

PROVIDER-BASED VET KAIAKO DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS

Exploring the ways Kaiako are
Supported and Developed

Version 1.5



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Abbreviations & Terms

Table 1: Table of abbreviations used in this report.

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
C&I	Construction and Infrastructure Sector
ConCOVE	Construction and Infrastructure Centre of Vocational Excellence
F&F	Food and Fibre Sector
Food and Fibre CoVE	Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence
PTE	Private Training Establishment
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

This report examines the development pathways for provider-based Vocational Education and Training (VET) kaiako (educators) in the Construction & Infrastructure and Food & Fibre sectors of Aotearoa New Zealand. The study explores current practices, identifies challenges, and proposes areas for improvement in kaiako development.

Overall, there is currently varied structure and guidance for development, including criteria for quality, across and within providers. Further, development tools and practices are insufficient for kaiako needs in many instances, though good practices exist. Collaboration is needed to enable better outcomes for kaiako and learners; guidance for development aims and pathways should be created, along with tools for provider and kaiako self-assessment and planning; and development tools should be adjusted or supplemented to meet kaiako needs for timing, relevance, and quality.



Current State of VET Kaiako Development

Provider-based VET kaiako roles are diverse, requiring a mix of industry, educational, engagement, and professional capabilities. The transition into the profession often involves a steep learning curve, with onboarding processes varying in quality and structure across providers. These processes frequently focus more on organisational factors rather than capability needs (which can be substantial) and are often disconnected from holistic or longer-term development pathways.

Many kaiako were dissatisfied with their onboarding and early development, desiring more structure and clarity about expectations, responsibilities, and delegated authority. Transitioning kaiako, while not 'beginners' due to their necessary industry expertise, often felt like they were starting something new, felt like imposters, and experienced psychological pressure.

"I definitely wouldn't want [a new kaiako] to go down the journey I went down." – Current Kaiako

Ongoing development activities are largely self-identified or supported by managers, generally focusing on formal activities. The Adult Education and Training qualifications suite forms the backbone of most kaiako development pathways. However, there is a lack of formal workplace learning opportunities for vocational educators, and current development pathways often lack customisation based on individual kaiako needs. Many also felt that professional development options did not provide enough relevance to the context and needs of VET kaiako.

"I didn't really know any different; I had nothing to benchmark against. You just fit into a system [for development] that people before have done: you get your qualification and go on. It's a system for academics, not necessarily tradespeople." – Former Kaiako

Some providers have dedicated organisational structures for kaiako support and development and employed various tools and methods for development. However, many providers face resource and funding limitations for professional development, and pressures for revenue can disincentivise development activities. Collaboration between providers for kaiako development did occur in some cases but was limited overall.

Direct managers, mentors, and peer support mechanisms play pivotal roles in kaiako support and development, though high workloads can limit their availability. Peer support is particularly powerful, reducing power differences from managerial feedback and amplifying benefits through organisational practice sharing.

Many kaiako desire to develop through learning from and with others, 'by-doing' within workplace contexts. They also seek smaller and more timely development tools as part of a holistic development pathway. Despite these challenges, many kaiako identify strongly as being part of a profession, fostered by organisational factors and communities of practice that encourage connections and belonging.

Barriers to Effective Development

Several key barriers to effective kaiako development were identified:

- New VET kaiako are often viewed as 'beginners' rather than industry experts, inadequately recognising their necessary background and experience.
- The transition to a provider-based VET kaiako role involves a substantial learning curve that is not always well-managed.
- Many kaiako do not receive adequate practical skills and guidance to support them in the early transition phase.
- There is no consistent set of criteria or direction for kaiako development across the sector.
- Onboarding and ongoing development processes are typically separate, missing the benefits of an integrated development pathway.
- Adult education qualifications, while valued, do not fully meet the needs of many kaiako in terms of relevance, timing, and practical application.
- The profession is often treated as separate from workplace-based delivery contexts, limiting occupational pathways and workforce mobility.
- Reactive rather than proactive attraction and recruitment practices mean little experience can be gained before delivery.

Systemic Shifts for Improvement

Five key areas for change emerged:

1. The profession and its development pathways need to be better defined and communicated.
2. The transition into the profession needs to be managed more effectively, with adequate support and development opportunities.
3. Development practices and processes should be holistic, adequately structured, and 'kaiako-centric', based on individual needs and timely delivery of theory and practical experience.
4. Development tools need to effectively meet VET kaiako needs, including more workplace learning options and flexibility to accommodate different starting points and contexts.
5. Greater collaboration is needed for kaiako development within providers, within these sectors, and across the VET system.

These are broad systemic shifts with actions recommended against them later in the document. Stakeholders across the VET sector are encouraged to reflect on these in relation to their own contexts and consider where changes might be beneficial. A vision is put forward at the end of this work incorporating these. By addressing these areas, the VET sector can work towards more effective development pathways for kaiako, enhancing the quality of vocational education in Aotearoa New Zealand.



INTRODUCTION

Background

The Aotearoa New Zealand vocational education and training (VET) system is in a state of change. The 2019 Reform of Vocational Education brought about several major changes within the sector (NZ MOE, 2024). These changes are now being discussed, partly reverted, and new changes incoming. The VET sector is unsettled and has been for some time. Irrespective of these changes and any structures that will emerge from them, Aotearoa New Zealand needs quality VET provision for its economic and social prosperity – this remains unchanged.

Quality VET is provided by quality VET educators (OECD, 2021). Some also consider vocational educators, otherwise called VET kaiako¹, as crucial to efforts to transform and improve VET systems in this context (Maurice-Takerei & Anderson, 2022). Systemic structures and governance arrangements may continue to change, but there will always be a need for high-quality kaiako in these systems.

There has been recent international interest in understanding the ways in which VET kaiako are developed into their roles (OECD, 2021; Misko et al., 2021). This interest is, in part, due to global trends reshaping the world of work and demanding change of VET systems and kaiako (UNEVOC, 2020). These have turned attention toward the ways in which VET kaiako within Aotearoa New Zealand are being developed and supported. Little information exists in this area though. Organisation's may have internal understandings of what works for them, or what they would like, but consensus across the VET sector is lacking.

Therefore, the question remains: if VET kaiako are crucial to the sector's quality, outcomes, and change efforts, are they being supported and developed to meet the needs of the sector?

The Construction and Infrastructure Centre of Vocational Excellence (ConCOVE) and Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence (Food and Fibre CoVE) have heard the sectors' need for answers in this space. They have commissioned this report so that a cooperative discussion can be had about VET educator development in their sectors, and across the VET system.

This report is concerned with the support and development given to Provider-based Vocational Kaiako in the Construction & Infrastructure (C&I) and Food & Fibre (F&F) Sectors of Aotearoa New Zealand.

¹ This work uses 'kaiako' synonymously with the term 'educator', though appreciates the wider value of the word and that some might consider 'kaiwhakaako', or others, to be more appropriate for this purpose.

The Project & This Document

Approach in Brief

This project explored the following broad questions:

1. What are the common elements of provider-based VET kaiako quality?
2. What are the development pathways for provider-based VET kaiako in these sectors?
3. How relevant and effective are these development pathways for provider-based VET kaiako?

RESEARCH METHODS

- Literature Scan
- Semi-structured interviews
- Online Survey to VET kaiako

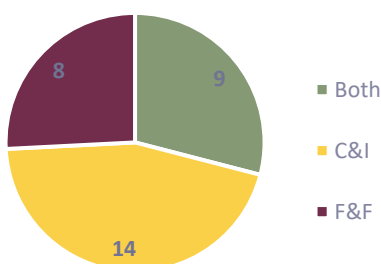
This research has been structured using a systems change approach. This approach is used to explore the various components of a 'system', frequently to identify the factors that enable or are barriers to positive change. This work will loosely follow the specific systems model set out in 'The Water of Systems Change' (Kania, Kramer, & Senge, 2018). This model recommends collecting, organising, and analysing systems information around structural, relational, and attitudinal dimensions.

Semi-structured interviews (n = 31) were the main source of data for this project. Stakeholders within the C&I and F&F sectors were interviewed to understand their experiences with development and perspectives about what could be improved. Key among these were current and former VET kaiako themselves – those who have been through the development pathways of interest.

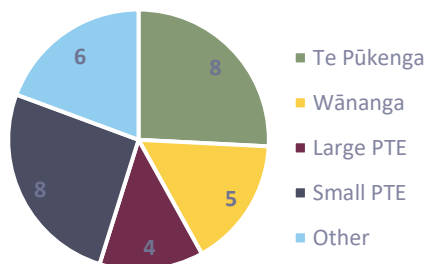
The research team spoke with the following groups of people, noting there were overlaps between these groups:

- Current VET Kaiako practising within the focus sectors.
- Former VET Kaiako from within the focus sectors, or those who deliver learning occasionally in these contexts. These were often managers of kaiako.
- Sector specialists and others who can speak to the pathways that VET kaiako go through and related aspects of the VET system. They had roles in industry associations, governance organisations, learning and development teams, among others.

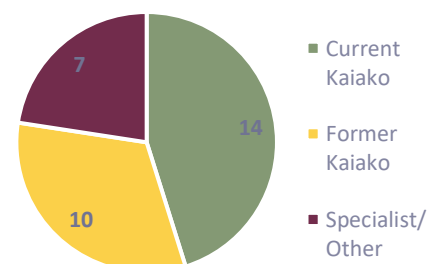
INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS BY SECTOR



INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS BY ORGANISATION



INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS BY ROLE



An online survey to VET kaiako (n = 15) was also implemented to supplement the interviews. This survey had quantitative and qualitative elements. Quantitative results have been omitted due to an insufficient response rate, but qualitative results have been integrated throughout.

Information presented in this report is accompanied by, and supplemented with, evidence from a literature scan for VET kaiako development, predominantly concerning the characteristics of an 'effective' VET kaiako. A detailed methodology is provided in Appendix 2.

How to Interpret this Report

In line with the systems change approach, this report brings forward notable system 'conditions' using callout boxes as they become relevant throughout (see adjacent). These are colour-coded for structural, relational, and attitudinal conditions of the system. Compare these with what you are currently offering or experiencing. At the end of the report these are presented together to provide an overview of the current system and what might need to change.

This report also presents as many direct voices as possible using anonymised quotes, attributed to groups of participants. Quotes are not attributed to individuals using numbers or pseudonyms to protect participant identities. Where multiple quotes are presented, however, these are to show multiple participants' views on a topic: they are from different sources.

Please read this report with your own context in mind. Use these views as a moment to reflect on what you, your teams, or your stakeholders need. Consider how you might share what works well in your context, and how you might learn from others to advance in areas for improvement.

We acknowledge that there are a range of practices and views across the VET sector in this space. There may be some findings that you find obvious, others possibly disagreeable, but we have attempted to capture consensus views as much as possible.

Structural Conditions such as policies, practices, or resource flows.

Relational Conditions such as relationships or power dynamics.

Attitudinal Conditions such as deeply held beliefs, feelings, or perspectives on the system.

Report Sections

This report is structured in three main parts:

- The **first section** presents information about the VET kaiako role and suggests concepts of the 'destination' for kaiako development. This includes what a VET kaiako is and the capabilities that are required to be effective in this role.
- The **second section** presents information about the development journey for VET kaiako. This includes what current development processes are being utilised, what practising requirements there are, what the transition to the role is like for new kaiako, and how stakeholders think VET kaiako development should be done.
- The **third section** presents a summary of the key ideas presented in sections one and two. It presents five systemic shifts to improve the VET kaiako development system and outlines a set of key actions to achieve these.

THE PROFESSION

Provider-Based VET Kaiako

One of three VET kaiako roles in NZ

In the Aotearoa New Zealand VET system, there are three primary roles for VET kaiako: Workplace-Based Vocational Kaiako, Provider-Based Vocational Kaiako, and Workplace Training Advisors.

There are three distinctive VET kaiako roles within NZ: provider-based kaiako, workplace-based kaiako, and workplace training advisors.

Workplace-Based and Provider-Based Kaiako are common and naturally emerging roles across education systems (OECD, 2022)^{2,3}. They can be distinguished primarily by their employing organisations, but their responsibilities can overlap substantially. Workplace-Based Kaiako typically have wider responsibilities within their workplace, with learning delivery being a smaller part of their role. Provider-Based Kaiako, conversely, focus primarily on learning delivery and associated functions.

Workplace Training Advisors, a role that emerged within this VET system (Ministry of Education, 1992), coordinate and support vocational programmes through a mix of educational brokerage, system navigation, pastoral care, learning verification, and assessment. While some may not consider them kaiako due to their typically indirect involvement in learning delivery, their possible involvement in assessment and feedback arguably qualifies them for this classification. There is certainly overlap between their roles and those of provider-based and workplace-based kaiako.

“There are a lot of training advisors/on-site assessors who’d be great tutors, and vice versa, but they get bogged down by their label.” – Former Kaiako

Participants used various terms for these roles, with substantial overlap between workplace-based and provider-based kaiako. Common terms included tutor, trainer, kaiako, teacher, and educator, with ‘tutor’ and ‘kaiako’ being the most frequent. ‘Tutor’ and ‘trainer’ were often used for workplace-based roles, while ‘teacher’ was typically associated with larger education providers. Workplace Training Advisors were also referred to as training advisors or workplace assessors. This diversity in terminology reflects the complex nature of these roles in Aotearoa New Zealand.

² Many European countries use the terms Vocational Teacher for provider-based occupations and Vocational Trainer for workplace-based occupations.

³ Historical analyses of VET demonstrate the ubiquitous role of the ‘master/artisan/meister’ in workplace education, which is now frequently supplemented in formal vocational systems – from guilds to modern systems – with provider-based delivery (For example, CEDEFOP, 2004).

What functions might they perform?

VET kaiako deliver educational experiences relevant to the world of work – a specific vocation, industry sector, or otherwise. Complexity emerges when considering that the scope of 'delivery' varies widely depending on context (Harris, 2020). Overall, VET kaiako could be required to:

- Plan, design, and deliver learning.
- Collect or verify evidence of learning.
- Assess, evaluate, or moderate learning.
- Administer and manage project or programme logistics, finances, or otherwise.
- Connect and engage with learning stakeholders internal and external to their organisation, and throughout the sector or education system.
- Contribute to educational quality assurance mechanisms or processes.
- Develop their organisation, company, sector, or vocational education system and system components.

This list isn't exhaustive. VET kaiako may also function as curriculum designers, administrators, counsellors, employment managers, or facilities managers, among other roles (Jae-Cheol, 2022). Some argue that defining VET kaiako by functions is crucial due to this variability (CEDEFOP, 2024).

There is a wide range of functions that VET kaiako could perform in their roles that vary by context.

This diversity challenges the establishment of clear occupational or professional boundaries for VET kaiako. While many in the sector might have implicit understandings of their functions, developing a system-wide consensus remains challenging.

Our interviews suggested some core functions for provider-based kaiako, such as delivery, assessment, and stakeholder engagement. However, defining VET kaiako roles is likely more complex than simply 'delivering vocational learning'.

"...this is more than just learning about learning and teaching. There's a whole bunch of other stuff that goes along with [this role]..." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"Kaiako have a lot to do in their role, [it's more than just teaching]." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Contextual Factors affecting their Roles

Kaiako Functions could be distributed across Teams

The allocation of kaiako functions varied across providers in the C&I and F&F sectors. Some distribute kaiako functions across roles or teams, while others require kaiako to manage the full spectrum of potential responsibilities. Larger providers had these types of distributed roles more frequently than smaller providers. Smaller providers tend to require their kaiako to manage the full spectrum of responsibilities for delivery, as a function of scale, and had insufficient

Kaiako functions can be distributed across teams. Larger providers were better able to do this than smaller providers.

resources to support these wider functions with separate roles or teams. Where functions were split it was most common for these to be administration, instructional design, or pastoral care.

"The smaller you are, the more difficult it is because you don't have the funding to employ a pastoral care person. We're lucky we're at that level of funding where we can employ someone. But if you've got 20 students, you're not going to have the funding that you can employ a pastoral care person. That means the tutor, the manager, is doing all of it. That's hard work." – Kaiako Manager

In a small number of cases, co-delivery or group-based delivery models were employed. Programmes using the former typically had a primary kaiako role that was ultimately responsible for the programme's outcomes, with a secondary kaiako role to support them. Programmes using the latter had a group of kaiako responsible for programme delivery, with each kaiako delivering specific modules or assigned specific responsibilities of the programme. For example, some might be assigned to workplace visits or delivery of day-release courses. These models would affect the functions that each kaiako were responsible for.

Some saw the distribution of functions as a positive, and that specialist support roles should also exist alongside VET kaiako. They felt that the role of a kaiako was large in scope and specialist support allowed for higher quality outputs and programmes. For example, by having a specialist instructional design team to create resources, rather than the kaiako doing this themselves.

"Actually, what I need is someone that's a good administrator, alongside someone that's a good instructional designer to [support me with these tasks]." – Current Kaiako

"I feel like this is four professions in one. I'm lucky I've got a pastoral care team to help me." – Current Kaiako

Others reinforced a need for provider-based kaiako to be involved in the full range of potential kaiako functions. They believed that kaiako should, over time, be capable in all these areas. These people viewed this as important for kaiako effectiveness – for example, by participating in educational administration, the kaiako would better understand the drivers of funding and be able to consider these in their work. There were differences in opinion, however, for the degree of capability kaiako should have in each area.

Overall, there was a sentiment across kaiako and their managers that there were, and should be, boundaries on the role of a kaiako in any given context. It is possibly too much to expect kaiako to be highly specialised in all possible functions of a kaiako, but most agreed that kaiako have a part to play in each of them. As examples, they do not necessarily need to be a pastoral care expert, but at minimum they should recognise signs of distress and know how to refer learners on; they do not necessarily need to be an expert in instructional design, but they should be able to evaluate and adjust learning resources, and use them flexibly; and they do not necessarily need to lead external quality assurance processes, but they should understand what inputs might be required to add to the process.

Most believe kaiako roles should have functional boundaries, but kaiako should have some capability in a broad range of areas.

Kaiako Roles varied by Provider Type

The type of provider partly affected the role of kaiako within them.

Kaiako within wānanga providers tended to have greater expectations for community engagement than those in other providers. Other types of providers performed community engagement, but kaiako within wānanga described more regular interactions and expectations in this regard.

Some types of education providers have niche or deeper requirements of their kaiako.

