Seamless transition or jagged edge?

Report of the Secondary-Tertiary Interface Taskforce 2013

Contents

This report was prepared by PPTA's Secondary-Tertiary Interface Taskforce. It was the result of a wide-ranging investigation, conducted by the Taskforce during 2013, into all the initiatives loosely gathered under the government policy heading 'Youth Guarantee'.

The initiatives included under that heading are: trades academies (or Secondary-Tertiary Partnerships or STPs), fees-free places in tertiary education, Youth Guarantee Networks, Vocational Pathways, the Secondary-Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR), Gateway, and careers guidance.

The report concludes that the policy, while producing some clear benefits to many students who might otherwise be at risk of disengagement from education, has some major problems which need to be addressed urgently.

In particular, the report argues that there is a lack of coherence in the policy as it is experienced at the level of the individual school. Implementation has had serious shortcomings, and this is reflected in poor communication with schools, an absence of provision for teacher professional learning and development that should accompany any major change process, and a failure to have robust evaluation strategies in place.

This means that schools, already reeling from the demands of the curriculum alignment process for NCEA, are faced with trying to make sense of a new policy without the necessary level of support.

While the Taskforce has identified a number of ways in which the youth guarantee policy and its implementation should be improved, very few of these can happen within a cost-neutral budget environment.

Ideas include abandoning the current shift to bulk funding of students in trades academies, comprehensive evaluation of the impact of trades academies on student achievement and the wider school community, better accountability for the funding provided for youth guarantee initiatives, professional development for all those tasked with implementing youth guarantee, a mechanism for tracking young people across the secondary-tertiary transition point, and improvements in support to enhance the capacity of schools to provide careers guidance.

Section 1 of this report explains the process used to gather information.

Section 2 explains why it is important to have effective, well managed and coherent policies around the secondary-tertiary interface.

Section 3 discusses some of the issues around transition across that interface:

Sections 4 to 11 comment on individual parts of the Youth Guarantee framework and on the policy as a whole, using information gathered by the Taskforce through the survey of and interviews with principals and through presentations, submissions, and subsequent discussion.

Section 12 presents some ideas for improvements, which are reflected in the list of recommendations on page 5.

Appendix A summarises PPTA's long interest and expertise in secondary-tertiary interface over a number of decades.

Members of the Taskforce were:

- Peter Kemp, Careers Adviser at Marlborough Boys' College and Executive member for Wellington-Marlborough – Chair
- Jim Bennett, formerly Careers Adviser and coordinator of Gateway, STAR and Trades Academy, Edgecumbe College
- Debra Miller, HOD Careers and Transition, Whangarei Boys' High
- Lorraine Pacey, Careers Adviser and Gateway Coordinator, Shirley Boys' High, Christchurch
- Linda Fox, principal, Kelston Girls' College and SPC representative
- Paul Towers, deputy principal, John Paul College, Greymouth and SPAC representative
- Huhana Davis, Waiheke High School, Te Huarahi representative
- Vijeshwar Prasad, Rangitikei College, Marton, Komiti Pasifika representative

Acknowledgements

PPTA wishes to thank the following people for their contributions to the work of this Taskforce.

Groups/individuals who presented to the Taskforce:

- Careers NZ: Graeme Benny, Chief Executive, Jay Lamburn, Chief Operating Officer, and Mitch de Vries, Career Education Benchmarks Project Manager

- Ministry of Education: Arthur Graves, National Manager, Youth Guarantee Networks

- Metro Group of Polytechnics: Dr Rick Ede, Chair and Chief Executive, Unitec

- Tertiary Education Union: Lesley Francey, President

- New Zealand Association of Private Education Providers: Virginia Archer, Board member

- Business New Zealand: Phil O'Reilly, Chief Executive, and Carrie Murdoch, Manager Education, Skills and Trade

- Federated Farmers: Kara Lok, Policy Adviser

- Industry Training Federation: Submitted a paper

Trades academy lead school principals and deputy principals interviewed:

- Rex Smith, principal, Nayland College, Nelson

- Bruce Ritchie, principal, and John Tinling, deputy principal, Massey High, Auckland

- Warren Waetford, Director of Secondary School, Southern Cross Campus, Auckland

- Soana Pamaka, principal, and Katherine Moore, deputy principal, Tamaki College, Auckland

- Peter Garelja, principal, Tikipunga High, Northland

- Linda Fox, principal, Kelston Girls' College, Auckland

- Salvi Gargiulo, principal, Manurewa High, Auckland

- Peter Tootell, principal, Trident High

Recommendations

1. That all the Youth Guarantee programmes be amalgamated into a cohesive framework with a single set of goals, consistent resourcing and coherent communications.

2. That government cancel the bulk funding of school students enrolled in secondary-tertiary partnerships, and return to full entitlement staffing to schools for students enrolled part-time in tertiary institutions, in recognition of the fact that the classes from which those individuals are drawn still continue in their absence.

3. That there be additional funding for the school and/or tertiary provider for the actual costs of the partnership arrangement, including salary, specialised facilities and travel costs.

4. That the Ministry of Education fund a comprehensive evaluation of trades academies, using both quantitative and qualitative measures, focusing on the relative effectiveness of different models in terms of the full range of student outcomes, and their impact on the wider school community.

5. That there be a robust and transparent accountability system for schools and tertiary providers for their use of funding for Youth Guarantee initiatives and the quality of their programmes.

6. That the government extend ERO's jurisdiction to programmes provided by tertiary institutions for students enrolled in secondary schools.

7. That government develop and resource a system for tracking the progress of students from secondary schools into tertiary study, industry training and/or employment, to assist schools to monitor the outcomes for their own students, and to obtain useful system information.

8. That the government establish an enhanced careers advice and guidance capability that follows each young person up till the age of 25.

9. That the Ministry of Education provide increased support to schools, including improved resourcing, to enable them to meet the high standards for careers education outlined in the Careers Education Benchmarks, including improved resourcing for careers advice programmes, as well as for careers work in the school as a whole.

10. That the Ministry of Education establish a range of professional learning and development (PLD) programmes for the Youth Guarantee area, including careers advice and guidance, to meet the differing needs of school leaders, specialist teachers, and all secondary teachers.

11. That the Ministry of Education provide comprehensive guidance to secondary schools about effective ways to coordinate the various Youth Guarantee initiatives within their school.

1   Introduction

1.1   This report canvasses the work of PPTA's Secondary-Tertiary Interface Taskforce, set up from January 2013 to conduct a wide-ranging investigation of all the initiatives under the government policy heading Youth Guarantee, and to establish a policy position for the future.

1.2   The Taskforce arose out of increasing concerns expressed by teachers and by principals about the impact of Youth Guarantee on schools.

1.3   The Taskforce consists of members working in the secondary-tertiary area (e.g. Careers Advisors, transition educators, Gateway Coordinators), a principal and a deputy principal, and Maori and Pasifika representation.

