to be developed) tertiary hub business case.

Key areas of uncertainty include that:

- Despite best effort and modelling, it is unclear how polytechnics both inside and outside the federation will ultimately perform financially once they are established.
- 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
- The TEC are maintaining engagement with the Open Polytechnic's new council Chair on the transfer process of Tai Poutini Polytechnic. While the Open Polytechnic is broadly supportive of the transfer option, their council are yet to formally confirm their agreement to the Tai Poutini Polytechnic transfer proposal.
- Ongoing funding is a necessity for some of the polytechnics' viability. It is uncertain whether this ongoing funding will remain should there be a change in Government or if Government priorities change after the election this year.
- Outside of the establishment/transfer decisions, decisions are also being sought to draw on the contingency fund to cover a number of polytechnic property issues. This includes property development decisions for NorthTec (the hub[2]) that are separate from the decision to establish NorthTec, and support for the Eastern Institute of Technology and the Southern Institute of Technology (both already established). These uses of the contingency are outside its original scope, and if agreed, could reduce the funding available to manage external risks and uncertainty for newly established organisations.

[2] There is a view among key Northland stakeholders that NorthTec should relocate to the proposed central Whangarei hub, increasing accessibility for learners. The proposal includes a health simulation suite at the hub to support health training programmes. The development of the tertiary hub and NorthTec's relocation to it, have an estimated total project cost of $34.7 million.

- Similarly, the use of SIP funding to provide support for polytechnics also reduces the funding available to support other strategically important provision, like workplace-based learning or maintaining programmes specifically designed for learners with disabilities.

I have read the Regulatory Impact Statement and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the preferred option.

Responsible Manager(s) signature: _

Katrina Sutich

General Manager, Tertiary Policy

16 March 2026

Quality Assurance Statement	***[Note this isn't included in the four-page limit]***
Reviewing Agency: Ministry of Education	**QA rating:** [partially meets]
Panel Comment: The Ministry of Education's Quality Assurance Panel has reviewed the Regulatory Impact Statement produced by the Ministry of Education (dated 16 March 2026). The panel considers that, because of constraints imposed on consultation and analysis, it partially meets the Quality Assurance criteria. Within these constraints, the analysis clearly and concisely outlines the complexity, risks, and costs and benefits of the proposed approach.	

Section 1: Diagnosing the policy problem

What is the context behind the policy problem and how is the status quo expected to develop?

1. Te Pūkenga was established in April 2020 to address fiscal constraints in the sector. It sought to preserve access and provision by consolidating assets and services into a single entity with a number of business divisions.

2. In December 2024, Cabinet decided to disestablish Te Pūkenga/NZIST and the Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) and replace them with a network of stand-alone polytechnics (with a federation to support them) and Industry Skills Boards (ISBs) respectively. The Ministry provided a RIS that included a cost-benefit analysis for a range of options for a VET redesign (VET RIS December 2024), as well as providing in-depth Te Tiriti analysis[3].

3. The federation of polytechnics was established through legislation in November 2025 and will become operational later in 2026 with the Open Polytechnic designated as the anchor polytechnic. 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted] will be able to access share services and resources through the Open Polytechnic and other member polytechnics to support their ongoing viability.

4. During the VET redesign, funding was reprioritised from within Vote Tertiary Education to provide extra support for strategically important provision in polytechnics (SIP funding). Funding was put in place for a transition period of 2026-2027, with a long-term approach to be developed for 2028 onward. A tagged operating contingency for 'Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition' was set up in Budget 2024, with funding to be drawn down once detailed design and legislation changes were completed.

5. On 22 October 2025 the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training) Amendment Act 2025 came into force, and in November 2025, Cabinet agreed to Orders in Council establishing ten polytechnics, eight ISBs, and to disestablish WDCs. This decision was supported by a RIS (VET RIS November 2025).

6. Cabinet agreed to receive a report back on the future of the four polytechnic divisions remaining under NZIST in the first half of 2026. Updated financial analysis has been received for each polytechnic division, which will support Cabinet decisions.

---

[3] The Te Tiriti analysis on pg 61 of the RIS from December 2024 stated the following regarding the process of developing the legislative framework for the VET redesign:
1. the time restraints have compromised our ability to engage meaningfully with Māori on the redesign process, which is not aligned with the Crown's Article 1 responsibilities;
2. consequently, there has not been sufficient analysis or engagement to confidently say that Māori interests will be met across the redesigned VET system, and while this risk is mitigated in part by some Tiriti-related provisions in the legislative framework, these are piecemeal and give some parts of the system less responsibility than others; and
3. inadequate attention has been given to the needs of learners, leading to specific risks around the Crown's Article 3 ōritetanga responsibilities.