Some providers had commercial service offerings beyond educational delivery – often advisory services – that kaiako might contribute to within their industry discipline. Providers that offered these additional services were typically smaller PTEs. This was not the experience for the majority of kaiako from this study, who were engaged solely with educational delivery and its associated functions.

Programme Factors affected the Kaiako Role

Programme factors can influence the role of a kaiako, primarily through a programme's maturity, structure, and learner demographics.

Programme maturity and development play a role in defining kaiako responsibilities. Kaiako can take on programme management functions, especially in new programmes or those being redeveloped. This can involve developing and administrating educational requirements, as well as managing finances and logistics for new sites, workspaces, and equipment. Kaiako in mature, well-developed programmes typically have fewer of these responsibilities, though some retain programme management functions long-term in their role.

Programme structure, naturally, affects the scope of a kaiako role. Some key programme factors that affect this are delivery location, the level of workplace or stakeholder integration, and programme modality. Some kaiako delivered from classrooms or workshops, others delivered within workplaces (not as workplace-based kaiako), and others were required to manage apprentices like workplace training advisors, including site visits. These conditions change what the kaiako was asked to do. In the case of C&I programmes, as an example, pre-trades courses often had less engagement with employers than higher level programmes.

Programme management, programme structure, and learner demographics affect the scope of a kaiako role and its capability requirements.

Learner demographics and factors partly affected the kaiako role, too. Kaiako that delivered to disengaged learners, to those with complex needs, or those who were 'high-risk' in some ways were often required to take on

additional functions to meet their needs. This was principally in the form of additional pastoral care and support. Lower-level or Youth Guarantee⁴ programmes more commonly required additional pastoral care requirements for their learners than other programmes.

"There's a whole range of teaching that happens. Sometimes it's about just getting people to turn up; at the other end it's producing people who are highly skilled." – Sectoral Expert

⁴ Youth Guarantee programmes referring to a range of initiatives designed to support young people to achieve the National Certificate in Educational Achievement levels 1-3 (TEC, 2024). These can be vocational programmes that include a wider set of curriculum elements, but can include a range of workplace initiatives and secondary-tertiary-employment integrations too.

Identities of Provider-based VET Kaiako

Professional Identity Formation

There are no universally agreed boundaries for the provider-based VET kaiako profession, unlike general education professions such as teachers. Despite this, many reported that they felt a part of a profession as a VET kaiako. This work doesn't provide an in-depth discussion on VET kaiako identity – for this, there are Aotearoa New Zealand-based discussions on this already (Chan, 2009; Maurice-Takerei & Anderson, 2013). Some insights from this work are, however, presented here – principally, that two main identities emerged through this work.

Many kaiako felt a part of a profession, despite a lack of professional or occupational boundaries or criteria.

The first identity was that of an 'industry-tutor'. Some kaiako and managers conceptualised a provider-based VET kaiako as someone imparting industry skills, that they were 'industry people', and that they had responsibilities to develop highly skilled people.

"We need industry people. We then have to support them the best way we can to turn them into good quality tutors, not teachers. And I think that's the difference. They are tutors, not teachers." – Leader and Former Kaiako

The second was a more "scholarly" or "academic" tutor. Kaiako and others who conceptualised the profession in this way spoke of their teaching as a distinct 'craft' to be developed, often through research, reflection, and engaging with the world of education. The more 'scholarly' approach to the profession often involved higher qualifications pathways and deeper engagement with educational theory. Some reported, however, that this more-scholarly approach to the profession wasn't something that all VET kaiako needed to achieve or aspire to.

"Most kaiako delivering levels 1-5 don't do [study beyond an adult education certificate]. They do what they do, get very good at it, but often there is a lack of reflective practice that would take them to a more 'scholarly' practitioner. Though, not everyone needs to get there." – Leader and Former Kaiako

"[It is preferred] to have a tradesperson in [charge of a subject portfolio/area] but finding a tradie with an 'academic brain' is a challenge, and many of them don't want to go down that route." – Current Kaiako and Manager

These two identities were mutually inclusive. There were those who spoke about both identities co-existing in a kaiako: a kaiako bringing their industry identity into their practice as well as pursuing more engagement with educational theories, research, and qualifications than others. This relates to the concept of 'dual professionalism' – the idea that VET kaiako are, or should be, skilled in both education and their industry practice (ETF, 2018)– taking cues for their occupational identity from both.

There are two main, mutually inclusive identity attitudes for kaiako: that of an industry-tutor and a scholarly/academic tutor.

One VET leader also described the role of a kaiako in Aotearoa New Zealand changing over time. They felt that the profession's identity was shifting away from the 'industry tutor' and more towards the 'academic tutor', due to expanding requirements of kaiako. This is referring to advancing assessment and literacy and numeracy requirements. They felt this was not the right direction for the profession, which needed to maintain this aspect of its identity. It was not clear, however, whether this was a common belief across the sectors.

"In my [long time] doing this, the biggest hurdle for tutors is the growth in [the] requirements they have to do. 15 or so years ago, they were industry people. They just had to teach industry skills and knowledge, so they were giving what they had back to the young people... [growing assessment and literacy/numeracy requirements are] something they never used to have to do, they just got on with delivering industry skills. Now, they're becoming like teachers, but without the qualifications or the training and development that a teacher gets." – Leader and Former Kaiako

Motivation to enter the Profession

Two main attitudes emerged surrounding peoples' motivations to join the VET kaiako profession. The first was a desire to transfer their expertise to others and to send them into the industry being highly skilled. The second was a desire to make a difference in the lives of their learners. Broadly speaking, the former was more prominent among kaiako who delivered higher-level programmes or those focused exclusively on industry skills; the latter was more prominent among kaiako delivering lower-level programmes, youth guarantee programmes⁵, or those with broader employment and curriculum outcomes.

The two key motivations for joining the profession were to transfer expertise and make a difference for learners.

"Our staff are all there for a reason: they all want to send their students into the industry with their stamp of approval." – Current Kaiako and Manager

"When I was learning, a lot of guys took time off to teach me, so that's why I really wanted to teach - to pay it forward." – Current Kaiako

"One of the most significant attributes [for kaiako] is... the desire to see others succeed and grow. – Manager and Former Kaiako

These motivations were not uncommon in other jurisdictions, and other studies have identified a range of other contributing motivations for VET kaiako (Tyler, Dymock, & Le, 2024).

The less physical nature of the role was brought up in some cases, but only in conjunction with another motivational factor. This motivation alone was reportedly insufficient for prospective kaiako to effectively transition to the profession. Several managers reported that prospective kaiako needed to have a deeper motivation for the profession than it's less-physically demanding nature to be successful: being retained in the sector and achieving good outcomes for learners.

"If you've got a bad back and you don't want to be on the tools, that's a good enough reason to look for a change. But it's not a good enough reason to choose teaching... You've got to want to teach, not just want to go easy on your back or aching limbs." – Manager and Former Kaiako

⁵ Some wider evidence suggests that kaiako delivering Youth Guarantee courses had strong motivations to see their learner groups succeed (Greenhalgh, Fussell, & Petersen, 2016).

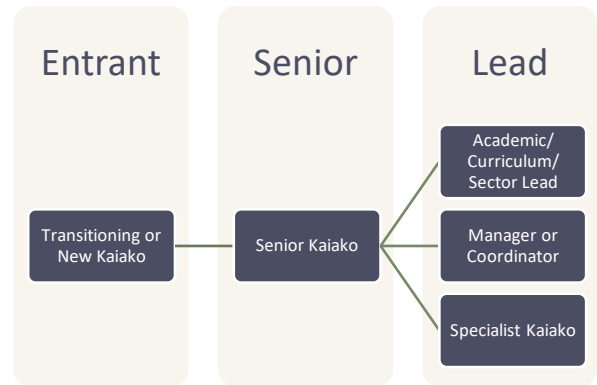
Career Pathways of Provider-based VET Kaiako

Their Career Pathways

Career pathways for provider-based VET kaiako lack agreement, but commonalities exist across providers. Most offer internal progression routes, typically starting with foundational requirements for new or transitioning kaiako, advancing to senior roles involving more mentoring, and then to a set of more specialised positions such as curriculum lead, team manager, or advanced practitioner.

Advancement to senior kaiako usually occurs in about two years. Criteria for advancement vary, with most providers accepting a flexible portfolio of evidence. The most common requirement is an adult education qualification, though some use formalised systems such as internal capability frameworks to guide this progression.

Advancement to a specialist kaiako role was based on provider needs and kaiako interests. Some kaiako develop further into an area of their industry expertise, or a related industry area, to become the specialist for that in their team of kaiako. Other kaiako would develop further into areas of educational expertise such as learning design or working with diverse learner groups to fill this expert role within their team. Larger teams of kaiako were generally able to specialise more often than smaller teams of kaiako. Sometimes, managers would also coordinate kaiako development plans around this concept too.



Kaiako career pathways were typically from tutor to senior tutor, followed in some cases by management or industry/educational specialisation.

"In some environments, as the kaiako gets more experienced, they almost earn the right to become the go-to person to teach [a specialist area] within the team. Again, the manager has to manage that as that can become a point of failure if a specialist leaves. So, managing the capabilities across the team is important as well." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Some stakeholders reported that the advancement of kaiako through this pathway was a collective process with multiple stakeholders. Notably, between kaiako managers and human resources departments. In some cases, this complexified kaiako advancement as well as the criteria for this.

Kaiako advancement within career pathways involved multiple organisational stakeholders, sometimes complexifying the process.

"The promotion process is also mediated by HR, so [there are] complicated relationships there." – Current Kaiako

Some kaiako reported not understanding what their career pathways could be from and within their VET kaiako role. It was commonly understood they would progress through their kaiako development pathway and likely progress to a senior kaiako role through this, but steps from this, or in place of this, were not understood by some.

"I don't know what the career path is, apart from just [keeping on] delivering courses." – Current Kaiako

Workforce Planning Factors

There was reportedly a large amount of kaiako attrition along this pathway. Many transitioning kaiako leave shortly after securing their role and many leave before achieving senior kaiako status within their provider. This leaves the pool of available staff for internal selection of these higher roles limited and managers left to succession plan out of *"the ones that are left"*. Some kaiako for specific industry areas, particularly those working within employers, can also reportedly leave for advisory or commercial positions after delivering in their area for long enough. Additionally, one stakeholder reported that their organisation lost many key staff due to sectoral changes, so they're in a stage of rebuilding lost capacity for kaiako development. Kaiako attrition was limiting to providers' workforce planning.

"It's important to hold the hands of people coming in so that we don't get this high attrition that we often get. They come in, get a bit of a shock, and then they leave."
– Leader and Former Kaiako

High attrition also results in a loss of organisational knowledge and capability to mentor newer kaiako. Losing organisational knowledge to pass on to new kaiako and having a limited supply of capable mentors affects kaiako development. Senior kaiako play a significant role in the development, support, and, subsequently, advancement of new kaiako.

"In fact, some of the 'older' tutors might still be doing the certificate in adult teaching themselves too. They're still learning. You've got the students teaching the next level of students coming through." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"In some of our programmes there's a lot of churn [of tutors]. So, we don't really have anyone there that can hold [a new tutor's] hand." – Leader and Former Kaiako

Many stakeholders reported having difficulty acquiring sufficient quality kaiako for their teams. Limited remuneration was cited as a key reason for this, but career awareness and proactivity of recruitment were also reported.

Many have difficulties acquiring kaiako and there is a large amount of attrition along the kaiako career pathway.

"You earn more money growing [fruit] than growing people." – Current Kaiako

"If we had the right people [the organisation would] be going gangbusters right now." – Manager and Current Kaiako

Despite some providers reporting that they've been able to bring in younger kaiako in recent years, there were concerns that the profession was still predominantly performed by older people. Younger kaiako were seen by many as important to balancing out workforce demographics and diversity as well as relating to younger learners.

Many wanted younger kaiako within the system for their ability to relate to younger learners, among other things.

"You don't want tutoring to become a retirement pathway." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Capabilities of Provider-based VET Kaiako

VET kaiako need a range of capabilities to perform their diverse roles. Contextual factors, as described, change what these are. Hence, any efforts to define these capabilities needs to consider that there will be no one-size-fits-all approach – at best, probably a one-size-fits-most approach.

“This role requires a huge skillset, it’s a unique role.” – Former Kaiako

To describe and discuss the development pathways for VET kaiako, it is essential to establish a clear conception of where these pathways are, or should be, leading. To accomplish this, an analysis of VET kaiako capability frameworks was performed. An overview of some of these is provided in Appendix 4 for illustrative purposes. Using this analysis and validation from the stakeholder interviews, a picture of common VET kaiako capabilities was established. The four capability areas for VET kaiako are:

- Industry capability and currency
- Educational knowledge and capability
- Stakeholder engagement and connection
- Professional and personal capabilities and characteristics

Provider-based kaiako require a mix of capabilities from each of these areas based on their specific role and context. These areas are described in Table 2 with some accompanying perspectives from participants.

VET kaiako require a mix of industry, educational, engagement, and professional capabilities in their role.

Table 2: Provider-Based VET Kaiako Capability Areas.

AREA & DEFINITION	ILLUSTRATIVE PARTICIPANT QUOTES
<p>Industry Capability and Currency This area includes all aspects of subject matter knowledge, skills, and competences that are relevant to their programme, but also extends to maintaining currency of these through industry changes. This provides credibility to industry, which many reported to be essential.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“You can’t have people teaching this stuff unless they know it.” – Leader and Former Kaiako</i> • <i>“They are technical experts first, then they will invariably teach the content to learners coming through.” – Former Kaiako</i> • <i>“How can you deliver a programme in horticulture if you don’t understand horticulture? You need to understand the industry.” – Current Kaiako</i>
<p>Educational Knowledge and Capability This covers all areas relevant to delivering a programme including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, designing, and delivering learning. • Assessing, evaluating, and moderating learning. • Supporting learners and providing pastoral care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“To be a good tutor, you’ve got to be a good teacher.” – Current Kaiako and Manager</i> • <i>“Just because you know something inside out doesn’t mean you can teach it.” – Current Kaiako</i> • <i>“There’re some concepts that you just know in your bones. How do you convey [these] to people just starting out in the industry? There are some areas where I don’t know if anyone’s ever taught me to do [certain tasks] – I find [delivering these</i>

AREA & DEFINITION	ILLUSTRATIVE PARTICIPANT QUOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributing to educational administration, quality assurance, or systemic processes. 	<p><i>areas] challenging at times." – Current Kaiako and Manager</i></p>
<p>Engagement Capability</p> <p>It is crucial for kaiako to be able to engage with a range of groups for their own development, their programme's development, the VET system's development, and the development of their learners.</p> <p>Provider-based VET kaiako might be required to engage and form connections with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners. Industry bodies, representatives, or employers. Educational stakeholders, such as governing or standard setting bodies; other kaiako; and other educational providers. Community groups, Iwi, or whānau. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Good [provider-based] kaiako have a few things in common: they're really good relationship builders;... they understand their role in a big organisation and how they can interact and access the other services that support both themselves and the learners; and they continue to maintain close connections with industry." – Manager and Former Kaiako</i> <i>"Every single kaiako is a member of a community of some kind. Whether it's their neighbourhood or their church group or whatever. They... bring value from that to their role as a kaiako. So, [it] might be a working bee doing up the rugby clubrooms, pulling together a group of tradies from within a community group to support something the learners are doing, or using their networks for accessing some sites for students to do site visits or that sort of thing. It's very much reciprocal." – Leader and Former Kaiako</i>
<p>Professional Capability and Personal Characteristics</p> <p>Specific professional capabilities and personal characteristics were reported as critical to kaiako success, and supposedly differentiating high performing kaiako.</p> <p>Professional capability examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpersonal and communication skills. Technological and digital literacy. Working with different cultures and those with different backgrounds. Supporting or contributing to provider or systemic VET quality. <p>Personal characteristic examples included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passion and motivation to achieve outcomes for learners, and valuing these. Commitment to continuous development and maintaining technical and educational competency. Traits including patience, perseverance, positivity, and adaptability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"I think this one is probably more important than anything else: it comes down to a personality thing and the ability to connect with people... there's something innate in good tutors that makes them good at their role." – Manager and Former Kaiako</i> <i>"One of the most significant attributes is empathy and a desire to see others succeed and grow... This is more important than having great subject matter knowledge - you can have people who know a lot but aren't actually able to break that down to the level of their students." – Manager and Former Kaiako</i> <i>"If they're a natural teacher, they don't require any teacher training... We've got guys that have just taken themselves off and learned about [a topic] because they want to be successful teachers – they're struggling with a group or a person in class and they just want to how do I help [them]." – Manager and Former Kaiako</i>

THE DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

Beginning the Journey

Where is the start of the pathway?

Every occupational journey has a starting point, but for provider-based VET kaiako, this point can vary. Some considered their starting point to be early in their lives as they developed necessary personal traits, others considered it to be their first experiences with supporting or delivering learning (in any context), and others considered it to be when they began their relevant career in their industry. Overall, the pathway has no compulsory starting point and kaiako backgrounds are diverse.

“There is no common starting place for the role.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Many kaiako suggested they bring their 'whole selves' to work, utilising their range of life experiences and skills in the role. This was especially true for those teaching foundation-level or youth guarantee programmes, where relating to students through common experiences helps create effective learning environments. Previous workplace and personal experiences contributed transferrable capabilities to their role and to their effectiveness as kaiako. Personal traits like empathy,

patience, and perseverance also reportedly differentiated high-performing kaiako from those that were just 'okay' or those who wouldn't be retained for long in the profession. Traits such as these are developed over time. This suggests that the development pathway may begin earlier in their lives, or at least that high-performing kaiako take cues from their wider experiences.

Many kaiako and managers also pointed to early experiences with or within education as instrumental in their development journey. This includes their first role as a provider-based kaiako or previous roles involving training, learner support, or otherwise. Several mentioned experiences in coaching, mentoring, or general people support roles as beneficial to their role. This could have been within their industry, such as supporting apprentices, or elsewhere, such as from social services occupations.

Some also strongly argued that new kaiako shouldn't be considered beginners, even without any previous experience working in an education provider – this was despite several kaiako reporting they felt like beginners in the transition. They described new kaiako more like

“senior apprentices” than beginners. New VET kaiako are already considered experts within their domain and this expertise is necessary to their new role. If provider-based VET kaiako are required to have industry experience, qualifications, or certifications to perform the role, why is it that some

Many kaiako believe that the sum of their life experiences and skills can be brought into their kaiako role.

Most believed that certain personal traits or factors differentiated a good kaiako from great kaiako.

