



Te Pūkenga

Level 2, Wintec House
Cnr Anglesea and Nisbet St.
Hamilton 3204

0800 86 22 84
info@tepūkenga.ac.nz
tepūkenga.ac.nz

27 March 2025

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Request under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 17 March 2025, requesting information from Te Pūkenga – New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology. You referred to a media article from The Spinoff, dated 17 March 2025, titled: *More than 150 jobs cut and one campus closed as Te Pūkenga disestablishment looms*, and asked the following:

What was the trigger point for terminating uneconomic courses in the decisions announced here? For example, a course roll forecast of less than 12 EFTS?

This letter provides a formal decision on your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Background

You may find it useful to read the *Progressing financial sustainability initiatives* letter dated 20 May 2024, sent to Te Pūkenga Council Acting Chair, from the Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills (now Minister for Vocational Education), Hon Penny Simmonds, available online here: www.tepūkenga.ac.nz/assets/Publications/Letter-of-expectations-Dec-2023/Letter-to-Te-Pukenga-clarifying-aspects-of-Letter-of-Expectations.pdf. Within the letter the Minister sets out her expectations that Te Pūkenga takes action to improve the financial performance and viability of our whole network.

In June 2024 Te Pūkenga was directed by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to obtain specialist support to review and improve the financial viability of our 16 provider-based business divisions - regional Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) - to support their ability to become standalone entities in future.

In mid-August 2024, specialist consultants provided draft reports to confirm the financial position of each business division, understand the profitability of programmes and delivery sites, and assess the utilisation of assets.

Following this work, the consultants developed interim high-level reports to improve the financial viability and financial positions of the ITPs. These reports provided initial views about the viability of

each ITP, timeframes to achieve viability (if possible), and the scale and scope of change required in areas such as property, programmes, and people.

The final and more comprehensive plans provide an overview of how each regional ITP can become a viable, stand-alone entity, or how it might minimise financial losses and operate as part of a federation or merger, for example. These reports outline what needs to be done to implement the recommendations and support business division viability from 1 January 2026.

This work by the consultants on the RIV programme formed part of the ongoing advice to the TEC and Minister, feeding into the options for consideration for final government decisions to be made regarding the way forward for New Zealand's Vocational Education and Training sector and the position of ITPs within that. It also outlined opportunities for the ITPs to improve their financial performance.

The decision

Each business division has been tasked with looking carefully at their own kaimahi (staff), ākongā (learner) enrolments, kaiako (teacher) to ākongā ratios, programmes offered, courses offered within those programmes, administration, operations, properties, and community needs to name a few.

With this information they carefully propose specific changes for each area that will help them to become and/or remain financially viable into the future. Many variables specific to the context of each division were looked at to determine individual course viability and therefore there is no 'one size fits all' termination point.

Along with the specific financial viability analysis of courses taught across the motu (country) currently taking place, information on the status of courses is constantly reviewed and updated as each division reviews its courses and market demand to ensure they are the right fit and meet community needs. This is business-as-usual good management process. Decisions on individual course provision is an iterative process, as demand ebbs and flows for courses and programmes, so do decisions around whether courses are taught in any given year.

You have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA if you are not happy with this response. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

We may publish our OIA responses and the information contained in our reply to you on our website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Ngā mihi



Gus Gilmore
Tumuaki | Chief Executive