What is the policy problem or opportunity?

7. This analysis informs decisions about the future of the four polytechnic divisions remaining under NZIST, in the context of the disestablishment of NZIST.

8. Decisions need to be made for each of the polytechnic divisions, or programme delivery will cease. Updated financial analysis on the polytechnics has been completed to support the consideration of these options.

9. This RIS demonstrates the options analysis that agencies have undertaken to inform the decisions sought from Cabinet to:
    a. Establish WITT by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027.
    b. Establish WelTec/Whitireia by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027.
    c. Establish NorthTec by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027, with ongoing additional funding.
    d. Transfer the Tai Poutini Polytechnic campus and programme provision to the Open Polytechnic (should the Open Polytechnic agree) with financial risks to the Open Polytechnic being managed e.g. through ongoing additional funding.
    e. 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]

10. This RIS also describes ancillary decisions sought from Cabinet to:
    a. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
    b. Provide funding support to NorthTec for campus property consolidation to help improve its future viability. Whilst this decision is separate from the establishment decision, this will significantly reduce the risk to NorthTec's future financial viability, especially post 2028, as described in further detail in paragraph 43.

What objectives are sought in relation to the policy problem?

11. The policy objective of the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Act 2025 is to return decision-making to the regions and for VET to reflect local and regional education, training, and industry workforce needs.

12. The preferred options for the future of the four polytechnics remaining within NZIST support continuity of provision and will complete the key stages of the implementation of the VET system reforms. Continuity of VET provision is crucial for ensuring New Zealand has the regionally relevant skills needed in our economy, including for major industries and social sectors.

13. The polytechnic divisions remaining within NZIST are intended to be operational by 1 January 2027, and to receive the programmes, assets, students, staff, and liabilities

transferred from NZIST. This will minimise disruption and uncertainty for staff and the sector while ensuring continuity of provision.

14. The Act sets out the circumstances under which the responsible Minister can recommend the establishment of a polytechnic. To be established, a polytechnic needs to be financially viable and the Minister needs to consider advice from NZQA and consult any other persons or bodies that the Minister sees fit. The Minister must also consider the characteristics of polytechnics as set out in the Act and be satisfied that establishing the polytechnic will be in the national interest and the interests of the tertiary education system.

What consultation has been undertaken?

15. Cabinet's decisions have been informed by formal consultation and informal engagement.

Formal consultation

16. The Ministry ran formal consultation in August and September 2024 on proposals for the new system, this included consulting on the option to establish regional polytechnics as stand-alone entities.

17. While there is a significant level of public awareness that the Government seeks to return these polytechnics to being self-governing institutions, the Ministry has not formally consulted further on the future of these four remaining polytechnics with the public or specific demographic groups, like Māori, Pacific, young, or disabled learners since the consultation in August and September 2024.

Other consultation

18. The Select Committee process for the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Act 2025, in mid-2025, allowed for public submissions on the overall VET redesign.

19. Volte Consultancy conducted consultation with relevant stakeholders regarding the future of VET provision on the West Coast in November 2025.

Informal engagement

20. The TEC and Minister Simmonds have had informal engagement with officials in local government and stakeholders in Northland about the tertiary hub.

Future consultation

21. For polytechnics that will be established, in line with requirements under sections 315 and 362 of the Act, formal statutory consultation will be undertaken in April 2026 with relevant stakeholders on the proposed Orders in Council to establish those polytechnics.

Section 2: Assessing options to address the policy problem

What criteria will be used to compare options to the status quo?

22. The following criteria were considered in relation to the options for each of the four polytechnic divisions:
    a. maintaining provision and continuity for learners, employers and industry
    b. financial viability, and
    c. ability to offer diverse and regionally relevant provision and to undertake research.

What scope will options be considered within?

23. Options will be considered within the scope of the previous Cabinet decisions to disestablish NZIST. The proposed decisions about the four polytechnics have primarily involved considering their different current financial positions and future pathways to financial viability. 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]

24. Criteria C, the ability to offer diverse and regionally relevant provision and to undertake research, is a condensed version of the characteristics of a polytechnic as per the Act. As such, we note the following about the four remaining polytechnics' ability to undertake research:
    a. Tai Poutini Polytechnic only delivers at Levels 1-5 on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF) and does not participate in the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF), which assesses research performance as well as on delivery of degree-level and above qualifications.
    b. WITT and NorthTec deliver at levels 1-7, and WelTec/Whitireia delivers at levels 1-9 on the NZQCF. In 2025, WITT, WelTec/Whiteria, and NorthTec's research performance collectively earned 5.6% of the PBRF funding allocated to NZIST, and 0.14% of the total PBRF funding pool of $315m. This was largely due to their previous participation in the PBRF Quality Evaluation in 2018, as in 2025 they earned very little External Research Income and had no research degree completions.