Transitioning VET kaiako are not beginners: they are well-qualified, experts in their own right, and the only ones who can do the job.

consider the ‘beginning’ of this pathway to be when they start working in an education provider? This doesn’t fully respect the expertise that VET kaiako bring to their role. These stakeholders considered the starting point of their pathway to be when they began their industry career.

You’re more of a ‘senior apprentice’ rather than a newbie. You know a lot of stuff which integrates into your kaiako development, because of what you’ve done in your trade. I think that framing that conversation [around this] becomes really important.” – Leader and Former Kaiako

Practically speaking, the start of the VET kaiako development pathway was most commonly seen as when they begin acquiring industry capability or educational capability – whichever comes first. This excludes, however, the concept of personal characteristics that could be developed even earlier, which were important to some.

VET kaiako development pathways begin when they begin acquiring industry or educational capability – whichever comes first.

How established is the pathway?

Pathway Formality and Clarity

Pathways that most kaiako took into the profession were informal. It was commonly reported that they ‘fell into’ the profession through word-of-mouth or coincidence, with opportunities becoming known to them at the right time.

Some leaders and managers also described little being done to proactively build or attract a pipeline of kaiako for their organisations. The pathway was not being promoted by providers. In one case, a C&I manager was eager to have a pool of potential kaiako identified, pre-interviewed, and ready for if roles opened. This hadn’t yet been operationalised. No other efforts to proactively build a workforce supply by providers were identified in this work. Many managers spoke of the need to do this however, as well as the need to implement high-quality recruitment pathways to minimise risks and costs.

Pathways into the profession were often informal, with few proactive workforce development activities.

“It would be really good if we [could] be proactive about pathway-ing people into the profession.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“We’re not proactive about getting into [the] trades and appealing for people to come and work for us.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

The requirements of the role and related expectations were not well understood by many new or prospective kaiako. Some reported that it was common for new kaiako to enter the role, be “shocked” by what they encounter, and leave shortly after. In one case, a kaiako believed they would be fulfilling a role dedicated to carpentry but was also required to immediately deliver a wider set of topics including literacy, numeracy, and digital skills. In other cases, kaiako did not anticipate the ancillary functions of the role such as administration, or they did not anticipate the level of challenge in managing a group of learners or a programme. As the role itself is commonly unclear, pathways to develop into and within it are equally unclear.

Kaiako often did not understand the role’s requirements or expectations of them well when entering the profession.

"The end goal of an effective Kaiako is possibly not obvious and visible, as it should be. 'We' know what it should be, but someone entering the profession should be [shown this more effectively]." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"I did think 'I don't know if I'm in the right job'. You've taken me off the tools, thrown all this administration at me... I pushed through because I could see the need for it - the [sector] industry needing it." – Current Kaiako

Key Development Features of the Pathway

Crucially, many stakeholders described having few options available to gradually develop into the progression. They reported not knowing of, or not being able to identify the tools, programmes, objectives, or otherwise to work towards before taking on a provider-based kaiako role.

Few formal development activities were accessible to kaiako before beginning their role in a provider.

Options that were available, including the Adult Education and Training qualifications suite (Ako Aotearoa, 2024), were not desirable to prospective kaiako due to their time requirements or were inaccessible as their entry requirements included being in the role already. Almost all kaiako received their targeted development for the role after being employed, despite many wanting or valuing earlier or progressive development options.

"In theory, some [educational development] should happen before they start; in practice, these are people likely transitioning from one career to another... they may not be willing to invest a year of their time and money doing training." – Current Kaiako and Manager

Once employed however, the Adult Education and Training qualifications suite (Ako Aotearoa, 2024) was a commonly known and utilised tool to develop VET kaiako. Many kaiako and managers saw completion of a qualification in this suite as a major component of their development pathway. Often, development and progression pathways within organisations were built around these too. In some cases, providers mandated their attainment over time, in others it was only recommended. Many of these providers had expected timeframes for attainment too – on average, between one to two years after employment. Some providers also had salary increases attached to completion of one of these qualifications, usually the Level 5 certificate.

The Adult Education and Training Qualifications were core development tools and were the backbone of most kaiako development pathways.

"These [adult education qualifications] exist; the means to turn an industry person to a kaiako exist. So, given there are qualifications for people, there's a pathway to follow." – VET Leader

Part time VET kaiako roles were reportedly common and useful pathway tools in both sectors. This being consistent with other international VET systems (OECD, 2022). These arrangements were not explicitly designed to fulfil this function, though they were described as effective for it. New kaiako could utilise these arrangements as job-tasters to understand whether the career pathway was of interest to them. They helped to clarify opportunities for some.

"Part time teaching allows them to have a foot in both camps, and they can make a decision either way. They can see what teaching might be like and make an informed decision." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Practising Requirements

The principal concept surrounding VET kaiako practising requirements is the trade-off between quality and flexibility. If a profession has more practising requirements, then those who enter it will likely be of a higher quality, produce better outcomes, and act ethically and safely in their practice. If a profession has fewer practising requirements, then it will be accessible to a greater number of people and allow flexible entry. This is important for the VET sector which often has challenges maintaining a supply of skilled educators, and that requires a large skillset (OECD, 2021). This trade-off is illustrated below.

Weighted toward Flexibility:

Greater access to a labour market of already skilled professionals.

Weighted toward Quality:

Greater confidence in entrants' capability to achieve good outcomes.

Fewer Practising Requirements

More Practising Requirements

Striking the right balance between quality and flexibility is essential, depending on context and stakeholder needs (OECD, 2022). Different countries have approached this trade-off in different ways. Many European countries have, for example, tended to have high practising requirements for vocational educators including high-level pre-service qualifications (OECD, 2022). Aotearoa New Zealand has taken the more flexible approach, with lower practising requirements to meet to enter the profession.

What Practising Requirements Exist?

There are few formal requirements to practice as a provider-based VET kaiako in Aotearoa New Zealand. Many within this work reported that development as a kaiako occurred whilst the individual had begun practising and that there were no compulsory requirements for entry, reinforcing earlier findings in these contexts (Maurice-Takerei & Anderson, 2022). The few requirements that did exist were driven by programme and provider quality assurance functions, rather than consensus for the profession and its quality. These limited requirements also applied to the organisation, rather than individual kaiako.

Few formal practising requirements exist for VET kaiako. Most that exist are flexible and not required before entering the profession.

Principally, these requirements were provided by the sectoral consent and moderation requirements governing providers' approval to assess against specific training standards, and the providers' other registration and operating criteria. Programme consent and moderation requirements have general provider-level requirements for staff selection and development but had differences for some sub-sectors. Requirements varied, though most were broad and offered flexibility to kaiako and their organisations. This flexibility results from conditions that the kaiako either *has, is working towards, or is able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge and skills*. This means that, in most cases, VET kaiako can enter the profession with industry capability and develop into the profession during practice. There are no centralised barriers to entry, only those imposed by each provider during selection and recruitment to maintain their overarching quality assured status.

Practising requirements that did exist were informed by providers' quality assurance requirements, rather than professional criteria.

It should be noted that Workforce Development Councils (standard setters) for the C&I and F&F sectors are in the process of reviewing the Consent and Moderation Requirements for their sectors. These reviews aim to combine current Consent and Moderation Requirement documents (C&I = 13; F&F = 4) into a single set of requirements for each sector, with sub-sectoral differences (Waihunga Ara Rau, 2024; Muka Tangata, 2024). This may provide clarity and drive consensus around the current limited requirements for kaiako.

From this work, and from the variability seen in industry-informed consent and moderation requirements, there are a range of sector specific views on the practising requirements. These are hopefully being addressed through the Consent and Moderation Requirement reviews, but nonetheless underscore the varied nature of the vocational education sector. See the quote below for an example:

“Some Workforce Development Councils want you to hold the unit standards you are delivering. I don’t fully agree with this. A good trainer should be able to create training around different areas... it’s more about understanding what you’re delivering.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Across programmes and providers there were also a handful of ancillary legal requirements, but these are only contextually applied based on kaiako functions. For example, the vulnerable children’s checks including police vetting or drivers licensing for roles requiring this.

In contexts where kaiako would be supervising or certifying live environments during their programmes, they would be required to hold relevant industry certification. This certifying requirement was common for C&I kaiako, where programmes regularly involved constructing and testing live electrical circuits, plumbing networks, building structures for sale, inter alia. In these contexts, industry certification requirements provided de facto kaiako practising requirements – provider based kaiako need to certify and test their students’ work, this requires industry certification, and industry certification requires demonstrated adherence to a set of standards. This was often managed, however, at a provider level. Providers tended to identify areas where sign-off was needed and ensure they had a certified kaiako available. It was not necessarily the case that all kaiako of a certain discipline within a provider needed to be industry certified.

Attitudes on Practising Requirements

The VET sector should carefully consider the effects of any current or potential practising requirements for its kaiako. Stakeholders felt strongly about this topic. Overall, current views suggest that having lower requirements is more effective for Aotearoa New Zealand than potentially having higher requirements.

Some recognised the value that increased practising requirements could provide, but also recognised the challenges that this would bring for the sector. Several suggested that having additional training before they began practising in an education provider would allow for better outcomes, but that the ways to do this without causing labour supply issues were not clear.

“The one thing that’s generally lacking... is a more formalised system for training our teachers. A lot of VET teachers in other jurisdictions come through different systems – some of them have trades experience, then they go through a Master of Teaching before practice. There are pros and cons to this type of system – for example, it might be too theory dominated – but it means that people who are VET teachers have a higher status and generally have a better understanding of pedagogy.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Most were firmly against increased practising requirements for VET kaiako in their context – *“it would be a total disaster for the vocational [education sector]*

(Manager and Former Kaiako).” They believed that this flexibility was essential to their contexts where kaiako

were hard to recruit; many would be unwilling to dedicate time for training before they found a kaiako role; and where there were disparities of esteem, recognition, and remuneration between practising in the industry and delivering education for the industry. Across the C&I and F&F sectors, stakeholders valued the flexibility that few practising requirements afforded them.

“It’s a blessing that we can transition straight into the profession from industry, without taking a year off to study.” – Current Kaiako

“I think it’s just important that you [don’t] have to have the qualification before you start tutoring... We would get no one who will leave their job and go and do a certificate adult teaching with the view that they may get employed to be a tutor, because there’s no guarantee of employment. They might have the qualification but don’t have the industry experience we’re looking for. So, I would hate to think that that could happen.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Contrasting this with general education in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Education Review Office recently identified that a substantial proportion of new general education kaiako (those within primary, intermediate, and secondary schools) frequently felt unprepared for key functions of their role when transitioning to classroom practice (ERO, 2024). This is despite requiring a high-level pre-practise qualification for their profession. Several findings of the report point to the value and necessity of classroom experience, observation, and mentorship to develop necessary confidence and capability (in other words, workplace learning and development). This is a valuable report that might provide other useful contrasts for the VET sector, but a key takeaway is that higher practising requirements alone may not guarantee kaiako quality in a VET context either.

Most believed that high practising requirements would be inappropriate for the NZ context, flexibility here was valued.

Transitioning to a Provider-based Environment

An Occupational Shift?

Some described the transition to become a VET kaiako as an occupational shift. They described the working environments and the nature of their work as substantially different to their previous roles.

Many industry practitioners feel they are starting something new when they enter the kaiako role.

"[For some] their whole identity comes from the trades, they struggle with some aspects of becoming a teacher... their whole occupational identity is challenged [when they transition to a provider]." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"I feel sorry for anyone doing their first two years teaching – there's just so much you've got to learn, and there are so many different aspects of people that you have to learn as well. You've got to cater to all that and you've got to tick off all the books at the same time, which is not easy." – Current Kaiako

Others instead spoke about the mindset of 'starting a new occupation' as flawed. These stakeholders thought it was important to recognise that their industry capabilities are essential to the role of kaiako. Therefore, they aren't conceptually changing occupations, they're specialising within their current discipline. This is reinforced through findings from other jurisdictions that industry professionals acquire tacit expertise through their practice that is transferred to their role as a VET kaiako (Lensjø, 2024). These stakeholders emphasised the importance of shifting perceptions in this area to better recognise and value the expertise of transitioning kaiako.

"One of the more difficult transition aspects, particularly for trades kaiako, is this notion that they're leaving something behind to start something else. It's an interesting mindset – I had an element of that when I started, and I know others have too. The interesting thing is that if they didn't have their vocational experience, and often qualifications, we wouldn't have employed them to do the teaching piece. So, they're actually building on what they've got rather than leaving it behind and starting something new." – Manager and Former Kaiako

A Substantial Organisational Shift

The focus for many was on the occupational shift, but this transition is also a significant organisational shift, and in some cases, culture shock. Stakeholders reported many organisational challenges or adjustments necessary to their transition. The transition to a provider requires integration with a different workplace culture, forming a connection with a different type of organisation, understanding their role in this environment, and making sense of a set of new policies and practices. Many of these are common features to role or organisational changes but were exaggerated in this context due to the substantial organisational differences between industry and VET providers.

Workplace culture was notably different between education providers and industry workplaces. The transition between these required new kaiako to integrate with this new organisational culture to build their identity and commitment to the profession at the same time.

Language and behavioural expectations for staff were different in this regard, among other things. Where differences in cultural expectations emerged, new kaiako could struggle to adjust.

"Language was a huge barrier to adjusting to the new environment. It's like learning a new trade." – Current Kaiako

"[The environment's different,] behaviourally and culturally – especially for tradies with the banter, language, and ways of behaving that you can get away with on-site but not in the classroom." – Current Kaiako and Manager

Further, some stakeholders emphasised the need for learning environments to more closely mirror industry cultures and norms. This alignment would better prepare students for their future work environments, not only in terms of language and cultural aspects but also in resource management and quality standards.

"It was hard getting out of the building site mentality. On a building site, the more you stuff up the more it costs the client... I came from [an area that] had high standards and lower tolerance for mistakes... This was a mindset shift for me: [realising that] they're not apprentices, they're students, and I needed to take a different approach to bring them up to competence." – Former Kaiako

This organisational shift was helped in some cases by forming a connection to the provider and its people – fostering a sense of belonging. Many kaiako and managers reported the need to connect with others in the organisation and feel as though they were a part of the organisation, believing that this contributed to the success, confidence, and retention of kaiako. To accomplish this, some providers offered holistic welcoming or induction processes that recognised this organisational shift for kaiako. Some stakeholders referred to this with the concept of whakawhanaungatanga (broadly, creating and maintaining relationships) and described implementing processes such as pōwhiri or mihi whakatau⁶ for new kaiako. Others had less-formal processes, but still put efforts into establishing kaiako connections within the organisation, as well as ways to provide a sense of belonging and shared identity. Kaiako spoke positively about communities of practice and kaiako groups for this purpose.

"Welcoming is important... people introduce themselves to each other and build connections so that they can support each other, nurture the new kaiako, [and] make them feel included in something that may be new to them." – Manager

"You do need to give people a bit of time to adapt to the different environment. And I think seeing their peers in action is a great way to just get a feel for what's

Workplace culture was different between education providers and industry workplaces which required adjusting kaiako behaviour.

Some felt that education provider environments needed to more closely resemble the cultural environments from industry.

Most providers offered some type of welcome for new kaiako to foster a sense of belonging and help them make connections.

⁶ Pōwhiri and mihi whakatau are two types of welcome in tikanga Māori. Pōwhiri are more formal than mihi whakatau.

okay and how to conduct yourself, more so than doing a module or a training." – Current Kaiako and Manager

The organisational transition also required kaiako to understand and apply new organisational policies and practices. Learning in a provider-based context, as opposed to a workplace context that they might be familiar with, has a set of new administrative processes to apply, amongst other things. Some of these also required new knowledge or skills, whereas others were cultural adjustments such as with procurement times and applications.

"(A kaiako was brought in days before their course started) I chose to do the behind the scenes work such as administration for the kaiako so that they just had to deliver. We have a lot of processes and platforms within the organisation for new starters to get their heads around." – Manager

"There are so many systems [to learn]. I learnt to implement them along the way in my role." – Current Kaiako

To be successful in the organisational transition, many believed that kaiako should understand their role in the wider organisational and systemic context. This included knowing where to find support, available resources, their role's scope, and their place in the broader education system. Many new kaiako often tried to solve all issues independently, unaware of existing organisational supports or services. Some attributed this to their industry background, where self-reliance was common. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of helping new kaiako navigate this transition by ensuring they utilise available resources within the organisation and understand their role in context.

Most believed that kaiako should understand the wider organisational and systemic context, as well as their role in it.

"Our team have found that new kaiako have a tendency to feel the need to resolve all teaching issues themselves. They struggle to see themselves as part of a bigger whole (organisation)." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Key Experiences of the Transition

Whilst not exhaustive, some key features of the transition to become a kaiako were the substantial capability development required, the psychological impacts of the change, and the overwhelming requirements placed on them.

Many new kaiako needed significant development to meet the requirements of the role, typically related to their educational capability. Common areas that kaiako reported having difficulties with during this transition were:

- Interpreting and using educational language.
- Delivering to students rather than employees or apprentices, if they had done this before.
- Working with large groups of learners rather than small groups or individuals that they may have had experience with from industry.
- Identifying and managing pastoral care issues in their learners.
- Facilitating for long periods of time, such as for full time programmes.
- Utilising formative assessment methods in their delivery.
- Using learning management systems and software, including paper-based systems.

Several kaiako also had feelings of being an “imposter” because of their capability gaps in this new role. The role could test their educational capabilities, but also the breadth of their industry knowledge and capabilities, which exaggerated these feelings for some. In some cases, even with diverse industry experiences, new kaiako were having to further develop their industry capabilities to meet curriculum requirements. These feelings reinforced the idea for some that they were ‘starting something new’.

Some kaiako feel like an imposter when entering the profession and experience psychological pressure during delivery.

Kaiako also described pressures being different in each role. Whilst often not physically demanding work like many had experienced in industry, the initial psychological pressures of delivery were significant for some. Standing in front of a group of learners, facilitating for long periods, and designing learning activities caused some to experience psychological pressure in the form of anxiety and stress.

“I knew the topic, I’ve had my own company and things like that, but to actually stand in front of a class and deliver that information, it spun me out to be honest.”
– Current Kaiako

“The same sort of feelings I had as an apprentice carry through here... a bit of on-the-job anxiety. If you get told to do something and you don’t know how to do it, and it’s expected of you, there’s a bit of anxiety. The same thing comes back in when you’re put in front of a class for the first time. A feeling of being over your head.” – Current Kaiako

A large set of requirements could often be placed on new kaiako too. In many cases, kaiako spoke about being overwhelmed with their requirements in the transition phase; many managers also reported these experiences with their staff. In some cases, new kaiako were assigned tasks typically expected of much more senior kaiako. New kaiako can face overwhelming demands in their onboarding phase. This was not the only identified experience, however. Several stakeholders reported that kaiako were gradually assigned new responsibilities as they gained confidence and capability.