1.4   It invited submissions/presentations from peak organisations, and conducted research, interviews with selected principals, and did a review of the literature.

1.5   Presentations were made in person by the Ministry of Education, Careers NZ, Business NZ, Federated Farmers, NZAPEP (the PTE sector), the Metro Group (the large polytechnics), and TEU and a written submission was received from the Industry Training Federation.

1.6   A survey of principals about their views of the range of Youth Guarantee initiatives produced a 36% response rate, very high for surveys of this type.

1.7   PPTA also conducted in-depth interviews with eight principals of trades academy lead schools. These often involved another person in the school with responsibility for the trades academy as well.

1.8   The Taskforce also considered relevant literature, and in particular the large body of work by Karen Vaughan of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER).

2 Growing Successful Citizens: Getting the secondary-tertiary interface right

2.1 The challenge of ensuring that secondary school students are able to parlay their educational experience into further learning opportunities or the world of work, is one that preoccupies all OECD countries. The problem has become particularly acute since the 2008 global financial collapse, with the consequent disintegration of the labour market, especially the youth labour market, and the increase in poverty and inequality.

2.2 Effective secondary-tertiary transitions are important both for individuals and society; vulnerable teenagers may detach themselves entirely from the labour market if they are not supported into more positive pathways. Ineffective secondary-tertiary transitions predispose young people to:

> lower-paying jobs than secondary school graduates. Since they earn lower wages, they also pay less taxes, which translates into lower income-tax revenues (OECD, 2012a) and…(t)hey are also more likely to rely on public assistance – although they receive little or no support from welfare systems in most countries.[1]

2.3 As well as the financial and social cost of supporting these students, there is a price to be paid in terms of national economic growth if there is a mismatch between the skills students graduate with and the employment needs of a modern economy.

2.4 None of this is new. For decades, governments and secondary schools have been grappling with the issue of how to ensure secondary schools serve the needs of students not destined for university. It was exactly these concerns that convinced secondary teachers of the need to move to standards-based assessment and led, eventually, to the adoption of NCEA.

2.5 NCEA has facilitated a rapid expansion in the range of subjects secondary schools are able to provide. Importantly, this expansion has been inclusive of the more academic and the more vocational options within the same schools, so avoiding an unhelpful and artificial divide that occurs in those countries where institutions are more specialised. New Zealand has some way to go, however, before the community accords vocational options the same parity of esteem that is accorded to university programmes.

2.6 A significant development in secondary schools has been the recognition of the need for authentic learning experiences for students who might otherwise disengage from school. Secondary schools have been facilitating work experience through the Gateway programme for some time while work-based learning, available in schools thorough the operation of STAR (Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource), has been with us for even longer.

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[1] OECD Education at a Glance 2013 p239 http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20%28eng%29--FINAL%2020%20June%202013.pdf

2.7   While there is no doubt about the success of these programmes, the scale of the problem, particularly since 2008, has required a more comprehensive approach, thus the development of the suite of initiatives known as the "Youth Guarantee".

2.8   As an approach it has strengths and weaknesses. Like all policies it has effects on the ground, including unintended effects, that policy makers may not always foresee. This report draws together practitioners' experience to make the case for some changes to the operation of the programmes.

3   Navigating the interface

3.1   The issues around transition

3.1.1   Unlike some other countries, New Zealand has no process for tracking individual students' progress across the interface, yet there is a significant body of research that shows that transition from school can be a fraught time for young people.

3.1.2   The internationally recognised term for young people who have not successfully transitioned is NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). In the 15-19 year old age group, New Zealand's rate of NEETs is not much better than the OECD average: 8.6% compared with an OECD average of 8.3%.[2]

3.1.3   Increasingly, there is a belief that young people need to see themselves as on "pathways" to some future destination, and that students who do not have a pathway in mind are "at risk".[3]

3.1.4   An alternative view is provided by Karen Vaughan who describes this generation as "the milling and churning generation", who increasingly postpone career decisions or change their minds several times about study or work. This is not necessarily a sign of a lack of commitment or focus, but a response to the huge number of pathways available to them today. For them, work is not necessarily the driving force of their lives that it was for their parents and grandparents.[4]

3.1.5   In her research project investigating student perspectives on careers, Karen found the activities that students rated most highly as guidance for career decisions were talking with family and friends, followed by learning in classroom-based school subjects. Activities such as discussing options with teachers or career advisors, looking through printed material, surfing the internet and working part-time were rated as useful by around 50-55% of students.[5]

3.1.6   At times of high youth unemployment, there has always been a tendency for policy-makers to blame schools for failing to facilitate transitions, or for not preparing students adequately for workforce needs. While there is a clear responsibility for schools to do what

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[2] Harrity, E. (2013). Vocational Pathways: Using industry partnerships and personalised learning to improve student outcomes. Wellington: Fulbright New Zealand. P.3.
[3] Vaughan, K. (2003). Changing Lanes: Young people making sense of pathways. Paper presented at the NZCER Annual Conference 'Educating for the 21st century' 8 August 2003. Downloaded from http://www.nzcer.org.nz/pdfs/12223.pdf

[4] Vaughan, K. (2004). Just browsing thanks: Young people's navigation of transition from school. Paper presented at PPTA's Charting the Future conference, 20 April 2004. Reported at http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=3561753.
[5] Vaughan, K. (2008). Student perspectives on leaving school, pathways, and careers. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Downloaded from http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/ECE/2567/35117/7.

they can to facilitate effective transitions, this is far from being the whole answer.[6]

3.1.7 There is also a clear responsibility on tertiary providers to smooth the pathway for young people as they enter their institutions, to reduce the drop-out rate at tertiary level. Tertiary providers who presented to the Taskforce agreed that this was important. Dr Rick Ede (Unitec and Metro Group) said that one of the benefits of trades academies and the Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) was that they "blurred the boundaries" between secondary and tertiary and gave students experience of a tertiary environment while still at school.

3.1.8 Employers also have a tendency to expect a degree of work-readiness that may be unrealistic. There is a responsibility on employers to recognise that young workers are still learning to be workers rather than students, and to think about what that means in their particular workplace.

3.1.9 For decades, employers have said that what they most want is young people with high levels of what we today call "key competencies": teamwork, listening skills, literacy, initiative, and a sense of responsibility to the employer demonstrated in, for example, punctuality, honesty and hard work.

3.1.10 In a presentation to the ITF conference in 2013, Rod McDonald of the Ithaca Group in Australia talked about a skills framework that they were developing which was made up of core skills, technical or discipline-specific skills, and core language, literacy and numeracy skills. The core skills are broken down into navigating the world of work (managing career and work life, working with roles, rights and protocols …), interacting with others (communicating, connecting with others, recognising and utilising diverse perspectives), and getting the work done (planning and organising, making decisions, identifying and solving problems, creating/innovating, and working in a digital world).

3.1.11 He warned, however, that it was vital to unpack what employers say they want, because a lot of the common words can mean different things to different employers, for example "attitude" – this could mean punctuality, or fitting in, or having a nice smile, or being energetic, or being highly innovative and self-motivated.