25. The degree-and-above provision at WITT, WelTec/Whiteria, and NorthTec is small in terms of volume[4].

[4] Delivery volumes (EFTS) in 2025 at level 7+
- WITT: 250
- WelTec /Whitereia: 1,697 (1,298 at Level 7)
- NorthTec: 400

What options are being considered?

Option One – [Status Quo /Counterfactual]

26. Based on previous Cabinet decisions to disestablish Te Pūkenga/NZIST and legislation passed in 2025, the status quo would involve the polytechnic divisions remaining in NZIST until it is disestablished. The educational work of the polytechnic divisions would then cease upon NZIST's legislative disestablishment date of 31 March 2027, (or earlier).

27. The status quo would result in a total loss of provision in the relevant regions and therefore fails to meet the policy objective of vocational education and training reflecting local and regional education, training, and industry workforce needs, and would not meet any of the criteria set out above. Therefore, the status quo is untenable.

28. Similarly, deferring making decisions to a later date in 2026 poses no discernible benefits as the financial forecasting is unlikely to change. Deferring decisions will also rapidly become operationally untenable due to the election period in 2026 and the time required to implement the decisions.

Option Two – [Mergers/ transferring provision]

29. This option involves merging[5] unviable polytechnics with viable ones or transferring the programme delivery to another polytechnic.

30. Mergers can allow for economies of scale, however, options to merge any of the remaining four polytechnic divisions have not been analysed in detail due to Ministerial direction early in the process.

31. The option to transfer the operations of Tai Poutini polytechnic division, however, has been considered by Volte consultancy and analysis is provided in their recently finalised report (see Annex 1 of the accompanying Cabinet paper). The Ministry has also considered the assessment undertaken by Volte and provide analysis of pursuing this option for Tai Poutini against the other options, as set out below.

Option Three – [Supported establishment plus federation membership]

32. This option involves the establishment of the polytechnics with additional ongoing strategic funding and the intention to designate them as a member of the federation of polytechnics, to support viability with access to shared services and resources.

Option Four – [Establishment plus federation membership]

33. This option involves establishing the polytechnics as full stand-alone institutions with **no** ongoing funding over and above their regular volume-based funding but with the intention to designate them as a member of the federation of polytechnics.

The unique context of each of the four polytechnic divisions

34. Each of the remaining polytechnic divisions face unique challenges that impact their likelihood of becoming financially viable from 1 January 2027,[6] meaning there is not one

[5] We refer to mergers in the plain language sense and not as per the Act.
[6] More detailed financial forecasting for each of the polytechnic divisions is available in Annex 1.

option that is appropriate for all four divisions (further detail is provided in the options analysis section below).

35. Explanation of the specific context of each of the four polytechnic divisions is set out below.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic

36. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

37. In November 2025, the TEC commissioned Volte Consultancy to engage with relevant stakeholders and consider options for the future of Tai Poutini Polytechnic. They considered a learning hub model utilising some existing Tai Poutini Polytechnic assets with delivery undertaken by other polytechnics and potentially private training establishments (PTE), and a regional PTE model. Stakeholders preferred the regional PTE model on the basis that it would allow more local control, be more responsive to the needs of the West Coast, enable regional decision-making as well as a simplified learner experience. Volte's analysis showed that both options would continue to return losses.

38. The Minister asked the TEC and Volte Consultancy to explore an option for the Open Polytechnic to manage delivery.

39. The TEC, through regular engagement with the new Chair of the Open Polytechnic council, has reported that the Open Polytechnic is broadly supportive of this option so long as it comes with ongoing funding support. An estimated $1m per annum of ongoing support will be needed to ensure the campus remains viable and not a burden on the Open Polytechnic, along with an additional $2m in upfront transitional costs. The proposed $1m of ongoing support will need to come from the SIP funding, and the $2m in upfront costs will need to come from the contingency funding which is pending Cabinet approval.

40. We have considered closure as an option for Tai Poutini Polytechnic due to its forecasted losses and a lack of a pathway to financial viability. We consider that Tai Poutini provides the only physical polytechnic in the region and regional stakeholders strongly supported maintaining in-person tertiary education on the West Coast. Maintaining VET provision is critical for the economic and regional development of the West Coast region.