Some new kaiako are being assigned advanced responsibilities too early; other kaiako are being gradually assigned these when they’re ready.

“I’ve seen some new kaiako completely overwhelmed with the expectations of writing new programmes, writing new assessments, and other more advanced capabilities that we’d expect a senior kaiako to be doing – [they’re] landing in the lap of new kaiako way too early.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“Their development journey starts with a good induction framed around building confidence... [they go through a structured and gradual introduction to delivery], but they won’t deliver by themselves until they’ve met the organisation’s [practising standard].” – Current Kaiako and Manager

Organisational Onboarding

Onboarding Processes

Organisational onboarding was reported by kaiako, managers, and VET leaders as critical to the success, engagement, retention, and development of new kaiako. The transition to kaiako is a substantial organisational and occupational change that requires consideration, support, and planning.

"If [onboarding is] poor, you set people up to fail." – Current Kaiako and Manager

A phased onboarding process that considered key learning and development outcomes was reportedly critical. This is because many kaiako and managers described a 'steep learning curve' for the role – "[The learning curve is steep]. So, [we need] a very slow process of easing these new people [in] to get them comfortable enough to be in that position (Current Kaiako)". Frequently, this learning was not managed adequately and expectations of new kaiako were too high. Other countries have identified the need to smoothen this learning curve too (See Tyler et al., 2024). There were a minority of providers that provided transitional onboarding pathways based on kaiako needs and confidence, but this was not the norm. Most often, kaiako described feeling overwhelmed and inundated with language, processes, or responsibilities that they didn't yet understand, with onboarding processes that didn't meet their learning and development needs. In particular, the need to scaffold development over time rather than expect too much from them too quickly.

The professional transition regularly involved a steep learning curve for kaiako.

"I don't think you'd do that in other industries: if you hired someone who was new to a skill set, you wouldn't just throw them in there and expect them to immediately be fully productive and have the brand new skill set." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"We have a tendency to firehose them with way too much in the beginning. It can be overwhelming to enter into a very different work environment [which is] often complex and has many moving pieces." – Leader and Former Kaiako

"I found [the learning curve] extremely steep. I didn't understand the jargon, and they expect you to. They just bounce you off with people: 'go and meet this person, go and meet this person'. It all happens in about three weeks. And you're like 'what are you talking about? I don't know what an EFT is, and you keep talking about these things... so, it was pretty stink, to be honest. It was a pretty [bad] way to be inducted." – Current Kaiako and Manager

Adequately structured onboarding systems and processes were important to manage this learning curve and transition, but structure varied between providers from both the C&I and F&F sectors. A small minority of providers had highly structured approaches to onboarding, whereas most had limited structure, and some had no formalised approach. Formal onboarding processes and tools ranged from limited conversations with staff or checklists for organisational knowledge and processes, to induction pathways linked to capability frameworks, bespoke development interventions, and mentoring or job shadowing arrangements.

Onboarding systems and processes had varied levels of structure across the sectors and within providers.

Onboarding Experience Examples

<p><i>"My experience was more 'Here's some book work, away you go, and good luck'."</i> – Current Kaiako</p>	<p><i>"Trouble is, you come in on your first day, meet lots of people, read policies, and then what? Tutors are often left to their own devices in [the] early stages."</i> – Manager and Current Kaiako</p>	<p><i>"We typically induct people into the teaching role by buddying them up with others. So, it's very rare that someone would be thrown into a classroom and told this is what you've got to do."</i> – Manager and Former Kaiako</p>	<p><i>"We'll always provide support within our organisation. We'll buddy up new tutors with older ones, but everyone is busy [so practices vary]."</i> – Manager</p>	<p><i>"It's a structured process, but it's not formal though. First couple of weeks they're just observing other tutors' practice, then maybe a couple of weeks [later] they're co-teaching..., then after sort of a month or six weeks they're picking up the class themselves."</i> – Manager and Former Kaiako</p>
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Providers with Less Structure

Onboarding practices also varied within some providers. Some larger providers had departments, teams, or managers that were implementing on-boarding processes to differing levels of quality, despite having the same access to onboarding processes and tools. This was sometimes due to a lack of, or limited guidance for, these processes and tools. Other times it was due to resource and time factors, or staff performance issues – staff not implementing, or not being able to implement, these processes effectively. Training for these practices was reportedly needed in many cases.

"There are pockets of excellence in the organisation: appropriate and timely information from their [managers] when they're highly organised and follow a process, and managers have done this with a lot of care... In some areas [within our provider], we still see 'off you go, go have a look in the old drive [for some old materials]'" – Manager and Former Kaiako

Critically, onboarding processes were most often disconnected from longer-term development pathways and processes. When this happens, onboarding is at risk of not meeting kaiako needs and missing key capability gaps. This can also result in limited clarity of development aims or good practices. When integrated with a longer-term vision for development, onboarding can provide a springboard to development pathways rather than a minimum threshold of confidence or standard of practice. Few providers meaningfully connected their onboarding with their longer-term development practices or frameworks.

"We [run an onboarding process involving observation and feedback], then it ends after [X] observation in the classroom. We then say 'bye' and don't see them unless they need a specific support. There's a huge amount lost in the process in terms of ongoing development." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Providers with More Structure

Onboarding quality varied within providers due to limited guidance for staff, resource, time available, and staff performance.

Onboarding processes were frequently disconnected from longer-term kaiako development pathways and processes.

"I'd like to see more connection between the start of recruitment and the continual [development] process between their manager, team, [and] mentors. Connection here is key." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Further, many onboarding processes and tools were also focused around managing the organisational transition, rather than the occupational transition and related long-term development needs. Onboarding was treated as an introduction to the operational aspects of the workplace rather than a develop tool to support performance. In other words, 'here's where the classroom or workshop is' rather than 'here are the skills you'll need to manage this group of learners and what to expect'. The organisational transition is important to cover, but focusing on this devalues the significant occupational transition that kaiako need to go through that requires new capabilities. It can also create risks for kaiako and learners.

Onboarding processes and tools were often more focused on organisational factors, rather than capability needs.

Kaiako Satisfaction with Onboarding

Most kaiako were dissatisfied with their onboarding experiences. Only a minority of kaiako reported being satisfied with these experiences overall. Many managers also rated their onboarding processes as poor or average, with only a small number rating their processes as good.

"[The induction wasn't done] very well to be honest... there was no one really to induct me at that stage. I had my manager, but [they're] just a broad manager across other trades... I didn't really have that person or that direction. I feel there's probably no procedure or induction process... [I was] really wondering what we were doing and what was going on." – Current Kaiako

"The induction process wasn't the best. Starting at the company it lacked processes to set you up to succeed – It actually almost set you up to fail." – Current Kaiako

Many kaiako also described feeling unprepared and not confident for their new role – *"I felt completely unprepared, to the point where I had to reach out for help (Current Kaiako)".* Those who had previous experience delivering learning or supporting, coaching, or mentoring people more generally tended to feel more prepared for and confident delivering in their new role.

Many kaiako were dissatisfied with their onboarding experiences and felt unprepared and not confident for their new role.

"I felt like my industry knowledge was good as I was coming straight out of there, but everything else was terrible. I didn't really have many computer and I.T. skills, didn't have a clue what I was doing in the classroom, it was just sort of a sink or swim type of thing: throw you in the deep end and learn as you go. But, looking back, [I was] very unprepared." – Current Kaiako

"Oh, I wasn't confident at all when I first started. I was way out of my depth... I definitely wasn't ready in my first year." – Current Kaiako

Many kaiako felt inadequately supported during their onboarding. Reasons for this related to a lack of formalised support processes; the unavailability or lack of engagement from managers, colleagues, or other kaiako;

In some cases, senior kaiako were unwilling to share their programme resources and tools to new kaiako to support their development.

and a limited access to resources and tools. In some cases, resources and learning materials or plans that would help new kaiako were restricted by senior kaiako – senior kaiako in these cases having the view that their resources were their intellectual property and having the mindsets of ‘I had to figure this out for myself, so you can too’. This lack of collegiality and support was only seen in a minority of reported cases, though.

“Generally, tutors are not well supported [into the profession]... in my experience, I was walked into a room of young people and had the door shut behind me.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“There was no one there to sit with you and walk you through procedures... no one to give examples...” – Current Kaiako

“[There was not a lot of support] from the organisation. Fellow tutors provided some support, but this wasn’t exactly considered policy. This was informal.” – Former Kaiako

Generally, kaiako also felt their onboarding experiences lacked structure and they wanted more in their onboarding processes. Effective structures reported by kaiako included mentoring or feedback processes; having knowledgeable staff known to kaiako and readily accessible to answer questions and give direction; having staff take on ancillary functions for them, either temporarily whilst they transition or permanently; face-to-face organisational and occupational development activities; including organisational or professional skills such as digital skills in onboarding planning; and having clear, interpretable development pathways and expectations of them. Where onboarding had greater structure, kaiako felt their transition needs were more effectively met.

Kaiako generally wanted more structure to their onboarding processes.

“...you basically can’t do this to people. There has to be some kind of procedure in place when you set someone up in a role – there’s got to be some kind of structure.” – Current Kaiako

Factors Influencing Onboarding

Key factors that influenced onboarding practices were kaiako managers, lead-in times before delivery, ineffective onboarding implementation, unclear expectations, geographic distance, and the lack of support for or identification of key skills gaps.

Managers were frequently reported to be key to onboarding success. They play a key role in their support and development across their time with the provider, but particularly in this phase. They are enablers, advocates, and guides for kaiako development, as well as the key figure that sets development and performance expectations. Sometimes, workloads and other pressures on managers left them unable to provide the necessary attention to these onboarding processes. This resulted in kaiako having negative initial experiences in the profession.

Kaiako direct managers play a key role in kaiako support and development during the onboarding process, and over time.

“Strong mentoring line managers see a lot of success. The opposite is also true – [and] in my experience common – managers aren’t doing a good job in the space. As a sector, we don’t do a good job of training those managers to take on mentorships.” – Leader and Former Kaiako

The amount of time that a new or transitioning kaiako had in their role before independently delivering varied. Though, the majority of kaiako interviewed had little time in their roles before being required to independently deliver. Some of these cases were in as little as a couple of working days (or less), and others could be a week or two. A minority of kaiako reported having larger lead in times for their roles of approximately six to eight weeks. Many larger providers reported that it was rarer to have a new kaiako thrown in ‘the deep end’ than it was previously, but that it still happened on occasion.

Kaiako had varied lengths of time employed before delivery; many had a short amount of time before delivery, but some had weeks/months.

“In some instances, [new kaiako] have a six week lead up within which they can familiarise themselves and plan. Some [kaiako] start the day before which horrifies me.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Short lead-in times for kaiako were primarily driven by funding arrangements. Programmes, and therefore kaiako roles, might not be financially viable until shortly before a programme is due to start. This being due to enrolment numbers reaching a threshold and triggering a rushed recruitment and induction process for the programme. In other cases, this could be the result of kaiako attrition. When an existing kaiako leaves a provider, there is regularly no resource available to ‘backfill’ them. The role is also difficult to recruit for. Again, resulting in a rushed recruitment and induction process. Some suggested that the time of year was a factor for this too – if a new kaiako was brought in mid-programme, there was additional pressure to get them delivering as soon as possible.

Funding pressures and kaiako attrition were key drivers for the need to recruit and have new kaiako delivering quickly.

“It’s pretty tough with the economics of it – people do get thrown into it.” – Current Kaiako and Manager

“Typically, a tutor resigns or leaves for some reason, you then put your job advert in, and they’re gone within a month. By the time you’ve actually recruited someone to start the job, it’s often two months later and everyone’s desperate, so they walk in the door and it’s kind of ‘oh, thank goodness, here’s your class!’.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Ineffective implementation also affected the onboarding in some cases. Issues with process and performance created poor circumstances for new kaiako trying to transition into the organisation and the occupation. For example, kaiako not being given access to their learning management system or resource library for substantial periods, recruitment staff not providing relevant contractual information to line managers, or parties not supplying learning resources to kaiako until just before a programme begins. Several reported that *“there are always challenges with [kaiako] onboarding (Manager and Former Kaiako)”* in their organisations.

Ineffective implementation limited the quality of onboarding processes in some cases.

In some instances, kaiako were also unclear about the expectations of them in their new role. Even in some cases where the transitioning kaiako had previous experience, they were still unclear about expectations, responsibilities, and delegated authority. While this may be like any workplace transition, the transition to kaiako requires a substantial shift. These cases experienced uncertainty for long periods and were given little guidance or answers from their organisation – for

Some new kaiako were unclear about expectations of them, their responsibilities, and their delegated authority for long periods.

example, ‘the programme starts soon, and I don’t know if and how I’m able to order materials, or what resources I have to deliver’.

“For me... it [was] more the course content or expectations of what is to be delivered – that [was] the biggest question.” – Current Kaiako

“It’s all new to me, and I’m going off conversations I’m having with other tutors to find out what is required, [but I have little guidance].” – Current Kaiako

Remotely based kaiako also had challenges with onboarding. Some kaiako were based in areas by themselves, with little to no face-to-face contact with others in the organisation. In these instances, onboarding processes were very limited and kaiako experienced challenges without regular guidance and support.

Remote kaiako had more limited onboarding experiences than central kaiako and with less guidance and support.

“[Being a remote tutor] is a big challenge for me... it would be just so great to have someone to come and show me the way a wee bit or go through the course materials.” – Current Kaiako

Some critical skills were often not considered in onboarding processes, despite being common gaps and essential requirements of the role. Principal among these were digital skills. Many kaiako entering the profession did not have previous experience with digital tools and they formed large components of the kaiako role. None of the onboarding processes described covered these types of skills gaps in any formal way. Some kaiako were able to access informal support from peers for these areas, however.

Several key skills for the role were not considered in the onboarding process for many – principally, digital skills.

Te Pūkenga has been undergoing efforts to make its recruitment and onboarding of kaiako more consistent. Some of this relates to the recently disseminated teaching and learning strategy – Whiria Te Ako (Te Pūkenga, 2022) – which includes onboarding. Other providers also reported undergoing similar efforts. With the sectoral changes surrounding Te Pūkenga, it is uncertain what the results of these efforts will be. As a significant and cross-provider (business division) effort, resulting outputs may provide effective benchmarks or guidance for the sector.

“At Te Pūkenga, we’re trying to establish a Te Pūkenga way of recruiting and onboarding our new kaiako so there’s consistency. That’ll include what is the teaching qualification you’ll need to obtain as a minimum, what checks and balances we need to put people through when we recruit them, and then that systems piece to support them in the first few months – whether it’s buddy or mentor or coach.” – Leader and Former Kaiako

Ongoing Development

Ongoing Development Overall

Views on Professional Development

Organisations were strongly in favour of regular professional development for their kaiako. They valued it and stated that it brought benefits to their organisation. Many felt that valuing development and building an organisational culture that enabled this was critical. Kaiako also widely recognised the need to continually develop in their role and were highly interested in this.

Professional development was highly valued by organisations and kaiako.

“If you don’t train people and they stay, you’re worse off than if you train them and they leave.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“A lot of development is contingent on the culture of the organisation they’re in. [They need] an organisation that values teaching and encourages continuous professional development, reflection, and discussion... It requires a high level of integrity and leadership by those who understand teaching and learning. In that context everyone grows, and you’ll get good teachers.” – VET Leader

Several stakeholders offered perspectives on ‘craftsmanship’ or ‘artisanship’ that differentiated VET kaiako development from that of general education kaiako. VET kaiako can come from occupational backgrounds that value the development of ‘craft’ and honing their skills, and several reported bringing this value into their approach to delivering learning or developing as kaiako. They likened the kaiako occupation to their previous experiences with apprenticeships and learning while doing. This concept was often reflected on in the context of what they would like the development pathway to be like.

Several felt becoming a kaiako is like developing a craft/mastery – kaiako hone their skills in the role, like in their industry backgrounds.

“Learning the trade of becoming a VET kaiako: Often framing it like that means there’s a point of connection between their trade vocation and some of the language they’re getting exposed to. So, you’re learning a new trade; you’re doing another apprenticeship if you’d like, only two years rather than four.” – Leader and Former Kaiako

“Higher education isn’t done with an apprenticeship model, but I’m looking at it like an apprenticeship model. ‘Figure it out as you do it’ kind of thing. [After about 4 years’ time] I’ll start to feel like a teacher, not an apprentice [teacher].” – Current Kaiako

“Teaching is a craft. There is no checklist [for] ‘if you do these things well it will work’. What works well for some does not work well for others.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

The practical aspect of delivery was seen by many as the primary aspect of the VET kaiako ‘craft’ to develop, to then be supplemented with educational theory to lift performance higher. Many felt that educational theory was being front-loaded when there were practical delivery skills not being taught.

They felt that practical delivery skills should be prioritised in the transition to the profession, and further refined or supplemented with educational theory later.

“We don't necessarily need to know all the theory behind it or make it academic. It's practical. [They're] in the classroom, [they're] exhibiting these behaviours - actually, there's a range of tools available to you. Here's how to spot this behaviour, this is the technique you can use...” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“I learnt how to 'do' the thing, then learnt the language and frameworks surrounding it.” – Former Kaiako

Professional Development Structures

Dedicated organisational structures existed to support kaiako development in some cases. Some providers had teams providing mentoring, coaching, feedback, peer observation, connections to relevant kaiako, connections to best practice, or otherwise. Where these arrangements existed, operators of these arrangements tended to claim that they were effective overall. Most did not feel these types of arrangements were essential for all providers in the sector, though.

Some providers had organisational structures focused on kaiako support and development – people, teams, or units.

In some cases, these organisational structures allowed for confidential kaiako feedback to be given, independent from their management lines. This was reportedly valuable for enabling honest and collaborative discussions of performance and development for kaiako. It minimised power differences and social desirability biases that could result from other feedback mechanisms.

Confidential kaiako support and development teams enabled honest development discussions, minimising power differences and biases.

“This confidential support is valuable; [kaiako] trust [them] with their information. They can recommend that feedback [is passed on], but it's up to the kaiako [where this is shared].” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Professional Development Approaches

Across the VET sector, it was suggested that managers took a range of approaches to professional development needs identification and administration. Some implemented it strictly or to manage performance, whereas others took a more relaxed approach, driven by emerging needs and kaiako interests.