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[6] For example, see:
UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) "*Our evidence suggests, therefore, that although employability skills are an issue for some employers, it is not the main reason for them not recruiting young people. While tackling employability issues is important, there is a risk that employability skills become over-stated as an issue… (UKCES, 2011: 19).* UK Commission for Employment and Skills. 2011. *The Youth Inquiry – Employers' perspectives on tackling youth unemployment*, Wath-upon-Dearne: UKCES
And,
Cuban, L. (2013, March 22). Cheese Argument for School Reform: Add Another Hole. Retrieved from:
http://larrycuban.wordpress.com/2013/03/22/swiss-cheese-argument-for-school-reform-add-another-hole/

3.2 Presenters' ideas about what students need

3.2.1 Presenters to the Taskforce were asked two questions about what they thought students needed if they were to successfully negotiate the interface between secondary schools and tertiary student or employment:

- How would you describe a successful school leaver?

- What are the key knowledge, skills and attributes for young people to move successfully between schools and further learning/work?

3.2.2 Virginia Archer (NZAPEP) said that for successful transitions into tertiary education, students need to know what they're enrolling for and where it will take them, have the self-confidence to ask when they don't know something and be willing to move out of their comfort zone, to be ready to take responsibility for their own success, and to be solutions-oriented. This implies that they will have left school with a positive attitude about their future progress.

3.2.3 Phil O'Reilly (Business NZ) said that a successful school leaver would be a rounded individual who turned up to work on time, was honest, courageous and resilient, had teamwork and customer service skills, emotional intelligence, strong values and beliefs, an understanding of what is going on around them in the world, and behaved in socially responsible ways. He said that technical skills were less important as they could be taught by tertiary educators or employers. On the other hand, there were key knowledge and skills that young people need in the areas of literacy and numeracy, ICT, communication, and critical thinking.

3.2.4 Kara Lok (Federated Farmers) said that a successful school leaver for the primary industries sector would have good literacy and numeracy and "soft skills" such as an interest in agriculture, a good work ethic, and good interpersonal and communication skills.

3.2.5 Dr Rick Ede (Unitec and Metro Group) said that the vision of the NZ Curriculum sets out what a successful school leaver looks like very well: confident, connected, actively involved and lifelong learners. He added resilient to that list. The competencies allow students to transition successfully: their thinking, their confidence in using language, symbols and texts, their self-management, relating to others, and participating and contributing.

3.2.6 Unfortunately, because there is no comprehensive evaluation of all the Youth Guarantee programmes and their impact on students, as opposed to anecdotes, there is no robust evidence as to whether these programmes are improving students' preparedness for tertiary study or employment.

3.3 The school's role

3.3.1   Presenters were also asked about the school's role in facilitating the transition:

- What do you think the school's role should be in facilitating young people's movement across the interface?

- What are the barriers to successful transitions?

3.3.2   Careers NZ argued that schools needed to involve as many of their students' wider networks as possible. Students need to practise the skills they need e.g. decision-making, while still at school. They also suggested that schools can use their successful school leavers as role models.

3.3.3   Dr Rick Ede (Unitec and Metro Group) said that planning ahead for successful transitions was really important. He said the trades academy model where the school continued to support students pastorally and academically was a really good model for facilitating a gradual transition into tertiary. The fees-free places in tertiary are more problematic, he said, because the students involved are often ones who have been disengaged, and the onus of supporting them lies fully with the polytechnic or PTE, who don't have the same depth of experience as schools with pastoral care of such young people.

3.3.4   At the same time, he said that his polytechnic was rapidly increasing its skills at ensuring successful transitions once students arrive with them. This is particularly for Maori and Pasifika students who are an increasing proportion of their student body. The polytechnic works hard to get these students engaged with the Maori and Pasifika support networks by running orientation programmes and whanau evenings, and by providing senior student mentors. They have built in checks after six weeks to see how students are doing.

3.3.5   Phil O'Reilly (Business NZ) recognised the complexities for schools seeking to engage with local employers. He said businesses tended to be generally positive about doing this, but didn't know how to do it. There was a need for some good practice examples to be shared. He admitted, though, that there is also some fear among the business community about the time it takes, reputational risks, and the like.

4 Trades academies

4.1 What they are

4.1.1   Trades academies are partnerships between schools and tertiary institutions with a lead provider which may be a school or may be the tertiary institution. There are currently 22 trades academies, with 3,695 allocated places. Approximately half of these are led by schools. In addition, there are a number of examples of schools running unofficial 'trades academies', with or without a tertiary partner. By 2014 there will be 4,500 places available for trades academies.

4.2 Achievement

4.2.1   Principals interviewed reported excellent outcomes for some of their most disengaged students as a result of placement in trades academies. The main measures of outcomes required by the MOE are in terms of achievement of NCEA Level 2, and attendance. There is pressure on schools to deliver in terms of these, otherwise the places could be withdrawn and allocated elsewhere.

4.2.2   In the survey, principals involved with trades academies reported very or quite positive change on average for their students as follows:

- Motivation to succeed: 90% of responses

- Clarity about post-school destinations: 79% of responses.

- Attendance at school: 76% of responses

- Achieving at least Level 2 NCEA: 74% of responses

- Staying at school to the end of Year 13: 53% of responses

4.2.3   For 56%, the information that they received about individual students' achievement was both adequate and timely. For 19%, however, it was adequate but not timely, and for 2% it was timely but not adequate. There was no difference on this between schools that led trades academies and schools that were involved with academies led by another school or a tertiary provider. There are clearly some issues in this area.

4.3 Partnerships

4.3.1   The new Ministry jargon for trades academies is STPs (Secondary-Tertiary Partnerships). Trades academies are predicated on a polytechnic or private training establishment (PTE) sharing the teaching and learning responsibilities for students with a school.

4.3.2   In some trades academies, the partnership element is relatively minor, with students largely remaining on the school site and tertiary tutors coming in for short courses or a few hours a week.

4.3.3   In others, the involvement of the tertiary partner can be as high as full-time attendance off-site, in the case of the Weltec trades academy. A more common pattern appears to be about a day a week with tertiary tutors either at school or at the polytechnic or PTE.

4.3.4   The Taskforce heard some reports that students in trades academies that involved their being off-site for part of the week often found it difficult to be back in school for the other days. This did not seem to be an issue where the trades academy was completely or largely school-based.

4.3.5   The model is very variable, and it appears that there is no comprehensive evaluation being done by the Ministry of Education about what model(s) work best for students. Lead schools report making constant adjustments in their models as they learn what works and what doesn't. However schools have big questions about how well the performance of tertiary partners is being monitored.

4.3.6   There are some big issues about reporting by tertiary providers to schools: the regularity and timeliness of it, and the accuracy. While tertiary providers and schools are required to provide comprehensive information to the Ministry, there appear to be no standards for reporting to the partner school.