NorthTec

41. NorthTec has been implementing a financial improvement plan over the past year and is forecasting to report underlying deficits over the 2026 to 2028 period. There is a risk that underlying performance is worse than expected if enrolment projections are not achieved and/or the full benefits from the planned financial improvements are not realised. With the addition of strategic funding over 2026 and 2027, NorthTec is

forecasting small surpluses. Ongoing funding will be needed for NorthTec to be viable. Officials have assessed that fully eliminating deficits without ongoing funding is unlikely for this institution.

42. As part of the analysis around NorthTec's future financial viability, there has been ongoing discussion around its property options. This includes exiting leases and consolidating campuses.

43. Agreement is being sought to provide NorthTec with $4.5 million from the contingency 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] Whilst this decision is separate from the establishment decision, this will significantly reduce the risk to NorthTec's future financial viability, especially post-2028.

WelTec/Whitireia

44. WelTec/Whitireia has implemented a comprehensive financial improvement plan over the past year, considerably reducing staffing levels and adjusting its programme portfolio. These changes mean that WelTec/Whitireia now has a profitable underlying financial position.

45. The lease costs from its now vacated Dixon St campus (lease due to end in 2038) mean that it is forecasting an overall loss as it is unable to make a return on this expenditure. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

46. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
    a. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
    b. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].

47. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] The underlying operations of WelTec/Whitireia will be financially viable, and it can be established as a standalone entity, albeit with some risk, and preferably designated as a member of the federation.

Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki

48. As a result of implementing their financial improvement initiatives, and the support of SIP funding, WITT is expected to report a surplus in academic years 2026 to 2028. However, WITT's small scale and history of financial viability issues means it faces considerable risk to its ongoing sustainability. As indicated to Cabinet in June 2025, once

established by Order in Council, WITT should be considered for inclusion in the federation, to support ongoing viability. Additionally, whilst WITT is forecasting to be in a surplus position over the 2026 to 2028 period, it may require ongoing assistance in future, despite being a member of the federation.

49. Subject to WITT being established, operational decisions will need to be made by WITT on what services could be accessed from the Open Polytechnic and other members of the federation, to reduce the risks associated with WITT's small scale.

How do the options compare to the status quo/counterfactual?

	Option One – [*Status Quo / Counterfactual*]	Option Two – [Mergers/ transferring provision]	Option Three – [Supported establishment plus federation membership]	Option Four – [Establishment plus federation membership]
[Maintaining provision and continuity for learners, employers and industry]	This option involves leaving the polytechnic divisions within NZIST to be disestablished and leads to a loss of provision. WITT: 0 WelTec/Whitireia: 0 NorthTec: 0 Tai Poutini: 0	This option is consistent with maintaining provision and continuity. WelTec/Whitireia have already merged to consolidate VET delivery in the Wellington region. WITT: + WelTec/Whitireia: 0 NorthTec: + Tai Poutini: +	This option is consistent with maintaining provision and continuity. WITT: + WelTec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: + Tai Poutini: +	This option is consistent with maintaining provision and continuity for WITT and WelTec/Whitireia. This option is insufficient to support NorthTec and Tai Poutini to maintain provision. WITT: + WelTec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: - Tai Poutini: -
[Financial viability]	All polytechnics need some form of intervention to mitigate their financial risks. WITT: 0 WelTec/Whitireia: 0 NorthTec: 0 Tai Poutini: 0	This option is consistent with supporting financial viability. WITT: + WelTec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: + Tai Poutini: +	This option is consistent with financial viability for polytechnics with a pathway to financial viability. WITT: + WelTec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: + Tai Poutini: -	This option is consistent with financial viability for polytechnics who forecast stable underlying surpluses. WITT: + WelTec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: - Tai Poutini: -

[Ability to offer diverse and regionally relevant provision and to undertake research]	This option involves leaving the polytechnic divisions within NZIST to be disestablished and leads to a loss of provision and inability to undertake research. WITT: **0** Weltec/Whitireia: **0** NorthTec: **0** Tai Poutini: **0**	This option has a marginally negative effect but has not been sufficiently analysed. For Tai Poutini, it is unclear exactly what VET provision will be lost and how the Open Polytechnic will supplement lost in-person provision. WITT: **0** Weltec/Whitireia: **0** NorthTec: **0** Tai Poutini: -	This option is consistent with ensuring the ability to offer diverse and regionally relevant provision and to undertake research. WITT: + Weltec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: + Tai Poutini: +	This option is consistent with ensuring the ability to offer diverse and regionally relevant provision and to undertake research for polytechnics who forecast stable underlying surpluses. WITT: + Weltec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: - Tai Poutini: -
Overall assessment	The status quo is untenable.	This is the preferred option for Tai Poutini Polytechnic as analysis shows that transferring to the Open Polytechnic will deliver the best possible outcomes in the most sustainable way. WITT: ++ Weltec/Whitireia: + NorthTec: ++ Tai Poutini: +	This option is preferred for NorthTec as it maintains provision and allows for ongoing funding to support financial viability. WITT: +++ Weltec/Whitireia: +++ NorthTec: +++ Tai Poutini: +	This option is preferred for WITT and WelTec/Whitireia as they are forecasting underlying surpluses with risks to be potentially mitigated by their membership of the federation. WITT: +++ Weltec/Whitireia: +++ NorthTec: --- Tai Poutini: ---

What option is likely to best address the problem, meet the policy objectives, and deliver the highest net benefits?