“I know that there are a range of ways that managers approach professional development across the [sector]. Some view it as a bit of a lever to manage performance, some have a very laissez faire approach to it, and others are a bit more middle of the road.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Development needs identification was driven largely through regular human resource processes and kaiako self-reporting, but also quality assurance functions such as programme reviews and learner feedback. Most often, formal professional development activities were self-

Managers would identify kaiako development needs through performance management and make development recommendations.

identified and applied for by the kaiako. Managers might make recommendations in some cases, including for development to address performance issues. Several larger providers also offered their wider programmes to kaiako, typically at a discounted rate.

“If upskilling needs to happen, [managers] take the direction from the kaiako themselves. [This is usually a] conversation with the kaiako about what they need to be able to do/do better.” – Current Kaiako

Ongoing development needs were largely self-identified, or with manager support, but were also informed by programme/learner feedback.

Overall, formal professional development could be seen as fitting into three broad categories: development applied for by the kaiako or completed independently; development through recommended or mandatory milestones such as educational qualifications; and organisational and departmental development activities such as communities of practice or team days.

“We have fairly regular campus-wide professional development sessions, but these often have everything from [organisational] values to financial performance. That’s not really what we want [from these]. Using these [more] for staff development would be a better use of time.” – Current Kaiako

Formal development activities were often accessed through application processes by the kaiako, though other methods for access existed.

Many managers and kaiako took a flexible view to what could comprise professional development. A range of methods and activities could be considered – both formal and informal. This flexible approach was often underpinned by value-add principles – that professional development should improve practices or outcomes in some way for the provider and their learners.

“I would always argue that anything [that’s] going to add value to your practice is professional development. It could be a half hour webinar, it could be a trade breakfast, it could be going to an industry meeting. If there’s something out of that which you can put into practice to improve your practice, to improve your experience and the outcomes of learners, then its professional development and its meaningful.” – Leader and Former Kaiako

Most thought that professional development for kaiako could be a range of activities and is good when it adds value for the provider or learner.

“Ultimately... I was looking to see how the activity was going to add value, and in particular with a focus on learners.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Despite this flexibility in mindset, professional development across the sectors was generally focused on formal activities. Reportedly, formal activities had status to educational stakeholders and were preferred for being more measurable. This limited the value that informal or non-formal development could provide to kaiako or to development pathways.

“Often its’s the formal [professional development] that gets the most recognition. It’s tangible, it’s measurable, and to education It’s got a status.” – Leader and Former Kaiako

Professional development was generally focused on formal activities, rather than informal or non-formal methods.

To some, formal development activities for kaiako are seen as higher status than other methods.

There is also notably a lack of formal workplace learning for vocational educators. There is a likely enormous potential to develop these initiatives for VET kaiako. Kaiako favour informal workplace learning they currently receive; many understand this model from their past experiences of on-job

learning and gaining skills from more experienced practitioners. They feel that this model could provide greater relevance to the profession than off-job models.

"[Ideal kaiako development would be] similar to [on-job learning and] experience. Working alongside the ['master'], sit down, and see how it goes... Sit with me and help me develop my first six weeks of lesson plans, show me the procedures/protocols that I should work off, show me what to do." – Current Kaiako

"[You] need to get them into a classroom so that [another kaiako] can train them up properly. Older kaiako need to train new ones – that's proper training." – Current Kaiako

There is a lack of formal workplace learning for vocational educators.

Professional Development Criteria and Pathways

Ongoing professional development was based more around milestones than comprehensive development pathways. Adult education qualifications were the key milestones to achieve. Development pathways or frameworks existed in a small minority of providers, but these were not typical. Development pathways weren't clear to kaiako without these being in place. There was general understanding of what was expected in terms of educational development and industry currency, but the actual development options and expectations for them over time were sometimes unknown.

"As a tutor, I don't know the avenues to upskill." – Current Kaiako

Some providers offered, or were in the process of developing, capability frameworks for their kaiako. These provided structure to organise kaiako development pathways and helped kaiako to understand these and their development needs. They were, however, not the norm.

"We have a tutor capability framework... along this pathway we support them to be experts in their area too." – Manager and Current Kaiako

Professional development was based on milestones rather than full pathways, mostly the adult education qualifications.

Some providers offered capability frameworks for their kaiako, but this was not the norm.

The need for bespoke pathways based on kaiako needs was often reported. Current pathways based on milestones are missing the assessment and consideration of individuals' needs. This is key to creating meaningful development, particularly for those who already bring substantial experience and capability into the profession.

"I'm all about customisation of pathways for development, but that requires manpower." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"Everyone starts from a different place; therefore, we need to adapt our approach [to onboarding and development]." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Current development pathways are missing aspects of customisation based on kaiako needs – most are implemented in a standard way.

Many wanted more customised development pathways for kaiako that were based on their needs, and when they needed development.

Sectoral Collaboration for Kaiako Professional Development

There was limited collaboration between providers and other stakeholders for kaiako development. Some substantial efforts existed, such as the annual carpentry kaiako meeting, and meetings between Deans, but few collaborative efforts were identified overall. Some providers wanted to have more sectoral collaboration for VET kaiako development. Their view was that this might allow for the sharing and development of practices between kaiako as well as resources and structures for them.

There was limited collaboration between providers and other stakeholders for kaiako development.

“The more cross-campus professional development that can happen, the better.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“We like to mix with [other providers] – [the] same type of tutor, same type of student, and same type of region – connecting with them on what works and what doesn’t work works really [well]... and that’s across all the trades.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“Attending workshops with other providers can be really helpful.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

One manager reported that Te Pūkenga did a good job of connecting kaiako across providers in their network: *“Yes [tutors across providers are connected], absolutely. That was one thing that Te Pūkenga did well.”* However, another was equally adamant that the protracted process to establish Te Pūkenga’s operating model had in fact stymied collaboration. It is unclear whether other managers or kaiako felt more or less connected because of Te Pūkenga initiatives or structures.

Work within Te Pūkenga has also provided some movement towards a common understanding of VET kaiako development due to their size and influence on the sector. Whiria Te Ako – their learning and teaching framework – was recently released to the public (Te Pūkenga, 2022) and has a component that describes their strategy for kaiako capability and development. Some key points to note from this are that:

- The idea of a “detailed capability framework” for Te Pūkenga kaiako was being confirmed.
- Kaiako were to be supported to identify their future capability requirements, identify how to engage with their industries, and identify opportunities to work towards relevant qualifications or skills standards.
- Kaiako were to be developed through using a range of informal and formal development tools (examples are given).
- Kaiako were to be encouraged to share examples of best practice across teams and the wider organisation.
- Before being given delivery responsibilities, kaiako were to have the opportunity to develop the required skills through inductions, professional development, and ongoing support.
- Kaiako were to be supported to collect naturally occurring evidence against Whiria Te Ako capabilities, for the purposes of recognising the learning and developing strategic capabilities.

These efforts reflect significant progress toward sectoral consensus regarding VET kaiako development. With the further round of system reform currently underway, the future of Whiria te Ako as part of a re-

devolved ITP sector is unclear; however, the framework and underpinning thinking will hopefully be adopted and continued in some form between providers in the new environment, to maintain this progress and ensure that the effort to date is not wasted.

A small number of stakeholders suggested that the Food and Fibre sector was providing less input and interest into VET kaiako development than what should be occurring. Due to the nature of the sector being relatively fragmented compared with others, it was reportedly more difficult for industry groups to advocate for their wants for kaiako. This resulted in industry not contributing to, or not being able to contribute to, kaiako development.

“I would love a situation where industry takes a stronger input and interest in kaiako professional development (PD). In other sectors, PD can be driven by industry bodies in some ways. With primary industries, however, our sectors are broken into many smaller parts that don’t, or can’t, advocate for what they want kaiako to deliver. We’re seeing some work [in this regard], but there could be more.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

How each Capability Area is being Developed

Developing and Maintaining Industry Capabilities

Most new kaiako enter the profession with the requisite industry capabilities. These are frequently key requirements for recruitment.

There were, however, cases where kaiako without relevant industry backgrounds transitioned into VET kaiako roles. There were only a small number of these, and these were often lower-level vocational programmes that had wider or more generic curriculum focuses. Alternatively, these cases were for co-facilitation kaiako roles that didn’t require deep subject expertise, but instead required ancillary capabilities such as pastoral care or administration.

Most kaiako roles required substantial industry experience, though kaiako transferred from different backgrounds in limited cases.

Some kaiako, however, also needed supplementary industry-capability development for the role too. Even highly experienced, qualified, and licensed industry practitioners may not have had the opportunities to build capabilities in niche curriculum areas. In some areas, such as specialist trades contexts, kaiako also need to hold multiple specialisms that are often unrealistic for industry practitioners to hold. For example, within plumbing, gas fitting, and drain laying programme contexts. Programmes that require a large breadth and depth of industry capability will often require transitioning kaiako to upskill themselves for delivery.

Supplementary industry-capability development can be required when entering the profession to meet broad curriculum requirements.

Some kaiako were interested in industry or occupational professional development pathways after becoming confident in their role. In these cases, kaiako could further specialise within their current occupational area or develop into related areas. For example, horticultural experts developing into specialised areas such as viticulture, or construction kaiako developing into

Some kaiako wanted to pursue further industry-related development and specialism to support their roles.

architecture, planning, or project management. These wider development areas were often related to their practice, but in rare occasions they were of personal interest and minimal relevance to their kaiako role.

Industry capabilities need to be maintained for currency, too. A large range of methods and mechanisms are being used to maintain currency of industry capabilities. Some of these included:

- Events and conferences
- Publications and newsletters
- Professional licensing and certification activities
- Workplace or supplier visits
- Temporary assignment to a workplace
- Part-time employment within the industry

“There was an upskilling or continuous professional development requirement [in the occupational license]. We talked at length over a number of years about the best ways to do that: some would do professional development projects, so they might go and work for a week or two with a builder on a building site; others might do it in a less formal way through trade breakfasts and reading publications.” – Leader and Former Kaiako

A range of tools and methods were used to maintain industry currency – those involving direct industry interaction were highly valued.

Sometimes, professional licenses or certifications had continuous professional development requirements. Other times, there were implicit requirements to be current with industry knowledge. Kaiako whose students are producing saleable or live products tended to require professional licenses to sign-off or supervise the work, providing personal and organisational drivers for industry currency.

“[For certifiable work, they have to sign their name against work going out] so there’s an individual and an organisational requirement that they’re up to speed on what they’re doing.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Some industry licenses or certifications had continuous development or currency requirements which drove currency efforts.

It was regularly reported that the more a programme was integrated with industry, the better kaiako industry capabilities could be maintained. For example, kaiako that were required to visit learners on work sites learnt new practices and became aware of developments through these visits. Kaiako that delivered to apprentices or employees rather than students learnt significant amounts from them as they reflected their employers’ practices. It was clear that industry integration, in all forms, supported kaiako capability and that informal development was important for industry currency.

“A lot of [industry] professional development happens organically. Where [learners] are out there attending field trips or doing work experience, and the kaiako is absorbing that knowledge just as much as the [learner] doing the work experience.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Industry integration with programmes supported professional development and the currency of industry capability.

Developing (and Maintaining) Educational Capabilities

Kaiako usually entered the profession with no previous educational experience. Developing these capabilities was a common need. Some kaiako spoke about this development need being the most significant marker of the professional transition.

Most felt that educational capability needed to be actively developed or taught.

“Those coming off the tools aren’t often in a place to [provide learner experiences that the organisation wants to offer].” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“I think that teaching is something that needs to be learnt.” – VET Leader

Some did, however, enter the profession with transferrable experience. Many prospective kaiako were informally developing capabilities relevant to the VET kaiako profession through their industry work. They might have been running apprentices, verifying learner evidence, or delivering learning and support within their teams. Others might have been coaching, mentoring, or delivering learning outside the workplace in community contexts or, rarely, within the education sector. Some new VET kaiako had worked in secondary education, learning support roles, or otherwise. These were only a small minority of cases, though.

Most enter the role with little direct experience with education, though many have transferable capability through past roles or experiences.

The development methods that were commonly used to build educational capabilities included:

- Mentoring or coaching
- Job shadowing
- Observation and peer or manager feedback
- Communities of practice
- Education-related qualifications and formal learning
- Organisational or departmental meetings and workshops

Mentoring, communities of practice, and qualifications were the primary development tools for educational capability.

Of these, mentoring, communities of practice, and education-related qualifications were considered most critical.

Mentoring and communities of practice were described in varying degrees of formality. Sometimes, for example, mentoring relationships were highly formal and had structured arrangements and goals, whereas other times kaiako were assigned a ‘buddy’ tasked with checking-in and addressing concerns. Less formal arrangements were not necessarily described as less effective, but they more commonly experienced implementation issues or shortcomings.

Educational qualifications from the Adult Education and Training suite were offered or recommended to kaiako in almost all cases. Many considered the level four or five qualifications as sufficient for most kaiako, with the level six moving the kaiako toward more advanced practice.

The Adult Education and Training qualifications suite was commonly offered or recommended to develop kaiako.

Some considered the level four to be more of a foundational understanding of delivery practice, the level five being more advanced, and the level six being more supervisory and related to ancillary functions to delivery.

Some kaiako also reported the importance of developing educational capabilities by doing the job. They reported that learning before delivering to students could only take them so far – this included

observing others' practice. The context of delivering in a real environment was key to their development as kaiako but needed to be introduced gradually and as they gained confidence.

"I had about 4 weeks before teaching where I could shadow someone and help out here and there, which was good, but it's not quite the same as the real thing." – Current Kaiako

Kaiako tended to report more challenges developing their educational capabilities earlier in the professional transition, within their onboarding phase. This was to be expected as many kaiako were entering with little educational capability but required it early in the role.

There is a greater need and pressure to develop educational capability early in the role. Many kaiako saw less of a need to develop their educational capabilities as they spent longer in the role. Some reported this to be because they reached a degree of confidence in their delivery. They might still complete professional development in that area but prefer to develop in other areas such as industry currency.

"In my faculties, many don't seek [education-related] professional development. They would do industry-related professional development though." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Overall, kaiako and their managers wanted development gaps to be addressed when they emerged and were needed within their role. They want educational development mechanisms and topics to be effectively timed. This was not always possible, or done this way, due to the complex nature of being in the role and needing to develop concurrently.

There were, however, commonly reported timings for building initial educational confidence and capability. Generally, well-supported kaiako were able to gain minimum levels of confidence to deliver within one to two months of reflective and supported delivery. The length of time until feelings of proficiency as a kaiako varied more. Some kaiako began feeling proficient as a kaiako within the first six months, whereas others took longer. There were also some who conceptualised the development into a highly capable kaiako as a two-to-four-year process. Some also compared this to an apprenticeship in duration.

Many kaiako felt pressure to develop educational capability quickly in their role, due to the steep learning curve and quick transition.

Some felt the development pathway to become a highly capable kaiako took between two to four years.

Developing Engagement Capabilities and Forming Connections

When in the role, kaiako need to be able to form new connections and engage with a range of different stakeholders. Few reported how these engagement capabilities were developed, but many reported that having these differentiated high-performing kaiako. Many believed that their ability to engage with stakeholders was something to be continually utilised and developed.

Many felt the ability to form relationships and connections with stakeholders differentiates high performing kaiako from others.

"[Maintaining] connections within [my industry] sector [is] so important. Even just networking with people so we can get feedback on ideas." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Many kaiako bring existing stakeholder connections with them into the role. Whilst not a requirement in many cases, several reported these existing connections to be valuable. In a small number of cases, such as the development of new programmes or entering new regions, these industry connections were critical. These contexts reportedly required a locally connected kaiako to be successful, particularly for the F&F sector.

Many kaiako brought stakeholder relationships with them into the role that were important to their work.

"[Providing and having networks is] not always explicit [as a requirement] and it's not necessarily an expectation that they'll be able to add that value, it's just something people do." – Manager and Former Kaiako

The ability to engage and form connections with learners was partly developed through professional development activities from providers. They will be developed naturally through practice, but many kaiako reported either having or planning professional development for working with different learner groups. These including learners of different ethnicities, cultures, or those with learning differences or neurodivergence.

Engaging and connecting with educational stakeholders was commonly done through communities of practice and related arrangements, as well as through educational qualifications. Kaiako support teams helped to facilitate these arrangements in some contexts. In other contexts, kaiako teams within discipline areas occasionally formed formal or informal communities of practice which met these development needs. Carpentry kaiako, as an example, optionally participate in an annual meeting to build connections and share industry developments and practices too.

Formal and informal communities of practice and educational qualifications support connections between educational stakeholders.

"Getting people together and reflecting on what they're doing and why has been really valuable for some people's learning." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"[The staffroom's] like being in a trades 'smoko' room. We're bouncing ideas off other staff... I guess it's our version of a community of practice." – Manager and Current Kaiako

Industry engagement and connections were mandated in some programmes. In other contexts, kaiako engaged with their industries naturally through the course of programme delivery or through targeted efforts for standards development or other industry concerns. The ability to engage with industry members or bodies was reinforced by their perceived credibility. This being a function of, principally, their vocational competence and their existing relationships within their industry. Typically, their ability to engage with industry stakeholders was developed through their industry experience before the role.

Industry connections were mandated in some programmes and contexts.

Developing Professional Capabilities (and Personal Characteristics?)

Professional capabilities other than those for their industry expertise or educational performance were not usually developed within the organisation. Many kaiako reported that their provider did not support them to develop these essential capabilities. Digital skills were commonly reported in this context, but others relating to new technologies, processes, and workplace environments were too. Kaiako must frequently find their own avenues to develop these essential capabilities, often on top of other development needs. In one example, a kaiako was undertaking development outside of working hours for digital skills that were essential to their role as they had no organisational support to develop these. In some cases, kaiako were provided basic informal support for these types of capabilities, often through peer learning and development or suggested self-directed development. This was limited by the availability of their peers and resources.

Kaiako were often provided little formal support to develop professional and workplace capabilities.

“People around here have their own jobs, so they don't have time to train me [in foundational workplace skills].” – Current Kaiako

Personal characteristics were seen by many managers as innate to the individual and unable to be developed. Some managers reported that, from their long experiences within the sector, they could not effectively develop the personal characteristics within kaiako that supported them to perform highly. These including passion, empathy, motivation for learning, among others. Several developmental and psychological theories suggest that personal characteristics and traits are malleable to a degree and can change over time (Cervone & Pervin, 2022) – in other words, they can be developed. It is possible, however, that the effort required to develop these in prospective kaiako is too much for an organisation to realistically provide. Alternatively, it may be that powerful motivations and strong personal factors are indeed necessary prerequisites to the role.

