

Benchmarking Higher Education in Vocational/Community Colleges

What patterns can be identified across countries where TAFE institutes/further education colleges/polytechnics are offering higher education?

What are higher education outcomes, innovations and challenges?

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Ara

- An Institute of Technology and Polytechnic (ITP) offering vocational and applied professional tertiary education across the Canterbury region of the South Island
- 2016 offering 7,800 EFTS to domestic and international students
- Level 7 and above (higher education) 40% of EFTS
- First degree (Bachelor in Japanese Language) offered in 1992
- Now offers 16 Bachelor degrees
- 2016 gained approval for first post-graduate qualifications and commenced offering

Story 1 – Characteristics of Excellence in Engineering Technology Education

- Work closely to the standards and quality defined for engineering technologist
- Tutors with engineering qualifications, a genuine interest in developing students, personal and professional integrity, communication skills, current industry experience and relevance and teaching and learning expertise
- Students meeting entry level requirements in English, mathematics, and science before commencing the programme, either through school achievement or bridging programmes
- The programme of study covers mathematics, physical science, communications, workplace skills and technical skills, with courses with an applied technical focus offered from early in the programme
- Close engagement with industry to understand employer expectations of graduates, provide project opportunities and to facilitate post-graduation job placement.

American Society for Engineering Education

1962

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Story 2

How is a polytechnic different from a university?

Story 3

Approval for Ara to offer the Master in Nursing and the Master of Health Science commendations about:

- The focus on future community needs
- The enthusiasm of stakeholders for the development and delivery of the programme

Characteristics of Ara Higher Education Qualifications

- A programme portfolio driven by industry
- A programme portfolio that maximises learner access through pathways and stair-casing
- Tutors with relevant academic qualifications, industry experience, industry currency and industry linkages
- Tutors with strong teaching and learning skills and a passion for facilitating student success
- Programme development that ensures a balance of technical, conceptual, generic and critical thinking skills
- Learning design that offers the learner a personalised experience through close engagement (both physical and virtual) with tutors
- Learning design that engages learners through incorporating practical application from the beginning and builds the body of knowledge throughout the programme
- Work integrated learning using a variety of strategies such as vocational and clinical placement, internships, work-based projects, industry delivered content and work-based learning
- The provision of support services, both academic and pastoral, that assist students address issues mitigating against their successful participation, achievement, completion and transition to employment.

Challenges in Higher Education Provision

- Tutors educated in a different paradigm
- Supporting staff in their roles of professional, industry liaison and tutor
- Achieving quality assured, applied research outputs
- Managing workloads and priorities across teaching and research responsibilities and ensuring equitable practices across disciplines
- Promoting a positive perception of polytechnic awarded degrees as a valued option for qualification attainment