50. Option one describes the situation if there is no intervention and the four polytechnic divisions remain in NZIST. This option is undesirable as it results in no polytechnic provision in the relevant regions leaving these regions significantly underserved. Barriers associated with learners travelling to study (cost, ability, and willingness) justifies maintaining provision by smaller institutions in the relevant regions.[7] For many programmes no alternative provider will be able to deliver them viably so the region will have significantly diminished educational opportunities. Therefore, option one is untenable.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic

51. **Option two is preferred for Tai Poutini Polytechnic** as it has no pathway to viability as a stand-alone polytechnic, with or without federation membership, without significant additional ongoing strategic funding. A business case has been completed for the transfer of programme delivery to the Open Polytechnic, and the Open Polytechnic is broadly supportive of this approach with upfront transitional costs provided and ongoing strategic funding. The Open Polytechnic has the systems and resources already in place to enable it to incorporate several Tai Poutini functions and to significantly reduce costs. This option will maintain provision in the West Coast region that is critical for the West Coast's economy and regional development.

52. We note that option two for Tai Poutini Polytechnic means that all Tai Poutini operations would transfer to the Open Polytechnic including the running of the physical campus on the West Coast. To ensure the Open Polytechnic can sustain the upkeep of the campus and maintaining delivery of in-person vocational education and training at Tai Poutini, ongoing funding will need to be provided.

53. Considerable work would be required from now until 1 January 2027 to operationalise the transfer to the Open Polytechnic. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] The proposal also includes a range of property changes. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

54. VET provision would also be refined under this proposal, with the aim being to minimise losses 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].

55. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] The TEC and the Ministry will need to monitor the range of regionally relevant programmes being offered on the West Coast and overall access to learning for local students.

[7] [Travel to tertiary: An analysis of how far school leavers travelled for tertiary study | Education Counts]

56. We note the compounded effect of the potential loss of VET provision creating uncertainty for disabled learners in rural areas such as the West Coast. Reduced in person delivery could significantly limit their access to education and training, as travelling further for study is often more difficult for disabled learners than for their nondisabled peers. Although foundation and bridging programmes are available online through the Open Polytechnic, digital delivery is not always accessible or suitable for these learners. Barriers may include inaccessible platforms, incompatibility with assistive technologies, and limited access to reliable internet or appropriate devices.

57. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

58. Option three would require a significant amount of ongoing additional funding for Tai Poutini Polytechnic to be viable and is considered unsustainable.

59. Option four describes establishing the institutions as stand-alone in the federation. We consider that the benefits associated with being a federation member will not be sufficient to mitigate the risk of the underlying financial position of Tai Poutini Polytechnic.

NorthTec

60. **Option three is preferred for NorthTec** as the financial analysis has shown that NorthTec will only be viable with ongoing funding support (available through SIP funding). NorthTec will continue to implement its financial plan and any other initiatives that will support a reduction in its underlying operating loss. This option also allows for continued provision of regionally relevant VET and the undertaking of a small amount of research at NorthTec.

61. We note the property consolidation decisions may have a negative impact on the engagement of learners who are based in rural areas and may need to travel significant distances to attend in-person programmes.

62. Due to the underlying operating losses of NorthTec, option four is undesirable and the potential benefits associated with federation membership will not address NorthTec's underlying financial position.

63. Option two, via a merger with Auckland-based polytechnics (Unitec and Manukau Institute of Technology) could have been considered as a potential option for NorthTec. The Auckland-based polytechnics would likely be stable merger partners, however, this option was not analysed in detail under Ministerial direction.

WelTec/Whitireia

64. **Option four is preferred for WelTec/Whitireia** 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] WelTec/Whitireia will be forecasting underlying profitability and its inclusion in the federation of polytechnics will provide further support

through access to resources and shared services. This option also allows for continued provision of regionally relevant VET and the undertaking of research in Wellington.

65. We note that WelTec/Whitireia faces considerable financial challenges and has a history of financial viability issues. There remains a need to address considerable deferred maintenance at its Petone campus, to stabilise (and grow) enrolments, and rebuild linkages with stakeholders in the region. The TEC will closely monitor their financial situation and further funding decisions may be sought if the forecasting of WelTec/Whitireia declines significantly.

66. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

67. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

68. WelTec/Whitireia merged into one business division when they moved into NZIST, consolidating VET delivery in the Wellington region. A further merger or transfer of provision may have provided further economies of scale, but was not considered under Ministerial direction. Additionally, officials consider that there is not an obvious appropriate merger partner given that WelTec/Whitireia have consolidated delivery in the Wellington region.

Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki

69. **Option four is preferred for WITT** as it is forecasting underlying surpluses and its inclusion in the federation of polytechnics will supplement their small-scale delivery and provide access to resources and shared services. This option also allows for continued provision of regionally relevant VET and the undertaking of a small amount of research at WITT connected to their degree provision.

70. We note that the federation and its ability to mitigate financial risks for WITT is untested. WITT's small scale and history of financial viability issues leaves it vulnerable to external shocks or any large declines in enrolments. The TEC will closely monitor their financial situation and further funding decisions may be sought if WITT's forecasting declines significantly.

71. Option three was not considered for WITT as it has a pathway to financial viability unlike the other institutions who require ongoing additional funding to be financially viable.

72. A merger between WITT and the Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec) was considered as a potential option but was not analysed further under Ministerial direction.

Is the Minister's preferred option in the Cabinet paper the same as the agency's preferred option in the RIS?

73. The Ministry supports the preferred option in the Cabinet Paper to:
    a. Establish WITT by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027.
    b. Establish WelTec/Whitireia by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027.
    c. Establish NorthTec by Order in Council in June 2026, working towards an operational date of 1 January 2027, with ongoing additional funding.
    d. Transfer the Tai Poutini Polytechnic campus and programme provision to the Open Polytechnic (should the Open Polytechnic agree) with financial risks to the Open Polytechnic being managed e.g. through ongoing additional funding.
    e. 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]

74. The Ministry supports the ancillary decisions to:
    a. 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]
    b. Provide funding support to NorthTec for campus property consolidation to help improve its future viability.

What are the marginal costs and benefits of the preferred option in the Cabinet paper?

Option two for Tai Poutini Polytechnic, option three for NorthTec and option four for WITT and WelTec/Whitireia.

75. The Ministry expects the total transition to cost the Crown approximately $140.39m, assuming two years of operational funding support. These costs and the funding streams are included in the table below.

76. Beyond the two-year transition period, ongoing costs are uncertain. Costs will depend on the financial performance of the polytechnics – which can depend on external actors like international student enrolments and subsequent fees increases.

77. The table below also highlights the benefits of the preferred option which is monetarily minimal but does follow the policy objective of maintaining provision and having VET that reflects local and regional education, training, and industry workforce needs.

Affected groups	Comment	Impact	Evidence Certainty
Additional costs of the preferred option compared to taking no action			
Crown costs	$37.69m to recapitalise the polytechnics, from Te Pūkenga/NZIST's	$140.39m cost.	Medium

	existing cash reserves of $529.8m (recapitalisation funding). $101.348m of funding from the Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition – Operating Contingency funding (the contingency) [CAB-24-MIN-0148.81 refers]. $2.3m per annum of ongoing additional funding support for NorthTec and the Open Polytechnic post-2028, intended to come from ongoing strategically important provision (SIP) funding [SOU-25-MIN-0027 refers]. There are potential downstream costs to the federation of polytechnics.		
Total monetised costs	9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] and the Tertiary Hub move for NorthTec. There is also ongoing funding for NorthTec and the Open Polytechnic.	$140.39m cost.	Medium
Non-monetised costs	Significant system change is likely to have caused uncertainty and potential disruption for learners, employers and industry. There may also be institutional knowledge lost if entities are forced to downsize. The likely disruption caused by significant system change is compounded for Māori, Pacific, and disabled learners. There has already been a loss of programmes specifically designed for disabled learners in the Wellington region and programmes that are culturally important to Māori in the West Coast.		
Additional benefits of the preferred option compared to taking no action			
Crown costs	Expect the overall change to operational Crown costs to be	Neutral	Medium

	approximately neutral beyond the transition.		
Total monetised benefits	Minimal.	Minimal	Medium
Non-monetised benefits	It will take time to see how the intended benefits of the redesign materialise, but the redesign aligns with the policy intent of VET reflecting local and regional education, training, and industry workforce needs.	Unknown	Medium

Section 3: Delivering an option

How will the proposal be implemented?