Some thought that personal characteristics couldn't be developed in people, or through development efforts for kaiako.

“These characteristics (such as passion, enthusiasm, and energy) can't be developed in people. I haven't seen this occur. Values and beliefs are inbuilt, they come with that. You can't buy that; you can't train that.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Factors Contributing to Good Professional Development

A relatively recent survey within Aotearoa New Zealand identified some key features of effective professional development for VET educators (Duignan, et al., 2016). Some key features being relevance to their context; including peer learning, engagement, and collaboration; and being well-designed, structured, and accessible. These were also reflected in the findings of this work. Table 3 provides an overview of these findings, which are outlined in this section.

Table 3: Key Factors Contributing to Good Professional Development, as reported by Stakeholders.

Key Factors Contributing to Good Kaiako Professional Development

- Structured and thoughtful professional development processes.

- Learning from and through others – kaiako, managers, or otherwise – in particular, on the job.

- Peer development mechanisms that minimised power differences, encouraged honest feedback, and contributed to identity and belonging.

- Formal development activities, such as qualifications, where kaiako can learn educational theories to refine their practice, but equally learn practical techniques to apply.

- Sharing new knowledge or practices learnt through development activities through the organisation to maximise training impact.

- Integrating aspects of a programme with industry to support the currency of kaiako industry capability, among other things.

As with onboarding processes, structure for professional development processes was reportedly key. While onboarding processes typically required extra structure to facilitate the substantial occupational and organisational transition, professional development needed structure to ensure reflective practice and continual improvement. Sometimes structures for this were less formal, but having any system to identify and meet development goals was reportedly necessary. This was to avoid missing key development needs, ensuring compliance requirements for kaiako capability are being met, and ensuring continuous improvement. Sometimes good structure included capability frameworks and transparent pathways; sometimes it included established and regular support and development mechanisms such as manager conversations; and sometimes it included resources and tools for their work.

There appeared to be no single set of structures or arrangements within a provider that would be universally the 'best' for kaiako development. The contextual factors for each provider, programme, and kaiako likely require different arrangements to see success.

Structure was important to the success of kaiako development efforts, though there was no single most effective way to structure arrangements.

"I wouldn't say our [system for development] was the best way, but we achieve results: not throwing a tutor in the deep end, supporting [the] health and

wellbeing of the tutor, [and] ensuring the tutor understands the content they're delivering." – Manager and Current Kaiako

The strongest factor for good professional development was learning from and through others – kaiako, managers, or otherwise. Kaiako commonly reported that the most effective way to learn the profession was by observing others and reflecting on their practice. This includes workplace learning and development that is familiar to many through their experiences with workplace-based education in industry. Kaiako want to learn the profession from others and see good results when doing so.

Kaiako want to develop in their profession by learning from and through others, as well as within workplace contexts.

Peer development mechanisms were of particular benefit as they minimised power differences that could emerge from manager to kaiako feedback or development mechanisms – *"We saw a lot of honesty when [we changed to peer feedback as] this power balance shifted... there's some real value that came from those conversations (Manager and Former Kaiako)."* Mentoring arrangements provided this for kaiako and those who had access to quality mentoring arrangements rated them as highly impactful for their development. All manner of peer development mechanisms including mentoring, coaching, observation, communities or practice, and structured peer feedback and reflection were reportedly useful for this though.

Peer development mechanisms were beneficial and could reduce power differences that came from feedback through managers or others.

"The best preparation has been when you can see someone doing it." – Manager and Current Kaiako

"Unless you've got trained people training people, unless the people you've got in those positions are being supported and grown as well, [the outcomes are] going to be down to the lowest common denominator." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Communities of practice also had wider benefits for developing kaiako. They could contribute to a sense of identity and belonging, as well as offering support and development to participating kaiako. Sometimes these were in lieu of any organisational structures for these purposes, particularly in the case of informal communities of practice. Forming communities of practice was challenging in some cases though due to operational and timing limitations.

Communities of practice could contribute to professional identity and belonging.

Communities of practice could be difficult to form and maintain in some contexts, particularly when unstructured or unfocused.

"Communities of practice can be hard to get together." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Managers typically valued interdisciplinary communities for their kaiako development, but their effectiveness reportedly varied. In some instances, these groups proved less useful as kaiako tended to favour discussions specific to their disciplines. However, interdisciplinary communities achieved success when organised around adult education programmes or other frameworks that guided conversations. Meanwhile, informal communities of practice often emerged naturally among closely-knit kaiako teams within the same or similar disciplines were highly valued by kaiako. This suggests that both interdisciplinary and discipline-specific communities can be beneficial, depending on their structure and the needs of the kaiako involved.

“I think that kaiako gained more from [our qualification focused communities of practice] than [general ones].” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Formal education-related learning activities were also reportedly important to some kaiako. Many kaiako rated their experiences with the Adult Education and Training qualifications as beneficial to their practice. This included learning educational theories and perspectives as well as practical aspects of delivery, assessment, among other things. Some also found that these qualifications, and the reflection and research that they involved, lifted the practice of their teams when shared or completed together.

“I actually think [the adult education qualifications suite are] really good qualifications. We’ve used a range of providers, out of pragmatism, but there’s some really good delivery happening out there.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“[The] adult education qualifications... have helped – they kind of push you towards a more ‘exemplar’ way of doing things.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Having team members share knowledge and practices that they learnt through formal professional development helps to maximise the investment in training and the reach of good practices. This was particularly important to industry currency activities but was reported as important for all activities. In the C&I sector, for example, licensing requirements for specialist trades needed to be regularly monitored to ensure teams could retain their licenses and operate their programmes. Any changes would need to be shared amongst the kaiako team, and development might be required. Best practice for formal development activities was reportedly to create a full plan around the activity including what the kaiako would bring back to their practice and how they would share this around the team.

Team members sharing their learning from development activities multiplied development benefits across teams and departments.

“[The learning] doesn’t stop when the course is finished. [It needs to be shared and embedded across the team].” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“We try to empower the teams of kaiako to [own their development]... they need to make the learning and development stretch across [the] wider teams.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“Sharing knowledge and practices is really important to developing kaiako and teams of kaiako.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Programmes that were well integrated with industry reportedly provided better industry capability development and currency for kaiako than those that were not. Even programmes that were only delivered to apprentices or employees had benefits over those delivered to students. By delivering to industry practitioners and apprentices, visiting worksites, or otherwise connecting with industry partners, kaiako were better able to develop their vocational skills and currency.

“Good tutors feed off their students. If they’re teaching apprentices, it’s easier to keep in touch. I [loved] delivering to night classes as [learners] could bring things up I didn’t know and I could learn from them... Connections to industry can be maintained through the learner.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Barriers to Good Professional Development

Commercial Barriers

Table 4 summarises the commercial barriers to effective professional development that were identified in this work. These are then described further in this section.

Table 4: Commercial Barriers to Good Professional Development.

Commercial Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs of development activities, considering funding rates for VET were low and with little margin for activities beyond programme delivery.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity costs of development, as many providers needed to be revenue focused and maximise kaiako utilisation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressures for revenue disincentivised kaiako development and shifted focused toward course completions rather than kaiako quality.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition between education providers was a barrier to development and cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New or untested programmes were potentially unsustainable, therefore kaiako development was not prioritised in these circumstances.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part time tutors had less investment in their development or had less ability to access development activities.

The most cited barrier to professional development was cost. Within VET providers overall “*the funding is not high, and the costs are quite high* (VET Leader).” This means that professional development was regularly resourced through ‘whatever was leftover’ after other costs were met. Several stakeholders felt strongly that this needed to be addressed for best practice development to occur. One manager mentioned that the recent establishment of the unified funding system for VET (TEC, 2023) resulted in lower funding for some providers in the sector too, depending on their context. Different providers have different levels of resource for kaiako capability building – “*If you look across the [providers], some have almost no resourcing in the capability area (Manager and Former Kaiako).*”

Many providers have few resources and little funding available for professional development of staff and kaiako.

“[There’s a] monetary barrier to our team’s vision [for kaiako development]. Naturally, the sector doesn’t have a lot of money.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“[The current professional development systems don’t work] very well, and the ‘bums on seats’ model of funding makes it challenging. Where in that ‘dollars per [student]’ is there any allowance for professional development? You can eat your budget up pretty well just delivering programmes without professional development. It is challenging.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Most providers had dedicated annual budgets for kaiako professional development. Some union-participating staff had this built into their contracts too. Many did not feel that their annual budgets were sufficient, though.

Many providers have dedicated annual budgets for kaiako professional development, some feel these are insufficient.

“HR has a certain amount of money for professional development. Tutors should get more than what they’re getting – they’re customer facing. Being learner-centric means investing in kaiako.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Others felt as though meaningful development was still possible with current funding levels. All, however, agreed that additional resource for kaiako development would be impactful.

Some felt as though additional funding was essential; others felt there were opportunities to do better with current funding levels.

“You could be really glib and just say that [the reason for inadequate development experiences] is money... [but] there are opportunities to do things better with the funding that we’ve got.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Several managers also reported the opportunity costs of professional development. In a commercial environment the pressures to maintain revenue through delivery hours were strong. The degree to which these pressures affect access to professional development are not known, but providers will experience this differently. Smaller PTEs or those not restricted to term cycles, such as company-focused providers, were likely to be more susceptible to these pressures. They reported these more than larger providers. In some cases, kaiako from PTEs were less able to prioritise their professional development as they were required to prioritise revenue generating activities – *“Our organisation isn’t a Polytech with limited hours as per collective contracts [for example]. Our tutors are in a full-time job and they need to be able to commit to it (Manager and Former Kaiako).”*

“We support people to do these [adult education] courses, but you also can’t pay someone a salary when they’re spending all their time doing courses.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

This pressure for revenue also pushed the focus for some kaiako toward learner completions, rather than professional development and quality practice. These pressures affected kaiako in their early transition, but also over the longer term.

Pressures on providers for revenue disincentivised development activities and shifted focus from kaiako practice to outcomes.

“Credit achievement, attendance rates, educational KPIs, et cetera: [these] add pressure on a trainer to deliver.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“There’s pressure on [the trainer] from above – finance teams for example. It’s not good to have new trainers [having pressure for] ‘numbers on the board’... Comparison between trainers’ cohorts can [also] have them questioning themselves.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Some managers reported competition between education providers was a barrier to development and cooperation. Due to the way the VET system is structured and funded, providers compete for kaiako and learners within their areas. This competition puts barriers in the way of sectoral collaboration. Some felt as though efforts that brought kaiako and others together reduced this sense of competition – *“doing [adult education qualifications with kaiako from other providers] brings collegiality. So, less of [the attitude] ‘you’re going to steal my students (Manager and Former Kaiako).”*

Providers reported competition in the sector getting in the way of collaboration for kaiako development.

"[Being] brutally honest, the competition for money will always be there... [we're] competing for good tutors across the sector, but also competing for clients/customers for programmes." – Manager and Current Kaiako

"It's competitive in the sector, which is a barrier to [forming communities of practice or collaborating]." – Manager and Current Kaiako

"We've worked well with [another provider], but we don't have similar collaboration with other providers. [It's] more of a competitive environment than a collaborative one." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Some also reported limited ability to invest in the development of kaiako for new programmes. New programmes were potentially unsustainable. Kaiako brought in to teach these might not be retained if the programme were to end, making development investments 'risky'.

New or untested programmes received less investment in kaiako development.

"Core courses you can invest in, including the delivery people. New programmes are pilots, and you don't know what the commercial realities will be." – Manager and Current Kaiako

Part-time tutors also had greater difficulties accessing professional development. Development for kaiako that taught permanent part-time programmes were viewed as having a lower "return on investment". They were, therefore, given less priority than full time staff in some cases. In other cases, they were not offered any formal professional development at all. Formal professional development such as adult education certificates would also require their unpaid personal time; few were likely to complete these during unpaid time – "I was doing 50–60-hour weeks [for my part-time teaching contract as well as industry work], I couldn't fit in [an extra] 12 hours a week to study... I wouldn't have been paid for it anyway (Current Kaiako)." Several managers emphasised the critical importance of developing part time kaiako as well as their full-time staff, though. They may have a smaller portion of total delivery hours within the provider, but their classes may be the only touchpoint that a learner has with the organisation – they are their only reference for provider quality. Part-time tutors also had less ability to access peers to support their development. They often come in to teach a class, then they leave.

Part time tutors had less investment in their development or had less ability to access development activities.

"We've struggled at our organisation to give part-time tutors more support, but the resourcing is not really there." – Manager and Former Kaiako

"Part-time teachers may only come in to do their lesson then go home for marking. Therefore, they don't benefit from peer learning and reflection... [and] may have less access to professional development..." – VET Leader

Operational Barriers

Table 5 summarises the operational barriers to effective professional development that were identified in this work. These are then described further in this section.

Table 5: Operational Barriers to Good Professional Development.

Operational Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited time available for development activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited availability of managers, mentors, or support staff due to high workloads, attrition, and geographic distance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of discipline-specific mentoring and support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low development capability of staff such as mentors or managers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development activity approval processes could be complex and multi-layered.

Time was a critical barrier to professional development activities in most cases. Kaiako have many responsibilities in their role that often have large time requirements – compliance and administration activities in particular. One kaiako suggested that *“any class that you tutor could take all of your time. All of it. You could have two students for one class once a week and spend the whole week on that, preparing the material and things (Manager and Current Kaiako).”* These time requirements often leave little time available for development, particularly if time is not proactively set aside for this. This affects not only their development, but the currency of their industry knowledge and networks – *“Many kaiako maintain networks in their role, but it’s a busy role so [this] can fall off (Manager and Former Kaiako).”* Many kaiako miss out on development opportunities because they cannot spare the time required to participate.

“Absolutely [I’ve got sufficient access to professional development]; it’s just about getting the time for this. We get allocated two weeks per year for that sort of thing... [but] I’m working [a] terrible [amount of] hours at the moment and just don’t have the time.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“We’re encouraged to do PD, but a lot of people don’t do it because they’re just too busy to take time away to do it.” – Current Kaiako

“The challenge is that our [central campus kaiako] can’t take multiple days off at the same time to do [their adult education programme of choice]. So, now they’re doing [another course with lower time requirements], which may not be as good.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Some kaiako and providers dedicated time for professional development to ensure this occurred. This was often through non-contact hours being designed into the role or development pathway. Where this didn’t occur, kaiako were often limited by a lack of kaiako to cover their ongoing delivery requirements. Providers typically have little resource available to backfill classes to give kaiako these opportunities. In many cases this role fell to

Some providers dedicated time for professional development, particularly early in the role, through non-contact hours and other means.

Many providers have little capacity to backfill classes, leaving kaiako unable to be released for development activities.

managers as there were typically few or no kaiako available to do this.

“[As a manager] I’m the backfill... because we have no redundancy of tutors here at all. Hopefully there can be another [kaiako] on [their] day off to backfill [them], otherwise it’s me.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

These high workloads limited access to discrete formal experiences, but they also affected the ability of kaiako to reflect and develop their practice on the job. Many kaiako, especially in earlier phases of their development, were overwhelmed by their job requirements to the point where they weren’t focused on how their practice was developing. They were focused on getting through the days and meeting basic requirements.

Kaiako had little time to access formal development activities or to focus on their development in their role.

“[You don’t have time to reflect]. Especially in a class where you need to set the rules quickly, you often don’t have time to learn as a teacher.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“We’re constantly grappling with high compliance loads on providers, and that also affects the teachers. There’s a high level of administration, often, which eats into time that could be spent becoming a better teacher or working with learners.” – VET Leader

High workloads also limited the availability of managers, mentors, and other supporting staff for kaiako development – *“If the team is under pressure, they can’t really give the time [to other kaiako] (Manager and Current Kaiako).”* These roles were seen as crucial for kaiako development and some felt that key roles should be rescoped to enable more time for kaiako development, particularly from their direct manager.

Managers, mentors, and key kaiako supports can have high workloads, leaving little time available to support their kaiako.

“To make [the manager’s] role very effective, [there’s a] need to disperse their workloads – have line managers more focused on [providing mentorship and development].” – Manager and Former Kaiako

The availability of these support staff was also influenced by other factors including staff attrition and geographic distance. In some cases, this affected the level of organisational knowledge that could be transferred – *“[There are] only [a few] people who’ve been here for over a couple of years – this means [there’s] very little organisational knowledge [available to pass on] (Manager and Former Kaiako).”* In others, managers didn’t have the time or resources to regularly visit remote kaiako – *“It’s been a challenge to run things from [my location] – many of our kaiako appreciate face to face conversations much more (Manager and Former Kaiako).”*

“In [some] programmes, however, they have a lot of [staff turnover] so don’t necessarily have anyone to fill that mentor role.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“It’s hard to get someone [to different sites] to upskill [new kaiako]... if there’s a tutor issue it’s up to [senior kaiako] to see this and help [newer kaiako] through this... there needs to be a level of team accountability.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

In some cases, there was also no kaiako of the same discipline within the organisation to fill this role. Many kaiako wanted support available from a kaiako or manager with experience in their vocational background. These staff could provide guidance to discipline-specific issues.

"[There's] not a lot of [F&F]-related support. There's some limited support in general. Most kaiako are in other areas of delivery." – Current Kaiako

Some kaiako didn't have accessible mentors or supports from their occupational discipline to provide guidance for discipline-specific issues.

Kaiako didn't have capable mentors, managers, and support staff in many cases. In addition to availability, many who were available couldn't effectively support and develop new kaiako. This was reported as a capability and training issue. Internationally, it has been found that developing the capability of VET leaders those that support or develop kaiako is critically important (OECD, 2021).

"There's a lack of consistency [and quality] from academic leads and those who implement [development for kaiako]. This is a training issue." – Manager and Former Kaiako

Some in manager, mentor, or support roles didn't have the capability to provide effective mentoring to kaiako.

Many kaiako and managers of kaiako reported challenges gaining approval for development activities. Some approval processes for these activities could comprise multiple stages of approvals – *"you can have multiple approvers in a process who pass requests between themselves (Manager)."* Some also reported that their approval or rejection criteria didn't follow value-add principles. Reportedly clear business cases could be rejected with little or no justification in some cases – *"[approvers] should recognise the taura impacts of kaiako training and use that to justify their thinking (Current Kaiako)."* Managers were reportedly key to advocating for these requests with different stages in the approval process. If kaiako didn't have a manager that understood the value development could bring, their requests often went no further.