4.3.7   There appear to be differences between tertiary-led and school-led trades academies. While school-led trades academies keep close control of the recruiting into their trades academy places, tertiary providers have the ability to market their academies directly to students and families, e.g. through local media. This can lead to pressure on schools to make decisions that might not fit with their perceptions of what the student would best be doing. This reinforces the need for good guidance and advice to students and their families.

4.3.8   The Taskforce was told by Dr Rick Ede, Chair of the Metro Group of large polytechnics, that involvement in a trades academy was not a profit-making enterprise for a polytechnic, although it was a useful way of marketing to future students. He said that his polytechnic, Unitec, highly valued their partnership with Massey High School's trades academy.

4.3.9   Some lead school principals reported that they found PTEs easier to work with than polytechnics, perhaps because they are generally smaller institutions and therefore more flexible. Some trades academies work with a number of different polytechnics and PTEs.

4.4 The name

4.4.1　An issue that was raised a number of times by lead school principals was "What is a trades academy? What makes something a trade, or an academy?"

4.4.2　Some of what is happening under the trades academy label is far from the traditional view of trades, e.g. courses in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), hairdressing, hospitality, aquaculture, and fitness, to name a few. The essential elements are that these are courses that are employment-focused, lead on to tertiary programmes, and involve a tertiary provider.

4.4.3　There is also a gender issue, in that the term "trades" tends to be equated with occupations that appeal more to young men than young women, and there is definitely a gender imbalance in the trades academies. (This could be partially explained by these programmes targeting the more disengaged students, and these being more likely to be male.) It was suggested to the Taskforce that the name should be changed to fit that better.

4.4.4　There are schools operating what they call "trades academies" or some similar name that are not receiving any government funding for them. In some ways, with the introduction of bulk funding of trades academy students (see below), these schools may be glad that they are not official trades academies.

4.4.5　There were also suggestions that the distinction between what happens in a trades academy and what happens elsewhere in a school is increasingly artificial. One large school showed its course handbook, which listed numerous 'vocational packages', some of which used trades academy funding, but others didn't, even though those others involved elements of partnership with a tertiary provider.

4.4.6　Some principals also said that despite being heavily involved with trades academy work, they were not really clear about what the government's overall goals for the academies were. Some said that they felt they were being expected to create the policy "on the hoof" for government

4.5 Staffing/funding arrangements

4.5.1　The staffing/funding arrangements for trades academies are a big issue for schools involved with them.

4.5.2　Secondary schools receive resourcing as both cash (operations grant etc) and staffing entitlement (a guaranteed number of positions which are centrally funded at actual cost by the government). The staffing entitlement (the Guaranteed Minimum Formula Staffing or GMFS) is generated by the number of

students on the roll at each year level plus some base allocations which address lack of economy of scale in small schools.

4.5.3   Information received under the Official Information Act (OIA) has revealed that the government is eager to shift to the full bulk funding of senior secondary students, and perhaps ultimately of all students.[7] The plan is clearly for an incremental erosion of the centrally-resourced staffing model. It sees trades academy staffing as an initial step, a way of "softening up" schools.

4.5.4   Salaries bulk funding means that the schools receive a bulk grant from which to pay salary costs. There is no guarantee of the number of appointments nor does the government guarantee to meet the actual salary costs. Bulk funding reduces costs to the government over the longer term as salary increases do not have to be resourced by the government but from within a fixed amount of resourcing provided to schools. Net results are a reduction in the experience and qualifications of staff, reduced staffing numbers for a given roll, increased inequality in the provision of staffing between schools with different capacities to draw on local funding, and therefore increased inequality in the provision of education based upon the community from which the school draws its students.

4.5.5   The government's public rationale for bulk funding of trades academy places is that this will "enhance the flexibility of the current resourcing system for schools". Another rationale is that this will ensure "a level playing field" between secondary and tertiary, with "funding to follow learners". An unstated rationale is probably that it provides a mechanism for reducing funding over time.

4.5.6   From 2014, schools with students in trades academies will receive $9,500 per student. This will be reduced pro rata on the basis of 20% per day per week that the student is not on the school site. This means that secondary schools will have reduced staffing entitlement if they have students in the secondary-tertiary programmes. This is problematic because the classes from which the students are drawn when they attend academy courses still need to continue. Schools will either have to carry the cost of maintaining the level of staffing required to do this or reduce the use of staffing in the general curriculum/pastoral areas (that is, reduce curriculum options for all students or provide lesser pastoral and guidance care) to accommodate the 'cashed-up' staffing. The STP-resourcing model is already increasing the level of instability in the provision of courses to students in secondary schools. This instability will be increased if more staffing is cashed up and if more students use the secondary-tertiary trades academy programmes under this model.

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[7] Tertiary Education report; Confirming the approach to cash-based funding for Secondary Tertiary Programmes under the Youth Guarantee. ED30/02/00/2 1st March 2012 . Available from PPTA

4.5.7   In addition, there is a pastoral care and coordination component of $1,250 per student in a trades academy which is paid to the lead provider for them to allocate to the partners, but the Taskforce heard anecdotes of academies where non-lead schools have seen nothing of this $1,250, because the lead schools claim that they need it all for coordination. One lead school principal commented that this amount is simply not enough to cover all that is required. The suggestion was made that it needed to be split into pastoral care and administration, to ensure that the pastoral care component was not lost to administration.

4.5.8   The introduction of a separate category for pastoral care illustrates the gulf between secondary schools and tertiary providers with an interest only in discrete parts of a programme. Secondary principals note that pastoral care is an intrinsic part of all school activities – teaching and learning, sports and cultural activities, fundraising and even grounds duty.

4.5.9   There is also transport funding which is provided on a needs-based application basis.

4.5.10   Principals note that there appears to be a lack of transparency between the various partners about the use of all the funding.

4.5.11   Trades academy students will not generate entitlements to units or MMAs,[8] nor to 5YA[9] property funding or the Operations Grant for the school. Ironically, these cuts in the Operations Grant include funding for careers, STAR, etc. These are supposedly covered by the bulk funded amount. Principals' remuneration, on the other hand, is calculated on the total of the GMFS and the bulk funded staffing.

4.5.12   The Taskforce is concerned that the bulk funding of trades academy staffing will result in a significant increase in the number of fixed term appointments in schools involved with trades academies because of the unpredictability of trades academy places from year to year. Previous experience of bulk funding of salaries in New Zealand also suggests that schools will increasingly be driven towards hiring less experienced and qualified teachers, who are paid less than highly qualified and experienced staff. Alternatively schools may be driven to seeking higher levels of funding from local sources through fees and donations. This will most disadvantage schools and students in low income communities.

4.5.13   The new funding arrangements will also place an enormous strain on smaller schools' ability to staff their senior curriculum. Two of the principals interviewed reported that they were really concerned about this because of their roll size, and the need to

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[8] Units and MMAs (Middle Management Allowances) are additional salary payments made in recognition of extra duties.
[9] 5YA stands for five year Agreement and is a mechanism whereby schools may anticipate up to five years future property funding.

provide a full range of curriculum subjects for students not in the trades academy, as well as in-school programmes for trades academy students the rest of the week. (Most students are in their trades academy for at most two days per week, and the rest of the week there must either be separate school-based programmes for them, or they must go back into subject classes along with non-trades academy students.)

4.5.14   Members of the Secondary Principals' Council have commented that this is not necessarily a problem only for small schools. While this is likely to have greater negative impacts on them, there will also be impacts on larger schools' ability to offer the full range of subjects. It is likely that some schools will lose the ability to "carry" senior subjects with small numbers because of the loss of GMFS staffing.

4.5.15   While it appears from Ministry modelling that some schools will, in theory, have a small cash surplus from their bulk funded trades academy staffing after paying for teachers and covering the losses from the Operations Grant and property funding, the Taskforce was concerned that there are costs not accounted for in that modelling.

4.5.16   Papers sought under the Official Information Act show that the Ministry was aware of the issues for small schools, and proposed that the GMFS base staffing for a year level be left untouched, even if all the students at a level were in the trades academy. This appears to have been implemented but will only partly mitigate the negative impacts.

4.5.17   Principals are concerned about the cost and impact of any potential redundancies. They worry, quite reasonably, that if their total roll (GMFS plus bulk funded students) declines in future, the Ministry will not fund the redundancies, because it doesn't normally cover redundancies of staff employed under the Operations Grant. At the time of writing, the Ministry has indicated that it will cover the cost of redundancies that arise from the youth guarantee.[10]

4.5.18   In summary, the positive learning potential of the scheme is being undermined, firstly by the appearance of a covert attempt to introduce bulk funded staffing, and secondly as a result of the insistence that the new policy, inherently more expensive than the status quo, be cost-neutral.

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[10] Ministry of Education (2013). Staffing and funding guidance documentation for schools participating in secondary-tertiary programmes 2013/2014, Version 1.0, issued 25 June 2013.

5   Fees-free places in tertiary institutions

5.1   What they are

5.1.1   The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), which funds these fees-free places in tertiary institutions for 16 and 17 year-olds, describes them as being "about creating opportunities for 16 and 17 year olds who are not currently engaged in education to re-engage with education in a tertiary rather than school-based setting". Providers are required to offer Level 2 qualifications, and to provide pathways to progress to higher levels of education.

5.2   Impact on schools

5.2.1   While the fees-free places in tertiary institutions are supposed to be targeting 16 and 17 year-olds who are NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), they do have an impact on schools.

5.2.2   The survey of principals revealed that not all of them perceived that these places were working as they should be. For example, when asked "What has been your experience of the operation of fees-free places in tertiary for 16 and 17 year olds?" 23% chose the response "It has resulted in students who would have succeeded at school leaving us prematurely" and 17% chose "It has increased the numbers of students picking up tertiary courses that lead nowhere". 11% chose "It has encouraged students to leave school for tertiary only to fail there", and 10% chose "It has led tertiary providers to 'cherry pick' students who would have been better staying at school". (Principals were able to choose more than one option.)

5.2.3   Only 20% of principals said that most or quite a few of their students did well when they took up these fees-free places. 37% said that "some do well". 27% said that they really didn't know how well their students did.

5.2.4   20% of principals had sometimes had the experience of students returning to school after taking up fees-free places in tertiary. This was most often because they realised they needed higher school achievement to achieve their goals.

5.2.5   The title "fees free" is somewhat ironic. Not only do vocational programmes running outside the formal programme need to charge students for materials, all secondary schools are increasingly having to ask parents to subsidise "free" secondary education through donations and extensive fundraising.[11]

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[11] For a summary of how much parents are paying, see *A level playing field? The importance of local funding in financing secondary schools.* PPTA conference paper 2012 http://ppta.org.nz/index.php/annual-

5.2.6 In the final stages of preparing this paper, the Taskforce became aware of an extension of the fees free places to a pilot, beginning in 2014 with 350 places at one day a week, for students enrolled in secondary schools but not in trades academies. There has been little publicity about this, but PPTA's response, when consulted, was that this would further confuse an already incoherent policy and should not proceed. It will also result in a further 350 students being bulk funded.

5.3 Future of fees-free places

5.3.1 The Ministry of Education told the Taskforce that the number of fees-free places was planned to grow to 10,500 by 2015. They said that the emphasis had shifted from the original employment skills/personal development focus for these young people to providers having to deliver actual educational achievement in the form of qualifications.

5.3.2 This is a shift for some PTEs, and raises the issue of whether they can deliver these outcomes. There is a risk that this could lead to their being selective about the students they take, because if their students don't produce the required results profile, they will lose funding.

5.3.3 PTE sources, on the other hand, have reported increased difficulty in finding young people to take up these places as schools have increased their programmes at the interface, resulting in fewer students leaving prematurely.

5.3.4 One source told the Taskforce that some PTEs had had to return funding at the end of 2012 because they had not filled the places allocated to them. This could indicate that school initiatives are beginning to make these fees-free places unnecessary.

5.3.5 On the other hand, the extension of the voucher model of bulk funding (cashed up staffing and operational funding) will impact on schools by reducing the resourcing available to them to offer broad curriculum choices to all students under their care.

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conference/conference-papers/doc_download/1501-a-level-playing-field-the-importance-of-local-funding-in-financing-secondary-schools-to-meet-

6 Youth Guarantee Networks

6.1 What they are

6.1.1   Youth Guarantee Networks are clusters of schools and tertiary providers that the Ministry is trying to establish in geographical areas to assist with the development of secondary-tertiary programmes.

6.1.2   Arthur Graves (MOE) told the Taskforce that the purpose of these networks is to achieve a senior secondary/tertiary interface "footprint" in the regions, with people with local knowledge supporting the various Youth Guarantee initiatives.

6.2 Awareness

6.2.1   The growth of these networks is far from rapid, however. 19% of principals had either never heard of these networks or didn't know whether they had heard of them. Another 38% of principals knew about the networks, but no-one had approached them to be part of one. This may not be surprising, given that the Ministry has been focusing on developing these networks in lower decile areas first.

6.2.2   30% said that they belonged to a network, and the remaining 13% said that they had been approached but had chosen not to be part of one.

6.3 Opinions of the networks

6.3.1   The survey asked principals who had heard of the networks, regardless of whether they were part of one or not, for their opinions of them. The question provided a number of possible responses, and respondents could choose more than one.

6.3.2   A slight majority chose the favourable responses, ticking the options "They can be a useful vehicle for getting different institutions to collaborate" and "They can help schools to be more aware of what is available for our students". A smaller group (26%) also ticked "There is useful discussion at the meetings".

6.3.3   On the other hand, 24% chose "We don't need a network to be able to co-operate with tertiary providers", a view that also came through in some of the interviews with principals of trades academy lead schools. 20% chose the option "They tend to just be a talkfest but don't do anything constructive", and 4% chose "They are a waste of time".

6.3.4   One principal of a very low-decile school said, when interviewed, that the higher-decile schools with which their school competed for students had refused to join a network.

6.3.5   The purpose of these networks is to promote collaboration, but as another principal commented, "collaboration has a cost, and it is hard to enact in a competitive paradigm".

7 Vocational pathways

7.1 What they are

7.1.1 The Vocational Pathways were launched in April 2013, and will be fully implemented in 2014. They provide guidance for students and teachers about what standards are most relevant to particular groupings of careers, under the five headings: Manufacturing and Technology, the Services Sector, Construction and Infrastructure, the Social and Community Sector, and Primary Industries. There are plans for a sixth pathway, Creative Industries. While the vocational pathways are only defined at Level 2 currently, it is intended to define pathways at Level 3 too. From 2014 students will be able to be "awarded" a pathway, but the more useful part may in fact be the vocational profile of their achievement against the pathways which they will be able to see in their results from 2013 study on.

7.2 An overall framework for Youth Guarantee

7.2.1 While the vocational pathways were originally mooted as an organising framework for students so that they could see how their study choices were leading towards particular occupational groupings, the Taskforce has noted an increasing use of these pathways as an organising framework for the whole Youth Guarantee project.

7.2.2 Youth Guarantee Networks (see above) are being expected to organise their thinking around the five (soon to be six) pathways.

7.2.3 Trades academies often link their courses to the various pathways in their marketing material.

7.3 Timeframe for the award

7.3.1 The Taskforce is concerned that the implementation of this initiative has not been well managed to date.

7.3.2 The draft pathways were published for consultation in Term 3 2012, but the time made available for responses was far shorter than had originally been promised.

7.3.3 The final launch of the pathways was not until April 2013, but secondary sector representatives on the Pathways Advisory Group were shocked to hear that PTEs applying for funding in late 2012 had been required by TEC to be demonstrating results against the pathways as a performance measure in 2013. This placed pressure on the school sector to agree to the pathways being awarded on the basis of 2013 results, when schools had had no time to gear up to the final shape of the pathways.

7.3.4   The changes between draft and final were not considered significant to PTEs because the unit standards content had remained roughly the same, and they have relatively little interest in achievement standards.

7.3.5   On the other hand, for the secondary sector, the fact that between the draft and the final there had been significant numbers of achievement standards added to the "sector-related standards" category was very important. While this had happened as a result of pressure from the secondary sector, it was also likely to mean that quite a few secondary students would achieve pathways in 2013 without their school having actually begun to officially offer them, or would come close to achieving them.

7.3.6   The school sector saw this as "an ambush" that didn't allow schools to plan in a measured way for implementation.

7.3.7   In the end, a compromise was reached whereby no students would be awarded pathways from 2013 study, but the profile builder would be available on their personal records.

7.4   Change management process

7.4.1   There have been major shortcomings in the change management process for the Vocational Pathways. One official was heard to say at a meeting "We've been too busy implementing the pathways to think about evaluation or PLD". Implementation should never begin until there is baseline data and clear plans for ongoing evaluation, and until the necessary PLD has been put in place.

7.4.2   It also appears that officials have been too busy implementing the pathways from the centre to think about the significant workload implications for schools.

7.4.3   In addition, the key official responsible for the implementation of the vocational pathways moved to a policy job almost the day after the launch in April 2013, and it took till August for a replacement to be in place. This has caused significant delays in the implementation process.

7.4.4   At the time of writing, PPTA was also still awaiting a response to repeated calls for a report on the Ministry's evaluation and PLD plans.

7.4.5   Interestingly, Business NZ in their presentation to the Taskforce, supported PPTA's view that the change management process was inadequate. Phil O'Reilly said that the pathways themselves were good but not sufficient. He said there needed to be better leadership from the centre, and work to ensure there is the capability in schools to implement them well.

7.4.6   The Ministry's approach to implementation has also been criticised by a Visiting Fellow who was based within the Ministry to study the implementation of the Vocational Pathways. In a report published in August 2013, Eileen Harrity, Visiting Ian Axford Fellow wrote: "Considerable confusion … seems to exist among stakeholders as to what is expected of schools…These tensions highlight a risk that has not been fully addressed in the design phase. Essentially all schools should choose the approach that best meets the needs of their students. However, that assumes that all schools have the understanding, capacity, and resources to implement Vocational Pathways even in their most basic form. Without additional guidance and clear expectations, schools may struggle to successfully implement the Pathways"[12].

7.5 School preparedness

7.5.1   When asked "How well informed do you feel about the Vocational Pathways initiative?" the largest group, 41%, chose the option "I know a bit about it", and a further 12% chose "I know very little". Only 13% of principals felt "very well informed" about the vocational pathways initiative, and a further 35% felt "quite well informed". Given that the survey was done three months after the official "launch" of the pathways, the MOE should be very concerned about this result.

7.5.2   When asked about their preparations for the vocational pathways, principals fell into three roughly equal groups.

7.5.3   33% of them said that they had done nothing because they were waiting for final information. This will be partly because of a significant delay between launch and the distribution of the final printed materials to schools. (Publication of the booklets on the Youth Guarantee website at the time of the launch clearly had no impact for these principals.)

7.5.4   At the other end of the scale, 36% said that they already had courses in place that fitted the final shape of some vocational pathways. Of these, about half were also discussing new courses they might offer next year, and a third had already made changes in assessment for the pathways, and a third were discussing such changes. This group could be described as well advanced in their preparedness.

7.5.5   The rest of the schools fell between these two extremes, and were beginning their preparations in a variety of ways.

7.5.6   The level of understanding of the requirements for the award of the pathways was not high. Only 34% of principals said that they were very or quite familiar with the requirements. These principals were much more likely to have also said that they felt very or quite informed about the vocational pathways initiative.

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[12] Harrity op cit, pp.16-17.

They were also much more likely to already have courses in place that met the final shape of some of the pathways, and to be actively discussing new courses and changes in the assessment of existing courses to fit the pathways.

7.5.7   Interestingly, the group who were very or quite familiar with the requirements were no more likely than the rest of the principals to feel that they would have to make only minor modifications to the senior curriculum for the pathways (57% compared with 55% of the whole group), and just as likely to believe that they would have to make quite major modifications to their senior curriculum (29% compared with 26%).

8 STAR funding

8.1 What it is

8.1.1 The Secondary-Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) is a longer-established funding resource provided by the MOE to enable students to access non-national curriculum courses which include work-based learning and lead towards unit standards for vocational, education and training courses at Level 1 or above.

8.2 School views of STAR

8.2.1 STAR is a resource that has existed for some years, although the rules for its use have been modified over that time. It is still well regarded by principals, with 82% choosing the response "It is a useful way to broaden students' experience of career options". Most of these principals also chose the response "It is a useful way for students to get a taste of options at tertiary", and some also ticked the response "It is very flexible".

8.2.2 From time to time there are rumours of STAR's imminent demise, but this would be very unpopular with principals, of whom 39% said that it should be greatly expanded, and only 1 said it should be abolished and the money spent in other ways.

8.2.3 A review of STAR was announced on 14 August, with submissions due on 20 September.

8.2.4 Careers advisors are strong supporters of STAR as a programme that allows schools to develop individual learning plans for particular students, in partnership with tertiary providers.

8.2.5 The STAR guidelines are excellent, and schools that are using the funding as intended are providing a very worthwhile personalised service to students.

9 Gateway

9.1 What it is

9.1.1   Gateway is a funding resource provided through TEC for arranging structured workplace learning for senior students.

9.2 School views of Gateway

9.2.1   Gateway is even more popular with principals than STAR, with 97% choosing the option "It is a great opportunity for students to taste employment opportunities", and 61% also agreeing that "It is a great motivator for students who are starting to drift".

9.2.2   One principal added the comment that "It is the best initiative in this area", and another wrote: "It is a very successful programme, not just for those most vulnerable but also for the most able where the opportunity to experience working in a law office or accountancy firm gives these students an insight they would not be able to get otherwise".

9.2.3   Gateway was also mentioned favourably by a number of presenters to the Taskforce: Dr Rick Ede (Unitec and Metro Group), Virginia Archer (NZAPEP), and Kara Lok (Federated Farmers).

9.2.4   The survey asked principals for suggestions about improvements to Gateway. Of the 41 suggestions, the most frequent were around increasing the availability of places with employers (7), increasing the TEC funding for the scheme (7), and modifying the accountability requirements to make it more user-friendly (5).

9.2.5   Gateway is also under review, as from 14 August, along with STAR.

10 Careers information, advice, guidance and education (CIAGE)

10.1 What it is

10.1.1   Every secondary school is required to provide its students with careers information, advice, guidance and education about careers. This is a huge task, made increasingly complex by the range of initiatives described above, with all their different funding and arrangements, and by the ever-expanding range of career and study options and entry requirements.

10.1.2   In October 2011, Careers NZ published a set of benchmarks which they describe as "a self-review tool for careers development in New Zealand secondary schools". They have since gone on to develop benchmarks for the primary and tertiary sectors. These benchmarks emphasis that careers development is a school-wide responsibility, rather than something that can simply be left to the Careers Adviser.

10.2 Findings on CIAGE

10.2.1   One of the original motivators for setting up the Secondary-Tertiary Interface Taskforce was concerns about the future of careers work in secondary schools. The government had initiated a review of CIAGE, and the union was concerned about policy changes would eventuate.

10.2.2   The future of this very important work in schools is still unclear, at the time of writing this report. The review report has never been published.   The Taskforce is worried that improvements in resourcing for careers may have been put on the back burner by government.

10.2.3   The Taskforce heard a presentation from Careers NZ. It was clear that Careers NZ has only limited levers to influence what happens in schools. They do not have a funding role, and can only provide advice and guidance about what effective careers provision looks like in a school or tertiary institution, e.g. through their Careers Education Benchmarks.13

10.2.4   The increase in government initiatives to provide a greater range of pathways for students necessitates significant advice and guidance to ensure that students choose well. This requires staff who are familiar with the New Zealand Curriculum, the full range of pathways, understand the characteristics of adolescents and are good at forming effective relationships with students, their whanau and colleagues.   The Taskforce was concerned that Graeme Benny, in his key role in Careers NZ, asserted that this work did not need to be done by teachers. The Taskforce is firmly

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[13] http://www.careers.govt.nz/educators-practitioners/planning/career-education-benchmarks/

of the view that careers advice and guidance is a role for experienced, qualified and highly capable teachers.

10.2.5 The Careers Education Benchmarks for secondary schools describe an ideal situation but there is little evidence that the Ministry of Education has a comprehensive plan for ensuring that all schools can reach this ideal.

11 The Youth Guarantee policy as a whole

11.1 Principals' perspectives

11.1.1   Principals are clearly struggling to get a coherent sense of Youth Guarantee as a policy area, as distinct from individual initiatives.

11.1.2   The survey asked principals "How confident are you that you understand the overall shape of the Youth Guarantee policy?" Only 4% chose "I am very confident", and another 28% chose "I am quite confident".

11.1.3   By far the largest group, 42%, chose "I am trying to get an understanding of it", while 21% chose "I know about some parts of it but not the whole thing", and 5% chose the option "I have no idea how it all fits together". Intriguingly, this pattern did not change when only the responses from principals involved with trades academies were counted. This is a very concerning picture.

11.1.4   Principals were also asked about their comfort levels with the directions of the Youth Guarantee policy. The largest group, 41%, chose "Quite comfortable, there are some good things happening". The next largest group, 26%, put themselves in the "Neutral" category. Only 6% chose "Very comfortable, it's absolutely on the right track", and at the other end of the scale 17% chose "Quite uncomfortable, some of it is quite worrying".

11.1.5   This picture was replicated in interviews with trades academy lead school principals. A number of them expressed a sense that there was a lack of leadership across the whole policy. The fact that some parts are funded by TEC and some by the MOE causes confusion.

11.1.6   One principal commented that the government was asking for a huge shift in thinking about secondary schooling. He felt that there was some logic to that, but questioned whether the government had the practical understanding of what was needed for schools to make that shift.

11.1.7   "What does "youth guarantee" really mean?" one principal asked.

11.2 Presenters' perspectives

11.2.1   The Industry Training Federation also criticised the government's overall policy, saying that while individual initiatives were all valuable, there was a "significant lack of cohesion" between them. They expressed a wish for a greater alignment to make them more understandable and accessible for schools, but also for parents/whanau, industry training organisations and tertiary education organisations to navigate and engage with.

11.3 An incoherent policy

11.3.1   The Taskforce agreed that there was a major problem with lack of coherence of the Youth Guarantee policy as a whole. It has been implemented piecemeal and haphazardly, with different funding sources, different regulations, and different levels of accountability to different agencies. While at the government level Youth Guarantee may be believed to be a coherent whole, at an operational level and in the community it is seen to be fragmented and not well understood.

11.3.2   The government needs to accept that the changes necessary to create the environment and to develop the pathways to which the government aspires cannot be brought about with a fiscally neutral strategy.

12 Ideas for the future

12.1 Students first

12.1.1 This investigation has not had the capacity to research the voices of students, however the interests of students have been at the forefront of the Taskforce's work and of the people who have been consulted in preparation of this report.

12.1.2 Any future policies in this area must take meeting the needs of the full range of students as the paramount purpose. New Zealand schools comprise very diverse populations, unlike systems where students are channelled into different types of schools quite early in their schooling. This is a considerable strength of the New Zealand school system, but it is also a challenge in terms of the resourcing of programmes for all the different needs.