Implementation of the establishment of WITT, NorthTec, and WelTec/Whitireia

78. Should Cabinet agree to establish WITT, NorthTec, and WelTec/Whitireia, the implementation will progress throughout the rest of 2026 with an operational date of 1 January 2027. The process includes NZIST developing a transition plan that is approved by the TEC, the Minister selecting Ministerial appointments to the polytechnic Councils, the Minister appointing an establishment committee (to propose the polytechnic constitutions which will be Gazetted), inducting establishment advisory groups, which begin the process of recruiting for Chief Executives, (to be confirmed by the Councils once in place) and preliminary work on the transfer of required NZIST staff which will be formalised by the Chief Executive of NZIST.

Implementation of the transfer of provision from Tai Poutini Polytechnic to the Open Polytechnic

79. Should Cabinet agree to transfer provision from Tai Poutini Polytechnic to the Open Polytechnic, the implementation will also progress throughout the rest of 2026 with an operational date of 1 January 2027. The process includes the Open Polytechnic developing an operating model for the West Coast campus, NZIST developing a transition plan that is approved by the TEC, and offers being made to any staff who will be needed to retain their positions.

How will the proposal be monitored, evaluated, and reviewed?

80. The Ministry has confirmed an approach to monitoring the VET system that will draw on existing data sources and outline agency responsibilities for data and trend analysis. The Ministry will prioritise data on learner outcomes and transition risks, as well as on overall system performance, considering the intended outcomes of the VET redesign.

81. The Ministry already reports on the overall participation and achievement of learners in the tertiary system. Monitoring of learner outcomes will rely on our existing mechanisms unless further data is needed to monitor emerging risks. Similarly, the TEC already monitors and reports on the financial performance of the polytechnics and the

educational performance of the polytechnics against investment plan commitments and will be monitoring their long-term viability.

82. The VET redesign will be implemented over the next two years, so it will take time to build a comprehensive picture of how risks and issues are materialising and the success of the redesign in meeting intended outcomes. Further work is underway to determine how to measure and report on the intended policy outcomes of the VET redesign.

83. In June 2025, the Minister for Vocational Education and the Minister for Social Development and Employment provided an interim report back to Cabinet on the implications of the VET redesign for learners. Cabinet requested an update on the impacts on learners [SOU-25-MIN-0076 refers] by the end of 2026.

84. Agencies (the Ministry, the TEC, and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)) will provide an update on the monitoring the impact on learners of the VET system changes in the second half of 2026.

85. The full shape of the new system will not be apparent until after the end of the transition period. But the limited and emerging picture we will have for the report-back in 2026 will provide an initial data baseline for monitoring changes over the longer-term as the VET system redesign continues.

Annex: Financial forecasting

These forecasts include the latest progress against financial improvement plans and updated domestic and international forecasts for 2025 and 2026. Based on those forecasts, NZIST head office have forecasted performance for 2027 and 2028.

9(2)(b)(ii)

[redacted]

9(2)(b)(ii)

SOU-26-MIN-0022

Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Proposed Establishment or Transfer of the Remaining Four Polytechnics

Portfolio **Vocational Education**

On 25 March 2026, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee (SOU):

Establishment of the three remaining polytechnic divisions

1 **agreed** to establish the Western Institute of Technology Taranaki (WITT) by Order in Council, to be progressed through the Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026;

2 9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted];

3 **agreed** to establish WelTec/Whitireia by Order in Council, to be progressed through the Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026;

4 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

5 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

6 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

7 **agreed** to establish NorthTec by Order in Council, to be progressed through the Cabinet Legislation Committee in May 2026;

8 **agreed** to provide $1.3 million per year from funding for strategically important provision, for the period of 2028 to 2031, to NorthTec to support its viability;

9 **authorised** the Minister for Vocational Education to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office for Orders in Council to establish WITT, WelTec/Whitireia and NorthTec;

Support for NorthTec's property consolidation

10 **noted** that whilst the decision to establish NorthTec can be made separately from the property consolidation decision, enabling NorthTec's 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] will significantly reduce the risk to NorthTec's financial sustainability post establishment;

11 **agreed** to utilise $4.5 million of the contingency to [redacted];

Support for NorthTec's proposed development of, and relocation, to the tertiary hub

12 **noted** that supporting NorthTec to develop and relocate to the proposed Whangārei tertiary hub will help NorthTec to modernise its facilities and potentially attract new learners, but that this is not without risk and may impact NorthTec's future viability;

13 **agreed in principle**, subject to approval of an appropriate business case, to draw down $34.7 million from the contingency to fund project initiation costs, hub development costs, and relocation costs;

14 **authorised** the Minister for Vocational Education, the Minister for Social Development and Employment, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister for Regional Development to jointly approve the draw down of funding for the NorthTec tertiary hub, subject to joint consideration and approval of an appropriate business case in the second half of 2026;