"When we have a valid reason [for a development request] it sometimes still gets squashed (not approved). You can't really do much about it." – Current Kaiako

"I had to fight like hell to get my colleagues to a conference. [It took substantial effort and] was a real 'coup'." – Current Kaiako

Some professional development approval processes are complex and involved multiple approvers.

Managers were key to championing development requests for kaiako and advocating for these requests within the organisation.

Kaiako who entered the profession in the past few years had development limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions implemented due to the pandemic limited the face-to-face availability of tutors and provision of development activities for new kaiako, amongst other things. It created additional requirements of kaiako too; many had to upskill quickly in digital tools and delivery methods.

"Usually there would've been support [available for my transition] but coming out of COVID [other kaiako were often working from home]." – Current Kaiako

"You can't keep blaming COVID for development lacking. If you want people to have particular skills, you need to provide training for them." – Manager and Current Kaiako

Structural Barriers

Table 6 summarises the structural barriers to effective professional development that were identified in this work. These are then described further in this section.

Table 6: Structural Barriers to Good Professional Development.

Structural Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers could lack structure or processes for professional development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of criteria for kaiako quality at a professional or occupational level, and limited consensus for development pathways.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational processes relating to development were often poorly integrated into HR processes and disconnected.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal stakeholders could be resistant to change or provide limited collaboration for kaiako development structures and processes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VET sector reforms have created uncertainty within some providers, have paused some efforts for kaiako development, and capability and capacity has been lost in many providers.

Several providers lacked structure for kaiako professional development and performed this in an ad hoc manner. Some took strategic approaches to kaiako development, though many do not view development in this way. The key risks to this being that “*if [development is] unstructured, it can become... not meaningful (Manager and Current Kaiako)*” and “*really variable (Manager and Current Kaiako)*”.

“Sometimes [development] structures are a bit ad hoc, it can be hard to get [kaiako] up to speed.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

The variance in development structures was underpinned by a lack of aims for kaiako development at a professional or occupational level. There are few widely agreed criteria for capability and quality within the F&F and C&I sectors, as well as the VET sector as a whole. Current adult

education qualifications and standards provide a set of criteria, but these are not sufficient to cover the entire profession. This lack of consensus has limited the ability for holistic or widely agreed development pathways for kaiako to emerge – “*There is a lack of a clear nationwide capability framework that we could hang all the learning opportunities and pathways off. Everyone's doing their own thing (Manager and Former Kaiako)*.” Some functional or capability-based descriptions of what VET kaiako do in these sectors might provide some useful direction for development tools and encourage high performance. Many kaiako wanted this too – “*Knowing what good looks like would've been good (Current Kaiako)*.”

“[There are no frameworks for being a tutor]. It's all ‘once you've got your 4098 you're an assessor’, but [this doesn't guide further development and quality].” – Current Kaiako

“[Some criteria for kaiako capability] may not be obvious to some people. Many people who are in the teaching area will get those intrinsically as part of their very

There is a lack of criteria for kaiako development at a professional or occupational level, and limited consensus for development pathways.

nature, but for other people you probably have to be more specific and state what good... is.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Some providers suggested, were using, or were in the process of designing kaiako capability frameworks for this purpose. Only a small minority of providers had these operationalised in any way. Organisational barriers and sectoral changes limited the implementation or further development of some of these frameworks.

Some providers used capability frameworks, though this was not the norm.

“Perhaps a model with capabilities mapped out would be useful, [with] when we’d expect new starters to have certain capabilities... There’s probably some comfort in knowing that we don’t expect them to be an expert on their first day.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“[Development] pathways should be more articulated and possibly focused around [kaiako] needs.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Some thought that any frameworks for VET kaiako would need to consider the complexity and scope of the role. The role’s diversity means that putting together development frameworks was, or would be, a challenge. It is difficult to capture enough in a framework to be meaningful for a range of kaiako or contexts – *“as soon as you put something in a framework, some things might not be relevant to some kaiako (Manager and Former Kaiako).”* Also, capturing what a good kaiako should be able to do in a framework is fundamentally complex. The role often requires a complex set of skills that vary by context and the outcomes for kaiako – ‘to inspire and develop learners’ – are sometimes not easily defined or explained. Australian research identified similar trends within their VET sector: there was a need and preference for criteria around capability, but flexibility and local contextualisation were crucial given the diversity within their sectors (Misko, Guthrie, & Waters, 2021). Frameworks within the sector will likely create good outcomes if they are sufficiently flexible and not focused exclusively on transactional elements.

“Magic often happens in the gaps between a framework, and that’s what we’ve got to be teaching our kaiako to do: to create magic in their classrooms. There are a whole lot of things they’ve got to do because it’s part of their job, but the core of what they have to do is inspire their students to success.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Kaiako development pathways within organisations were regularly disjointed and not well coordinated between organisational stakeholders. Kaiako are not provided with a clear view of where they could progress to within the profession or how they could get there. Stakeholders within providers also do not often coordinate their efforts to support and develop kaiako – recruiters, HR teams, kaiako support teams, managers, academic leads, kaiako, and others are not contributing to an agreed development journey for kaiako. They are implementing separate processes when these could be connected into pathways that more effectively develop kaiako. This is likely due in part to the lack of agreed development criteria and aims, but operational barriers likely contribute to this too. Some departments were reportedly resistant to external processes, and some found difficulty agreeing what the overall pathway or process should be.

Organisational processes relating to development were often poorly integrated into HR processes and disconnected.

Internal stakeholders were sometimes resistant to change or provided limited collaboration for kaiako development structures and processes.

“[What we need is] some kind of shared system where [kaiako] can see [where their development is at and where they need to be]. [Where] we can walk a kaiako through this process; everyone can see what’s needed and what they need to add to this; and then the kaiako understands what they need and who can/will support.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“[The] lack of flow [between internal processes] really impacts on the positive experience kaiako [could] have.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

The 2019 Reform of Vocational Education caused uncertainty within the sector, particularly within Te Pūkenga divisions. Some considered the VET system to be like this regardless of the recent reforms too – *“The VET space is nebulous. [It] can lurch around to changes in funding, demand for training, et cetera (Manager and Former Kaiako).”*

VET sector reforms have created uncertainty within some providers and have paused some divisional efforts for kaiako development.

From the 2019 reforms, some providers reported that staff departures had reduced their capacity to provide effective development for kaiako; some reported their teams withdrawing into themselves; and some reported pausing their own strategic efforts for kaiako development in anticipation of centralised guidance from Te Pūkenga. Te Pūkenga has done substantial work to establish this, but it looks likely that development guidance will not be fully realised before further changes are carried out. As structural changes within the sector are likely to continue in the near future (MOE, 2024), it is likely these experiences will continue into the future too.

VET sector reforms have resulted in a loss of capability and capacity for kaiako development and support within some teams.

“We’ve had some good staff leave due to sectoral changes. So, we’re rebuilding our capacity to champion good kaiako development. It will take a while to get back to where we were. It’s a constant thing to monitor and keep on top of – there’s a huge amount of churn in the kaiako workforce.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“In our context, the sectoral changes had our teams withdrawn, pulled into their shells and [they] weren’t doing all they could to support their communities.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“It would be hard not to mention sector change at the moment [as a barrier to good kaiako development] and the ambiguity that adds into the likes of us putting pause on some of our strategic efforts in the capability space.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Development Tools Barriers

Table 7 summarises the development tools barriers to effective professional development that were identified in this work. These are then described further in this section.

Table 7: Development Tools Barriers to Good Professional Development.

Development Tools Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some kaiako and providers had difficulty identifying the best development tools for their needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some kaiako had issues with the accessibility, timeliness, quality, and relevance of currently available development tools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current development tools don't adequately address the practical skill needs of kaiako.

Some kaiako and providers had difficulty identifying the best development tools for their needs. Many referred to a variance of quality and delivery arrangements between programmes that were challenging to navigate. Many larger providers offered adult education programmes internally for their kaiako. One stakeholder suggested that *“each institution thinks their [adult education] programme is better than [others’] (Former Kaiako).”*

Some kaiako and providers had difficulty identifying the best development tools for their needs.

“The [adult education] courses are great, but you kind of have to know what you don’t know to choose the right course across the sector.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Some kaiako had issues with the accessibility, timeliness, quality, and relevance of currently available development tools.

Some kaiako suggested that there were few formal development tools available to them. The adult education suite of qualifications was well known and utilised, but some kaiako were seeking additional formal tools to fill other known gaps. Some managers or other stakeholders suggested that there were a range of tools available, but that these were not well known to kaiako and providers.

Some kaiako reported they had few formal development tools available to them, both longer and shorter course and programmes.

“I’ve been trying to find short courses for education. There’re lots of short courses for the industry side, but for the education side there are only large things... [There’s] so much potential for little things that would improve my ability to facilitate classes.” –Current Kaiako

“A lot of providers struggle with finding out the best resources for tutors. Like, who’s offering the adult education certificate, what resources might be available to their kaiako, et cetera.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Adult education programmes were also inaccessible for some. Some were unable to complete their preferred programmes due to having limited time available, geographic distance, fixed course start-times, or not being able to complete these prior to acquiring a kaiako role.

The Adult Education and Training qualifications were less accessible to some due to time, distance, fixed course start times, or otherwise.

“Some people need to wait 6 months before [their] course starts, but they’re teaching a class the whole time. Earlier access to teaching development might be good for some.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

There was also reportedly a variable quality of development tools, both formal, non-formal, and including programmes for the adult education qualifications. Some managers reported dissatisfaction with the courses they have put their kaiako through.

“Some [professional development resources and tools] are really patchy. Sometimes we’ve gone to courses, taken full days out of work, and just wondered ‘what was that for?’” – Manager and Current Kaiako

The adult education qualifications suite, specifically, was reportedly too theory-based for some VET kaiako – *“I don’t think [the adult teaching certificate] is the right approach. It’s delivered by some awesome people, but the qualification itself for many people, including our beginning kaiako, is overly academic and overly theory-based”* (Manager and Former Kaiako).

Some believe the Adult Education and Training qualifications don’t offer sufficient practical delivery skills, they’re too theory based.

While many valued the adult education qualifications, many reported that they did not cover the core tools that kaiako required. They instead focused on learning underpinning theory – *“...for many it can feel a bit ‘cart before the horse’. They could do with a whole bunch of other learning first before they embark on the deeper exploration of adult teaching that the [qualifications] provide* (Manager and Former Kaiako). In the early transition, many kaiako felt that development tools should be aimed towards developing practical skills and confidence for delivery. Theory could then reinforce these later. Some also thought that the qualifications were not suitable for VET kaiako; they were better suited to general education kaiako. This was, in part, because of their focus on educational theory, but also because they reportedly didn’t cover some practical aspects of delivery or VET-specific issues - how to work with VET learners and how to deliver VET learning, as examples. Despite many suggesting that *“basic [delivery and assessment] skills can be taught in a relatively short period [and can then] be built on (VET Leader)”*, kaiako felt that these qualifications were not meeting their needs for this.

“Tutoring is a practical subject that should be subsequently developed into a theoretical framework.” – Former Kaiako

“[A] new [kaiako] needs the practical advice. Then, as they get more comfortable, [they] can add finder skills and delivery techniques/understanding... Don’t front-load the adult education theory.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“[I] think we swamp new trainers with adult education theory without experiences to attach them to. Depending on the theory they’re learning, they can go down a rabbit hole that might not be relevant to their context.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Several kaiako also felt that their adult education experiences would’ve been improved if they were relevant to their VET context: their vocation or sector. They felt as though the current adult education qualifications were not

Some believe that the Adult Education and Training qualifications are less relevant to some VET sectors or disciplines.

suiting to those delivering practical skills. They did not suit the ways that VET kaiako wanted to develop. This was reported by some from both the C&I and F&F sectors. Delivering educational capabilities within a workplace context or a discipline-specific context appeared to be wanted, but it is unclear how widespread this view is. There were some, however, who considered the current style of provision and content to be relevant across all kaiako and that mixing with kaiako from other discipline areas is good for their development.

“The current qualification is not fit for purpose for tradies, and probably primary industries too. It’s for an academic person teaching an academic class, not a chippy building a fence – that’s completely different.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“I’m a bit of a cynic about academic courses to help you teach vocational education. It’s a practical skill, it’s a vocation, you learn by doing. There’s only so much you can learn by teaching and being in a classroom. It’s like a trade – you learn from your mistakes and successes. I’m not saying it’s not important – we do enrol people in the adult education courses - they pick up some useful tools, they’ll pick up some useful theory, and perhaps understand some of the science behind the things that are going on in the classroom.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Some also felt that the adult education qualifications alone did not provide a good proxy for kaiako quality, despite many often assuming this. These people argued that these qualifications should be seen as part of a broader development pathway, rather than a stand-alone mark – let alone guarantee - of effectiveness. This has important implications – if the qualifications pathway alone doesn’t necessarily provide an absolute benchmark of kaiako quality, this may need to be positioned as part of wider upskilling strategy.

Some believe the Adult Education and Training qualifications don’t offer a full ‘certification’ for a quality kaiako.

“You can have your [adult education certificate] and still be a poor tutor.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

“[There are some adult education programmes that] have no observable relevance to the training environment, [but] they give the credential which satisfies a third party’s belief that they’ll be a good trainer.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Overall, kaiako were seeking development tools that were smaller, delivered in a timely manner, and integrated within a holistic development pathway that was clear to them.

Kaiako want smaller and more timely development tools that are a part of a holistic and clear development pathway.

“The feedback we’ve had is that new [kaiako] would prefer some bite-sized learning based on their needs at the time.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“[Good professional development] has context and is relevant to what the tutor is experiencing. [It] has to align with organisational priorities and with the practitioner’s expectations. Practical stuff – not massive, not 120 credits worth.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Cultural Barriers

Table 8 summarises the workplace or professional culture barriers to effective professional development that were identified in this work. These are then described further in this section.

Table 8: Cultural Barriers to Good Professional Development.

Cultural Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some kaiako and managers viewed educational development tools as compliance, rather than meaningful or value-adding activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some kaiako didn't see value in updating or continuing to develop in certain areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal staff were reluctant to collaborate on kaiako development processes in a small number of cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some kaiako had 'old school' approaches to delivery that were difficult to change.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some cultures, including Māori, can have difficulties utilising self-report or self-advocacy to access development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some kaiako may also be less willing, enthusiastic, or confident to complete formal education for their development based on their previous educational experiences.

In several cases kaiako and managers reported kaiako viewing educational professional development activities as compliance. This was commonly surrounding the few mandatory or strongly recommended educational qualifications and standards: the adult education qualifications; literacy and numeracy certification; and assessment and moderation skills standards. Viewing these activities as compliance limited the value kaiako received from them and limited them viewing these tools as a part of a larger development pathway. These attitudes were acquired and reinforced by some teams of kaiako, including their managers. One manager stated that kaiako needed leadership to help them get the most out of these development activities and view them as part of a pathway.

Some kaiako and managers viewed formal educational development activities as compliance rather than meaningful development.

"[Some kaiako] would sometimes view [educational development tools] as compliance, and sometimes their managers would see it as compliance [too]. They'd say 'right, now you've got that [qualification or standard] out of the way you can get on with the real job, which is teaching.'" – Leader and Former Kaiako

"We need a cultural change around development too. A culture of raising excellence [and] empowering yourself, rather than being told 'you've got to do it.'" – Manager and Former Kaiako

Some kaiako reportedly didn't see value in updating or continuing to develop in certain areas. Several managers reported attitudes of 'I know that already' within their teams of kaiako. These attitudes were barriers to participation in development activities for areas that may have changed over time, or where the capability of the kaiako may have waned.

Some kaiako reportedly had attitudes of 'I know that already', limiting their participation in some development areas.

“Some of the people who’ve been here for a while will have done all sorts of training previously, but they don’t understand that things change over time... [there’s] a feeling of ‘yeah, I’ve done that back in the day’, but some things may have slipped or waned.” – Manager and Current Kaiako

Internal staff were reluctant to collaborate on kaiako development processes in a small number of cases. In these cases, managers and corporate services staff were reportedly unwilling to take on or contribute to new processes for these purposes. Sometimes this involved ‘patch-guarding’ where staff wanted to implement processes in their own manner rather than use interconnected processes. Some speculated that these could be due to perceived increases in workload or power differences between departments.

Internal staff were unwilling to collaborate on development processes in some cases due to ‘patch guarding’ and other things.

“There can be power barriers too – ‘keep out that process, we do this!” – Manager and Former Kaiako

“[There can be] a bit of patch-guarding in some contexts such as from HR. From the [recruitment space] there’s a lack of communication and overlap of [processes] which isn’t necessarily effective or smart.” – Manager and Former Kaiako

Some tasked with supporting kaiako development reported difficulties shifting ‘old-school’ attitudes to delivery. These cases reported kaiako with strict classroom management styles that created large power differences between themselves and the learners.

Some kaiako had ‘old school’ approaches to delivery that were difficult to change.

“[Some] are a bit more ‘old-school’ about their delivery – ‘we’re doing this’, ‘stop talking and get on with it’, ‘how dare you be late to my class’... how [can we] quickly, within that learning curve, enable a change of attitude from that old school way of thinking and doing?” – Kaiako Manager

Some cultures, including Māori, can have difficulties utilising self-report or self-advocacy to access development. As these are common ways for kaiako to access development activities, inequities may be occurring.

Some cultures, including Māori, can have difficulties utilising self-report or self-advocacy to access development.

“For a lot of people, particularly Māori, it is difficult to engage with professional development processes that require the individual to put themselves forward. Advocating for themselves or speaking about their own achievements is not something that many are willing to do. This puts a barrier in the way of kaiako-driven advancement or recognition.” – Current Kaiako

Some kaiako may also be less willing, enthusiastic, or confident to complete formal education for their development based on their previous educational experiences. Many reported that negative experiences with formal education in secondary or other contexts carried through to their practice as kaiako. Some reported apprehension or anxiety around completing education-related qualifications and study.

Some kaiako may be less willing or confident to participate in formal learning due to previous negative experiences with education.