12.2 Collaboration rather than competition

12.2.1 A challenge for this kind of policy area in New Zealand is that schools are being asked to collaborate with each other and with tertiary partners and industry while continuing to operate within a highly competitive environment. To promote collaboration in this context requires more than proselytising. As the principal quoted above said, "Collaboration … is hard to enact in a competitive paradigm".

12.2.2 Perverse incentives that mitigate against co-operation, such as removing staffing from schools as a consequence of their engagement with certain initiatives, make no sense at all.

12.3 Change management rather than laissez faire

12.3.1 There is a marked absence of effective change management in the Youth Guarantee policy area.

12.3.2 Schools are being asked to make huge changes in their approach, however there is no evidence of comprehensive planning for the professional learning of school leaders and teachers, or of a communications strategy that is mindful of the fact that schools are already very busy places and innovation is time-consuming, nor is there any evidence of proper plans for evaluating the impact of this policy as it unfolds.

12.3.3 The government's emphasis on teachers differentiating learning for individual students is not replicated in its policies for schools, where a one size fits all approach appears to dominate.

12.3.4 The Taskforce noted, both among some presenters to it and in the public domain, negative generalisations about the work already being done in schools and schools' efforts in this area. As professionals heavily involved in trying to implement the various

Youth Guarantee initiatives, they felt that this was misplaced. There needs to be celebration of the huge changes that secondary schools have delivered, especially over the last twenty years, to meet the needs of an ever-increasing diversity of students.

12.4 Refinement or replacement?

12.4.1   There are clearly strengths in the individual parts of Youth Guarantee, including those that existed before they were gathered up into the overall Youth Guarantee framework. Whether the particular individual parts are the right ones, and whether they are meeting all the needs and working well, is a question that, at this time, the government appears not to be interested in answering.

12.4.2   There is a need for improvements to Youth Guarantee that will not be able to be achieved within the current funding.

12.4.3   The suggested improvements identified by the Taskforce all require funding by government, and include:

- The amalgamation of all the Youth Guarantee schemes into one overarching scheme with one set of goals and guidelines.

- Rejection of the bulk funding of school students enrolled in secondary-tertiary partnerships, and a return to full entitlement staffing to schools for students enrolled part-time in tertiary institutions, in recognition of the fact that the classes from which those individuals are drawn still continue in their absence. In addition to the GMFS staffing, there should be funding for the school and/or tertiary provider for the actual costs of the partnership arrangement, including salary, specialised facilities and travel costs.

- A comprehensive evaluation of trades academies, using both quantitative and qualitative measures, focusing on the relative effectiveness of different models in terms of the full range of student outcomes, and their impact on the wider school community.

- Robust and transparent accountability for schools and tertiary providers for their use of funding for Youth Guarantee initiatives and the quality of their programmes. The government should consider extending ERO's jurisdiction to programmes provided by tertiary institutions for students enrolled in secondary schools.

- A mechanism for tracking the progress of students through secondary schools and the transition into tertiary study, industry training and/or employment, to assist schools to monitor the outcomes for their own students, and to obtain useful system information.

- An enhanced careers advice and guidance capability that follows each young person up till the age of 25.

- Support to schools, including improved resourcing, to enable them to meet the high standards for careers education outlined in the Careers Education Benchmarks. This includes improved resourcing for careers advice programmes, as well as for careers work in the school as a whole.

- Professional learning and development (PLD) programmes for the Youth Guarantee area, including careers advice and guidance. These need to meet the differing needs of school leaders, specialist teachers, and all secondary teachers.

- Comprehensive guidance to secondary schools about effective ways to coordinate the various Youth Guarantee initiatives within their school.

13   Conclusions

13.1 The overt aim of the Youth Guarantee policy is sound. The Ministry's website describes it as "to provide learners with more choices, ways and places to achieve NCEA L2 or equivalent".[14]

13.2 There may, however, be covert aims, such as to gradually introduce the secondary sector to a voucher system of funding student places.

13.3 Furthermore, as with so many government initiatives, the devil proves to be in the detail, and in particular in the quality of the policy design and policy implementation, in the adequacy of the resourcing, and in the follow-up in terms of ongoing support and evaluation to monitor for the unforeseen negative consequences that so often materialise despite policy makers' best efforts to predict.

13.4 There is an urgent need for government to engage far more effectively with the secondary sector to clarify the areas of concern and identify ways to address these. Without such engagement, there is a real danger that the full potential benefits of this policy will not be realised.

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[14] http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/EducationInitiatives/YouthGuarantee/AboutYouthGuarantee.aspx

Appendix A

PPTA's interest in the secondary-tertiary interface

The union has a long history of work around this interface. *Secondary Schools in Change*, for example, in 1973, began with an article by the principal of Aorere College, which included the statement: "The guidance programme should comprise several major elements including some understanding of the world of work, of the world of leisure and of the adult community that the pupils will enter later."

1987 saw a conference paper *Towards a co-ordinated policy for youth* on post-compulsory education and training, which said: "A fundamental principle is that all post-compulsory education and training, together with the associated matters of funding and student support, be planned in the context of one coherent policy."

That paper also signalled support for the ideas underpinning the NZ Qualifications Framework, in that it recommended that all participants in post-compulsory education and training be provided "with recognised certification which describes actual achievement".

PPTA's work from as early as the 1970's to advocate for a shift to standards-based rather than norm-referenced assessment[15] can also be seen as a major contribution to our ability today to deliver high quality curriculum and assessment for the full range of students that enter secondary schools.

PPTA has been committed from the 1990's right up to the present day to ensure that New Zealand school students have access to a national qualifications system that recognises their achievement, avoids an artificial academic-vocational divide, is motivating, and enables a smooth transition into tertiary learning.

In 2008, PPTA published a document titled *Secondary Forward*[16], which was a response to a flurry of government and opposition announcements about post-compulsory education policies. The Labour Government's version was titled Schools Plus, but National was beginning to signal its version which became Youth Guarantee.

Secondary Forward described the situation as "chaos at the interface" and criticised both the government and National for the following:

- Failing to consult adequately,

- Failing to base their policies on solid evidence of what was already happening,

- Failing to underpin their policies with a sound definition of what would constitute success in programmes, and

- Failing to establish adequate financial and quality control requirements.

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[15] Alison, J. (2007) *Mind the gap! Policy change in practice. School qualifications reform in New Zealand, 1980-2002*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Massey University. Download from http://muir.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/1441

[16] NZPPTA (2008). *Secondary Forward*. http://ppta.org.nz/index.php/-issues-in-education/youth-policies

Schools Plus had a much greater emphasis on maintaining the role of the secondary school in the education and monitoring of young people across the transition, but PPTA was still concerned that there was no evidence of an intention to properly staff or fund the extra responsibilities for schools envisaged by the policy.

The union has never challenged the obligation of schools to facilitate the transition of their students into worthwhile destinations beyond school. The NZ Curriculum's vision for students as confident, connected, actively involved and lifelong learners requires that students are being prepared well for life beyond school.

On the other hand, our experience has always been that governments underestimate what is required to support schools to achieve that vision for all students.