Transfer of Tai Poutini Polytechnic to the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

15 **noted** that the Open Polytechnic council has formally agreed to the transfer of Tai Poutini operations to the Open Polytechnic (pending Cabinet's agreement);

16 **agreed** to the transfer of the Tai Poutini polytechnic division from NZIST to the Open Polytechnic as per the process set out in the paper under SOU-26-SUB-0022 and its attached timeline, to be effective and operational from 1 January 2027;

17 **agreed** to utilise $2 million of the contingency to support the transfer of Tai Poutini operations to the Open Polytechnic;

18 **agreed** to provide $1 million per year from funding for strategically important provision, for the period of 2028 to 2031, to the Open Polytechnic to support the viability of West Coast provision;

Support for other polytechnic property issues

19 **agreed** to utilise $10 million of the contingency fund to support the Eastern Institute of Technology in rebuilding and improving its Taradale campus following Cyclone Gabrielle;

20 **agreed** to utilise $2.4 million of the contingency fund to support the Southern Institute of Technology to address a range of deferred maintenance needs at Telford campus;

Strategically important provision funding

21 **noted** that ongoing funding has been reprioritised for the purpose of supporting strategically important provision, although its use from 2028 onward has not yet been agreed;

22 **agreed** to utilise $12.057 million from underspends in the Workforce Development Councils' appropriation to increase funding for strategically important provision to $15 million per annum for 2028 to 2031, as an alternative to transferring funds from core tertiary delivery funding;

23 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to utilise underspends to increase funding for strategically important provision to $15 million per annum for 2028 to 2031, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and/or net core Crown debt:

	$m – increase/(decrease)					
Vote Tertiary Education Minister for Vocational Education	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Non-Departmental Output Expense:						
Workforce Development Councils	(12.057)	-	-	-	-	
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:						
Tertiary Education and Training (MCA)						
Non-Departmental Output Expenses: Qualification Delivery	-	-	2.925	3.044	3.044	3.044

Fiscal impacts

24 **noted** that in April 2024, Cabinet agreed to establish a tagged operating contingency of up to the following amounts for the purpose of funding costs involved in the disestablishment of Te Pūkenga and transition to a replacement model [CAB-24-MIN-0148.81]:

	$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28 & outyears
Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition – Operating Contingency	-	-	147.449	10.000	-
Total	**-**	**-**	**147.449**	**10.000**	**-**

25 **noted** that in June 2025, SOU noted indicative uses of tagged contingency funding [SOU-25-MIN-0076], and that the Minister of Finance and Minister for Vocational Education have previously jointly agreed to appropriate $56.1 million from the contingency in line with those indications, $28.4 million of which remains unspent;

26 **agreed** to establish the following new appropriation:

Vote	Appropriation Minister	Appropriation Administrator	Title	Type	Scope
Tertiary Education	Minister for Vocational Education	Ministry of Education	Support for polytechnic property management	Non-Departmental Capital Expenditure	This appropriation is limited to supporting polytechnics to repair, build or acquire facilities for their operations.

27 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to paragraphs 11, 17, 19 and 20 above, using funding already appropriated from the Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition contingency, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt:

	$m – increase/(decrease)					
Vote Tertiary Education Minister for Vocational Education	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Non-Departmental Capital Expenditure:						
Recapitalisation of the New Vocational Education and Training Network	(18.900)	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Departmental Output Expense:						
Re-establishing the New Vocational Education and Training Network	2.000	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Departmental Capital Expenditure:						
Support for polytechnic property management	16.900	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operating	**2.000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Total Capital	**(2.000)**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

28 **agreed** that the changes to appropriations for 2025/26 be included in the 2025/26 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply;

29 **noted** that the current balance of the Te Pūkenga Disestablishment and Transition tagged operating contingency is $101.349 million, and that this contingency expires on 31 December 2027.

Tom Kelly
Committee Secretary

Present:
Hon David Seymour
Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Nicola Willis
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Simeon Brown
Hon Erica Stanford
Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Dr Shane Reti
Hon Mark Mitchell
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Nicole McKee
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Penny Simmonds
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon Scott Simpson
Hon Karen Chhour

Officials present from:
Office of the Prime Minister
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Office of the Minister of Education
Office of the Minister for Vocational Education
Officials Committee for SOU

Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Report of the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee: Period Ended 27 March 2026

On 30 March 2026, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee for the period ended 27 March 2026:

Out of scope [redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
SOU-26-MIN-0022	**Proposed Establishment or Transfer of the Remaining Four Polytechnics** Portfolio: Vocational Education	CONFIRMED

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet