Report on progress made in policy work on Teaching with Digital Tools and Technologies policy

Background

PPTA Te Wehengarua passed policy on Teaching with Digital Tools and Technologies at Annual Conference 2023. The policy accepts that there are potential opportunities and risks of teaching with these technologies and provides a clear direction for developing workforce and data capability. It advocates for system and process readiness for the appropriate use of GenAI tools that can enhance teaching and learning outcomes. This report for the 2024 annual conference outlines progress made.

Expected Outcomes

Advocacy in an emerging area such as teaching with digital tools and technologies requires PPTA to become a thought leader in this specialist area, so we can understand how to advocate for our members' needs and be linked into the current work and developments.

It is expected that PPTA Te Wehengarua elected representatives and advisory staff, will increase their understanding of these technologies, their impact, and be able to respond with appropriate advice and guidance. PPTA elected representatives and staff need to be informed, connected, learning, and listening, in the current forums that we have available, and in new ones that we will need to develop. We want to empower members with knowledge.

Professional work in support of this policy.

Building member understanding of our starting point

Acceptance of the definition of digital tools and technologies (recommendation 2) and of potential opportunities and risks of teaching with digital tools and technologies (recommendation 6) were the starting point to our work in this area. Building member understanding began with sharing these two recommendations through articles in our internal communication, presentations at conferences and committees and networks.

Building our knowledge and connections

Recommendation 3, 4 and 5 called for specific actions and required PPTA to build our knowledge to ensure that we are informed, current and can provide guidance to membership in these areas –

a) *calls on the government to ensure protection of Māori taonga*

b) *calls for further research that increases our collective understanding of its impacts* will

c) *calls on the MoE to ensure transparent and needed structures are in place to evaluate the quality, usefulness, and relevance of digital tools and technologies used in our schools*

d) *calls on the MoE and NZQA to provide policy direction and advice to ensure the rigor and validity of our national qualifications in the increasing use of digital tools and technologies*

Knowledge building has been a major focus of the policy work, since it was passed at annual conference, 2023. PPTA advisory officer (AO) Kathleen Kaveney who has the lead responsibility for this work has attended forums, seminars, external meetings, conferences with findings and feedback shared.

Seminars attended:

- September 2023 - **Determining the implications for education from the hype of AI.** Mandy Henk and Dr Bickerton discussed developments in AI, educational impact, and strategies that teachers and schools can use to engage effectively with AI.
- October 2023 - **18th Research Network Meeting- Education International.** The 2023 GEM Report on [Technology in education: A tool on whose terms?](#) addresses the use of technology in education around the world through the lenses of relevance, equity, scalability and sustainability.
- October 2023 - **Educational technology and inequality.** Professor Rebecca Eynon (University of Oxford) on the relationships between education, the Internet and inequalities, continuing digital inequalities that exist and implications of disparities.
- October 2023 - **Gender Bias in AI – Celebrating Ada Lovelace day.** The rise of AI, with its gender bias the result of its sources - data sets, algorithms, code writers bias.
- November 2023 - **Writing in a digital age.** Professor Emerita Naomi Baron's research into digital technologies and writing, and insights from her newest book, 'Who Wrote This? How AI and the Lure of Efficiency Threaten Human Writing'.
- November 2023 - **The emergence of euCONSENT in the digital economy and Age Verification's crucial role**. The nature of the challenges faced in the age verification domain, children's data privacy rights and euCONSENT framework.
- December 2023 **- Large Language Models (LLM) Working Group's living White Paper.** Overview of benefits, challenges, and governance considerations associated with LLMs in NZ, best practices, informed decisions to use LLMs responsibly and ethically.
- May-November 2023 - **AI and Society Seminar Series.** Weekly Friday seminar on 'AI and Society', Victoria University. Topics included: How are LLMs impacting education? LLM safety: 'harmful content' generation; The case for AI content detection, Generative AI in the workplace; AI, IP, and Indigenous Rights; Hate speech classification.
- February 2024 - **Climate adaptation: Transforming urban environments.** Data and sustainable strategies for cities utilising IoT; public safety, energy efficiency, sustainability, and overall quality of life for citizens.

- May 2024 - **NZ Techweek online.** Run by NZTech the nationwide programme is developed and curated locally by regional partners. Several useful sessions attended; Navigating the Path to Trustworthy AI; AI in the Modern Workplace; Digitising Government; What's Free in Tech and Bilingual approaches to website design and development.
- March 2024 **NZTech Cyber Security Conference** - a collaboration between NZTech and Brightstar, aiding a national conversation on cyber security with government, tech sector, and businesses together. There were many worthwhile sessions, particularly addresses by the Privacy Commissioner, CERT and National Cyber Security Centre. Keeping Aotearoa schools and kura safer online highlighted what a big job this is!
- June 2024 **- AI in Education - Navigating the opportunities and risks.** Science-based framework for navigating AI, its impact on education.

Connecting with others to build power

Recommendation 11 requires partnership building and establishing connections through meetings, attending seminars and conferences. Several positive connections were made in developing the policy and seeking expert advice that continues to be strengthened.

The opportunities have been taken up due to–
- positive, timely and responsive communications,
- positive to partnership/ advocacy request,
- alignment with PPTA Te Wehengarua objectives.

Expert knowledge - Simon McCallum (VUW/ Otago University) and Prof. Alistair Knott (VUW).

April 2023 - An initial Roundtable discussion was held at PPTA NO, facilitated by Madeline Newman, Executive Director, AI Forum NZ. PPTA connected with Simon McCallum (VUW and Otago uni) and Prof. Alistair Knott (VUW) at this discussion with further work together:

- PPTA recommended Simon McCallum as a keynote speaker for the Symposium – Assessment in the Age of AI (May 2023) and invited him as a keynote and workshop presenter for I and O (March 2024).
- Simon McCallum and Prof. Ali Knott have presented to SPC (March 24) committee and Simon sought feedback from ICTAC (April 24), on PLD provision in the AI space.
- Ali Knott and Simon McCallum also facilitate the Victoria University weekly interdisciplinary seminar on 'AI and Society'. PPTA presented its policy thinking May 2023 at the seminar on *How large language models (LLMs) are impacting education in NZ, and how should NZ teachers and policymakers respond?*

Teacher expertise - Kit Willett

Executive member Lawrence Mikkelsen recommended PPTA speak with Kit Willett who has produced resources to aid teachers with AI. We then recommended him as a speaker for the Victoria University AI and Society' seminars and the Assessment in the Age of AI symposium. Kit's resources can now be found on the MOE website. [Kit Willett chatgpt](#)

Industry expertise - EdTechNZ

May 2023 – AO Kathleen Kaveney attended the Digital Trade Review online public workshop, along with Dave Moskovitz, EdTechNZ Council. This was followed by a meeting to discuss opportunities for EdTechNZ to work with PPTA. EdTechNZ wishes to improve EdTech options at the secondary level and the EdTech council invited PPTA to present its thinking at its June 2023 meeting.

EdTech Council wants to better connect with the sector and PPTA recommended NASDAP, PPTA conferences as ways to link with secondary teachers. EdTech executive member Dave Moskovitz was a panel member at the NASDAP 2023 conference and EdTechNZ Council member, Courtney Robinson spoke to the ICTAC November 2023 meeting about what EdTechNZ can offer teachers.

International connections

University of Alberta

September 2023, AO Kathleen Kaveney presented on the development work for this PPTA policy to the Master of Educational Studies. The graduate course is on students' perspectives on AI, with a focus on how students are experiencing the digital disruption of education.

PPTA was invited to do a repeat session in August 2024, expanding the conversation around participatory design and decision-making. Kathleen's presentation provided an overview of the PPTA policy development, the NZ context, developments and the advocacy work undertaken. Feedback is that the current realities in NZ very much resonated with the group. One of the benefits of these collaborations is the sharing of information and resources.

Member voice

The policy work has included gathering member voice to ensure we understand the research gaps and where the focus should be. It is critical that PPTA understands member perspectives. PPTA committees have been utilised and feedback regularly gathered and communicated where they have an impact. These networks also create feedback loops with the membership to share the knowledge and test our learning.

Over the last year PPTA committees – ICTAC, MLAC, SPAC and SPC have been consulted on the impact of GenAI technology in schools and provided much useful feedback.

- SPC June 2024, PPTA advice to Minister on next steps AI

- SPC April 2024, PLD advice sought, regulation, assessment; what good might look like in AI age, feedback to NZQA on digital technology and authenticity
- SPAC April 2024, cybersecurity and digital support
- ICTAC April 2024, advice sought on PLD provision in the AI space; need technology with a NZ focus, and a standard or endorsement would be useful for schools.
- MLAC May 2024, to NZQA – concerns platform ability and teacher load for authentic work
- MLAC Nov 2023, PLD thoughts, assessment guidelines, partnership ideas/possibilities.
- ICTAC Nov 2023, **"Connected Ako – digital and data for learning"** update, MOE existing guidance on AI, EductechNZ and partnership possibilities
- Cybersecurity and Digital Support of the MOE, with presentations to SPAC (April 24) and ICTAC (April 24). MOE team has sought member voice on the development of the MOEs Cyber Assistant Tool (currently being tested).

Other opportunities for member voice have also been taken:
- I and O March 2024, What PLD in AI would best suit teachers?
- Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Region Training & Activism Hui, March 2024, update and PLD options and issues explored.
- Pasifika fono presentations July 2024

Advocacy

Recommendations 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 require advocacy – through regular meetings with Ministry of Educations (MoE) and New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). We have also sought to empower representatives to advocate in the forums they attend.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)

PPTA has highlighted the continuing pace of AI development and the need for teacher upskilling in this area. We have also shared our belief that NZQA is responsible for robust processes to ensure authentic assessment.

NZQA funded and organised the May 2023 Assessment in the Age of AI symposium in collaboration with MOE and sector representatives (PPTA included). After the symposium NZQA provided updates on actions and resources.

Over the short to medium term, NZQA will continue providing guidance on good practice for using AI technologies in secondary assessment; build deeper insights about regulatory effectiveness; and manage risks around the use of AI within its organisation. NZQA is keen to continue communicating with the sector on capturing opportunities along with managing the risks.

NZQA regularly presents to PPTA committees. In April SPC gave feedback that with AI use, schools would appreciate greater certainty around authenticity, as well as AI risks and increased expectations on schools. The issues with internal and external assessments and the cost to

schools of digital platforms were highlighted. SPC members raised significant practical issues with schools in terms of managing digital assessments.

PPTA members have also raised their serious concerns regarding the ability of all schools to carry out the new [NCEA Level 1 over time submitted assessments](#) in a way that does not breach the assessment specifications provided by NZQA. Members consider that the MOE and NZQA do not understand the implications of their assessment specifications on schools and students. PPTA maintains dialogue with NZQA and shares all concerns.

Ministry of Education (MOE)

MOE acknowledges that AI is likely to have an increasing impact on education systems over the coming years. They are developing policies and advice about this to ensure the system is well prepared. [Digital-technology/generative-ai GenAI](#)

Robyn Caygill is leading the cross-Ministry work on AI. She also presented for the MOE at the Assessment in the Age of AI symposium.

MOE representatives spoke to ICTAC Nov 23 about MOE existing guidance, its connections to other advice and guidance. They were interested to hear from ICTAC about their experiences, what they are seeing in terms of use.

MOE recommends that schools have a policy on AI use. PPTA considers that school policy direction should come from MOE with a template rather than 450+ different versions. MOE would not provide a generic model but would look to provide advice on what should be in a policy. MOE thinks this technology is best learned by exploring it yourself and they did not know of much suitable PLD available.

In regular ministerial, peak body and educational advisory groups and forums, PPTA remains committed to promoting dialogue and continues to question the purpose of the digital technologies, the extraction and generation of data.

Political advocacy

Briefing to the Incoming Minister (BIM)

The coalition government was sworn in November 2023. PPTA Te Wehengarua and Secondary Principals Council (SPC) each provided briefings to the incoming Minister (BIM), Erica Stanford. Teaching with digital technologies formed part of the BIM, highlighting that the rapid development of digital technologies and the globalised nature of economic systems was creating an entirely new set of educational challenges for the world and schools to adapt to.

The BIMs stated that making the most of digital technologies (emerging, advanced, GenAI) would require trust, inclusion, workforce capability, data capability, and systems and processes to manage these. Both emphasised that the digital divide must be addressed.

Ministerial advice - Providing a consistent and informed perspective

PPTA has given feedback and advice to Minister Stanford, that is both consistent and informed:

April 2024, **The International Summit of The Teaching Profession**,
The summit was held in Singapore this year. Chris Abercrombie, PPTA President presented on AI in education speaking of the need for high-quality professional development for all, bridging the digital divide; the need for governments regulations; data protection and privacy of students is crucial; indigenous knowledge needs to be protected as 'taonga'; learn what is true, what is not, and what it means to be a trusted resource. AI is a tool, and cannot replace the human relationships, that are teaching.

The development of a framework in partnership with stakeholders for the responsible and ethical use of generative AI in education is one of the three commitments for Aotearoa, made at the summit. PPTA has been working on developing our approach to GenAI, through policy, member education and advocacy. Our briefing for Minister Stanford establishes a starting point and key recommendations - *Examining the issue and uncovering next steps for Generative AI (GenAI) in New Zealand education*.

Follow up meetings with Minister Stanford have been held:
- May 2024 – follow up to ISTP, working with sector, AI commitments and the digital landscape, highlighting that the MOE has a digital action plan, research priorities paper being prepared for Minister.
- June 2024 – Meeting with Minister Stanford - follow up on commitments made at the International Summit of the Teaching Profession.

Further knowledge building and collaborations

PPTA is concerned to ensure that the known harms of digital technology are addressed. The impacts of online harm fall and are felt differently and is particularly negative for women and other groups deemed different e.g., Gender diverse, ethnicity. Social media and search engines have become new tools for violence against women and other groups.

Online Safety Coalition, PPTA joined the coalition August 2023. The coalition wants to strengthen work on online safety, with the overall aim to push and advocate for change at the political level requiring stronger laws, to keep people safe online. PPTA attends regular meetings.

Classification Office, Te Mana Whakaatu (CO) conducts research that guides its work. Recent research is the result of CO noticing a common thread of publications being classified - an increase in misogynistic hate, particularly to women in leadership roles, and the emergence of specific movements that target hate at women.

PPTA staff attended knowledge building seminars on the work of the Classifications Office:

- March 2024, Countering Misogyny: The Link Between Online Misogyny and Violent Extremism and the
- June 2024, Online Misogyny and Violent Extremism: Understanding the Landscape | Speaker Series presentation

Office of the Privacy Commission (OPC)

Children's privacy is a big focus for the Office of the Privacy Commission (OPC) and is one of the priority projects for the Office over the coming years. In 2023 OPC launched the Children and Young People's Privacy project, which is looking at how children's privacy is being protected in NZ. PPTA has contributed to this work:

- Submitting to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner – Children and Young People's Privacy Policy Project – Government Questionnaire, September 2023
- Participating in the Safeguarding children and young people's privacy – Privacy Week panel, May 2024

Future partnership and knowledge building and advocacy possibilities:

It was clear from the ISTP summit that countries are grappling with similar issues across their systems. These issues are not unique to one country. Our strength is in working together. PPTA Te Wehengarua elected representatives and staff continue to need to be informed, connected, learning, and listening.