“My fellow tutors were stressed about the academic side of things in the certificates... when you throw these types of people into a Polytech and tell them to

do academic study it can be frightening. Rewarding when you do it, but for many it's a big step.” – Former Kaiako

“[Many] people coming out of the industry haven’t necessarily had good education experiences themselves. So, they may be reluctant to participate in a programme if they’ve had poor experiences, despite wanting to be good educators.” – VET Leader

One manager also reported that the framing of professional development activities could affect how willing kaiako would be to participate. Specifically, that kaiako would be more willing to engage if they could see practical applications for the learning – *“Framing is important for kaiako. ‘Here’s this course on neurodiversity’ probably wouldn’t be received as well as ‘here’s a learner with these behaviours/challenges and here’s a course on neurodiversity that would help them.”*

THE SYSTEM & POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS FOR CHANGE

System Overview

Key Summaries of the Current System

Below are a set of short summaries for the current system conditions identified throughout this report. Listing these key factors is designed to support individual or collective professional reflection, particularly in education provider contexts. A comprehensive list of these conditions is provided in Appendix 1. It is strongly recommended that this is read alongside these summaries to understand the key factors that influence and enable system change. We invite readers to use the summary and/or full list as aide memoire to facilitate relevant reflection in your own context, and as part of enabling and delivering improved development pathways and journeys for provider-based kaiako.

Table 9: Key Summaries of the Structural, Relational, and Attitudinal components of the system.

Structural Factors

VET kaiako roles are diverse. These roles require a mix of industry, educational, engagement, and professional capabilities. Transition into the profession often involves a steep learning curve, with onboarding processes varying in quality and structure across these sectors. These processes can be more focused on organisational factors rather than capability needs and are frequently disconnected from longer-term development pathways.

Ongoing development activities are largely self-identified, or supported by managers, and are generally focused on formal activities. There is a lack of formal workplace learning for vocational educators, and current development pathways often lack customisation based on kaiako needs.

Some providers have organisational structures focused on kaiako support and development, and many use a range of tools and methods to maintain industry currency. However, many providers have limited resources and funding for professional development, and pressures for revenue can disincentivise development activities.

Relational Factors

Despite lacking defined professional boundaries, many kaiako identified as being part of a profession. This was despite differences in workplace culture between education providers and industry workplaces which necessitated behavioural adjustments. This identity was contributed to by organisational factors and communities of practice, both formal and informal, that fostered connections and belonging.

Direct managers or mentors played a pivotal role in kaiako support and development. High workloads of these groups often limited their availability for kaiako and some kaiako didn't have

discipline-specific supports. Some stakeholders also felt, however, that separate and confidential support structures (independent of management) enabled more open discussions and minimised power differences where these caused issues.

Peer support and development mechanisms also achieved this and were powerful. They reduced power differences from managerial feedback, and the team-wide sharing of practices and learning from development activities amplified benefits. In some situations, however, internal staff were unwilling to collaborate due to 'patch guarding'.

Collaboration between providers and other stakeholders for kaiako development was limited, however kaiako often brought important stakeholder relationships into their roles. Sectoral competition limited collaboration too.

Access to development could be limited by cultural factors, such as cultures including Māori being less likely to self-advocate. Internal resistance could also hamper development strategy or processes. Sometimes, career advancement could also be complicated by the involvement of multiple stakeholders or teams.

Attitudinal Factors

Stakeholders overall felt that kaiako roles should have functional boundaries, yet they encompass a broad range of capabilities. They also felt that the identity of a kaiako can encompass both an industry-tutor and a scholarly/academic tutor; that many join the profession to transfer their expertise or create impacts for learners; and that personal characteristics and relationship building differentiate good kaiako from great ones.

Transitioning VET kaiako, while not 'beginners', often feel like they are starting something new. They may feel like imposters and experience psychological pressure.

High professional practising requirements for the profession were generally deemed inappropriate for the Aotearoa NZ context. Many valued the more flexible arrangements in the sector afforded by lower requirements.

Many kaiako were dissatisfied with their onboarding experiences, desiring more structure and clarity about expectations, responsibilities, and delegated authority. The pressure to develop educational capability quickly is common due to the steep learning curve.

The profession was seen as a craft that kaiako hone over time. Kaiako generally want to develop in their profession by learning from and through others, as well as within workplace contexts. Formal development activities are also seen as higher status by some, and many desire more customised development pathways based on kaiako needs.

Professional development is highly valued across the sectors, but some viewed formal educational development activities as compliance rather than meaningful development. Attitudes of 'I know that already' can also limit participation in development activities, and 'old school' approaches to delivery can be difficult to change. Some kaiako may be less willing or confident to participate in formal learning due to previous negative experiences with education.

Opinions vary on funding for professional development, with some seeing additional funding as essential, while others believe current funding levels can be better utilised.

The Adult Education and Training qualifications are seen by some as too theory-based and not offering sufficient practical delivery skills. They are also viewed as less relevant to some VET

sectors or disciplines and are not providing a 'certification' for a quality kaiako to some. Kaiako desire smaller, more timely development tools as part of a holistic development pathway.

Key Barriers to Address

Barrier 1: New VET kaiako were often thought of as 'beginners' rather than industry experts who are tasked with developing others in their field.

New kaiako can certainly be relative beginners at delivering education – this is reportedly common – but that is not the key requirement for the role. To perform their role they need to have substantial industry experience, certification, and credibility. They need to be experts in their field before they can begin as a provider-based kaiako. They are, therefore, further specialising in their field by becoming a kaiako, not starting something new. The belief that new kaiako are beginners disrespects their necessary background in industry as well as any experiences they may have had delivering workplace education or otherwise. Changing this belief will be challenging, but necessary to recognise and build the status of the profession, among other benefits.

Barrier 2: The transition to the VET kaiako role was substantial for many and involved a large learning curve.

Does it have to be? Without making judgements about practising pre-requisites or otherwise, there are opportunities to reduce the magnitude of the transition to a provider-based VET kaiako role. This could be achieved by more gradually introducing responsibilities and development requirements once a new kaiako enters the profession (which several providers were doing well); by building and recognising relevant skills before their practise in a provider context; by integrating any language and conventions used between the industry and education environment; or otherwise.

Barrier 3: Many Kaiako are not getting the practical skills and guidance that would support them in the early transition.

Many felt there were a set of practical skills that would've helped them in their early career and that the fundamentals of delivery could be learnt in a relatively short amount of time. Instead, many were receiving or had received little practical skills support or guidance in the early transition. Many felt that theory was being 'front-loaded' rather than being integrated with and supporting their practical skills formation. There is potential to make the transition easier for new kaiako by giving fundamental delivery skills early and subsequently supplementing these with educational theory.

Barrier 4: There is no widely agreed set of criteria for kaiako quality, and, therefore, development direction.

Without common criteria for kaiako functions or capability, kaiako and their teams are left to interpret quality in their own contexts. This is important, as the kaiako role is so varied and quality differs between contexts, however common principles exist and many felt these were not clear. Guidance in this

space, formal or informal, might help to give direction to kaiako and their providers, further develop the profession, and drive quality across the sector.

Barrier 5: Onboarding and ongoing development processes are typically separate; they should be an integrated pathway.

By treating these two broad phases of kaiako development as separate providers are missing out on the benefits that a holistic and needs based pathway could provide. Additionally, treating these processes separately may be contributing to a lack of ownership or accountability for kaiako development as well as creating operational limitations in some cases and limiting those who are available for support in others.

Barrier 6: Adult education qualifications are currently key milestones along the development pathway, but they do not meet the needs of many kaiako.

These tools were highly valued by some, but several contexts limited their utility for VET kaiako. Some had limited access to these tools, or their preferred providers of these qualifications, whilst others questioned the relevance and timing of qualification content. VET kaiako generally wanted more workplace development, 'bite-sized' learning, and learning that was relevant to their context, emerging needs, and vocational discipline. Additionally, several felt that these qualifications alone did not provide their 'industry certification' of a quality kaiako. The sector might benefit from exploring a formal development pathway that fully meets the VET sector's graduate expectations. Though, stakeholders reinforced that qualifications requirements pre-employment were likely inappropriate in most Aotearoa NZ VET contexts.

Barrier 7: The profession is treated as separate from workplace-based delivery or other contexts; the profession should be more blended or connected with other VET kaiako roles.

No formal links exist between the three VET kaiako roles. This has the effect of limiting the occupational pathways between them and minimising the potential labour pool and mobility of those in these roles. Shared functional, capability, or professional criteria between these roles might have benefits for the sector.

Barrier 8: Reactive rather than proactive attraction and recruitment means little experience is able to be gained before delivery.

Funding arrangements, among other factors, mean that once enrolment thresholds are met the recruitment of a new VET kaiako can be rushed through. This often results in limited experience and development before a new kaiako is expected to independently deliver learning. This rushed process caused issues for workforce supply as well as quality in several cases. Several spoke of the need to make recruitment processes more proactive to reduce the effects of this – making efforts to connect with the relevant industries, advertising the career pathway, and attracting prospective kaiako into the profession.

Recommended Systemic Shifts

There are great kaiako development practices being implemented in some areas. There are also, however, some areas achieving poor outcomes that require change. Systemic change for kaiako development is possible, but only with considered effort, input, and collaboration from the range of VET stakeholders. When reading this section please keep in mind your context and what works for you, as well as how your practices could be shared or built upon.

“There are really good teachers doing really good jobs – we know this from the results within the system – but, if we’re looking at ways to improve it, there are options.” – VET Leader

From taking a wider view of the system to develop VET kaiako in the C&I and F&F sectors, several themes for change emerged. There were other shifts that might be needed in some contexts – these are evident throughout this report – but those here represent some of the key areas that may need to be addressed based upon what stakeholders wanted. These are:

- **Shift 1:** The profession and its development pathways need to be better defined and communicated.
- **Shift 2:** The transition into the profession needs to be managed more effectively.
- **Shift 3:** Development practices and processes need to be holistic, adequately structured, and ‘kaiako centric’.
- **Shift 4:** Development tools need to effectively meet VET kaiako needs.
- **Shift 5:** Greater collaboration is needed for kaiako development within providers, within these sectors, and across the VET system.

SHIFT 1: The profession and its development pathways need to be better defined and communicated.

Greater consensus for kaiako quality and capability is needed. This understanding of where the development pathway should aim, as well as how it may be navigated, should be better communicated to kaiako and those that manage these pathways. Kaiako need to know where their development should be leading them and how they can get there. Those adding to their pathways need to understand this too so that they can meaningfully input into the process and support kaiako to achieve their potential.

To enable this shift to occur, the following actions are needed:

- 1.1. Centres for excellence⁷** should develop criteria for VET kaiako quality – including their functions, capabilities, or professional standards and boundaries – to guide pathways and tools. The more consensus that can be gained here, the better. These should not be prescriptive but provide necessary guidance for local contextualisation. **Providers** should take these guiding criteria and create profiles for quality kaiako that suit their contexts and facilitate effective development planning.

⁷ ‘Centres for excellence’ are any groups advancing VET research or practice, including ConCOVE, Food and Fibre CoVE, Ako Aotearoa, Independent Tertiary Education NZ (ITENZ), education provider working groups, or others.

- 1.2. **Centres for excellence, providers, and industry groups** should clarify pathways into, within, and through the profession to enable career planning and flexibility in the workforce. These should integrate with industry career pathways to promote industry currency and reinforce workplace kaiako roles.
- 1.3. **Providers** should clarify performance and development expectations to their kaiako as they transition into and develop in the role. These performance and development expectations should be mapped to sensible and clear individual development pathways.
- 1.4. **Centres for excellence and regulatory stakeholders** should clarify and communicate connections between provider-based kaiako, workplace-based kaiako, and workplace training advisor roles so that career or developmental pathways can synergise.

Table 11 in Appendix 1 contains a list of system conditions that may need to be addressed or considered to complete these actions. It is recommended that you read this table, as well as the full list of system conditions, when considering how you might complete these actions.

SHIFT 2: The transition into the profession needs to be managed more effectively.

The transition to the profession needs to be respected. It is a substantial occupational and organisational change for many industry experts. They require thoughtful and coordinated support that considers both their capability as well as their confidence and identity. Steps should be taken to reduce the scale of the transition for prospective kaiako, by enhancing links to their previous industry role and creating a more gradual induction and development process.

- 2.1. **Providers** should give adequate levels of support and development to kaiako in this transition to respect the large occupational and organisational shift that is required – structures, systems, processes, and practices should support this, but building relationships and belonging is important too.
- 2.2. **Providers** should build the capacity and capability of managers and supports for kaiako to facilitate effective development. This may require redesigning their roles, considering their capacity in kaiako development planning, or otherwise. New kaiako require dedicated time and effort from these critical stakeholders.
- 2.3. **Providers and funding stakeholders** should transform the transition into provider-based practise to prioritise kaiako confidence and capability and be informed by commercial requirements rather than driven by them. Providers should design their onboarding processes around these factors, and funding stakeholders should consider the sufficiency of resourcing for these contexts.

Table 12 in Appendix 1 contains a list of system conditions that may need to be addressed or considered to complete these actions. It is recommended that you read this table, as well as the full list of system conditions, when considering how you might complete these actions.

SHIFT 3: Development practices and processes need to be holistic, adequately structured, and ‘kaiako-centric’.

Development practices and processes are currently ‘piecemeal’ in many cases. Few structures exist within providers to manage development sufficiently, particularly new kaiako. Kaiako are being put through development milestones, such as qualifications, with little regard to overarching development goals and individual kaiako needs. Criteria for development (Shift 1) will support this, but operational development practices and processes should shift towards a more holistic view of kaiako quality and the value of development activities. These practices and processes should support kaiako to meet their development goals (as key drivers of the learning process) and be structured in a way that meets their needs – particularly the needs for timeliness and practical skills development.

- 3.1. **Providers** should restructure their development pathways to focus on kaiako needs and consider the timings of theory and experience. **Industry groups** should guide this process and consider how they integrate with pathways for workplace-based VET kaiako (see Shift 1). The sector should aim for bespoke pathways for kaiako based on their capability needs, as all tend to start from a different place. Also, the timing of practical skill development and theory should reflect the realities of what they will need to be doing at any point in time. If a new kaiako is required to deliver by themselves sooner, they will require classroom management and lesson planning skills before advanced pedagogical theory.
- 3.2. **Providers** should connect their onboarding and ongoing development activities into an interpretable journey for kaiako. This will require the coordination of internal stakeholders around an agreed development pathway for kaiako with defined roles and responsibilities – from recruitment to professional development roles and team leaders.
- 3.3. **Providers, kaiako team leaders, and kaiako communities** should frame development pathways around developing their ‘craft’ and lifting quality, rather than complying with the limited requirements. For example, pathways should not lead to the achievement of an assessor standard such as 4098, they should lead to high-quality practice, with milestones such as this supporting along the way.

Table 13 in Appendix 1 contains a list of system conditions that may need to be addressed or considered to complete these actions. It is recommended that you read this table, as well as the full list of system conditions, when considering how you might complete these actions.

SHIFT 4: Development tools need to effectively meet VET kaiako needs.

Many stakeholders valued current development tools that were available to them, including the Adult Education and Training qualifications, for the benefits they brought in reflection and advanced practice. Many, however, felt that there were few or no adequate development tools for their context. VET kaiako were primarily interested in accessing workplace-based methods of development (such as mentoring, observation, communities of practice, structured activities or tasks) with off-job tools supporting these. Many felt as though they did not receive adequate access to these methods overall, or within the current iterations of development tools. Kaiako also wanted their tools to be smaller so that they could be

accesses as needs arose. Development tools also need to integrate with holistic kaiako-centric pathways for development (Shift 3).

- 4.1. Providers, industry groups, kaiako communities, and kaiako qualification/programme developers** should expand or explore workplace learning options given kaiako preferences and familiarity with this learning mode. This might involve increasing the structure around mentoring models or increasing the workplace components of programmes.
- 4.2. Providers and kaiako qualification/programme developers** should review and improve development tools so that they are flexible to kaiako needs – including timeliness and relevance – given the varied organisational and capability starting points kaiako have.
- 4.3. Providers and kaiako qualification/programme developers** should explore options for the recognition of current competence within formal development tools.

Table 14 in Appendix 1 contains a list of system conditions that may need to be addressed or considered to complete these actions. It is recommended that you read this table, as well as the full list of system conditions, when considering how you might complete these actions.

SHIFT 5: Providers and other stakeholders need more internal and external collaboration for kaiako development.

Effective VET kaiako are the product and responsibility of a range of stakeholders. Not only does their role require them to coordinate with many stakeholder groups, but several of these groups are responsible for their development too (for example, other kaiako, educational stakeholders, industry). As their role requires capability from multiple areas, these areas should work together to ensure effective development occurs – they all have an interest in quality kaiako to drive this.

- 5.1. Internal provider stakeholders** should work together to ensure that processes and practices for kaiako support and development are mutually reinforcing. This might require a broader view or assessment of groups and systems that relate to this.
- 5.2. Providers** should collaborate to ensure sufficient access to communities of practice and ‘cross-pollination’ of practices for their kaiako. This could be particularly impactful for kaiako from environments with little access to kaiako from their discipline. Carpentry kaiako already meet annually, would this be relevant for other disciplines or across disciplines?
- 5.3. Kaiako, industry groups, and providers** should inductively build consensus around VET kaiako quality to drive professionalism and identity.
- 5.4. Providers and industry** should collaborate when setting requirements for kaiako and implementing development activities. Opportunities for kaiako development and mutual benefit can be identified through these actions – the employer down the road might just have the right learning opportunities for kaiako (and their learners).
- 5.5. Centres for excellence** should create and provide guidance to providers and other stakeholders about kaiako quality, development options, and how to build impactful development pathways for their contexts. **Ako Aotearoa, centres of vocational excellence, industry bodies, and providers** with effective practices could contribute to these processes.

Table 15 in Appendix 1 contains a list of system conditions that may need to be addressed or considered to complete these actions. It is recommended that you read this table, as well as the full list of system conditions, when considering how you might complete these actions.

A Vision and Final Thoughts

This research has revealed some great practices through the C&I and F&F sectors, as well as the wider VET sector, but clearly there are areas for improvement for kaiako development. The vision we set out below is informed by stakeholder perspectives from this work, but it is not definitive. It is our hope that providers, sectors, or the whole VET system take this vision or create their own to create wider sectoral action. One key quote that was considered when developing this vision statement was:

*"We talk a lot about being student-centred, which is fantastic, but what about being Kaiako-centred too? I think that that has been put to one side. We should value them more, invest in them more, and see the value they can bring." –
Manager and Former Kaiako*

First, let's establish some criteria for provider-based VET kaiako – either functions or capabilities – that provide direction to career and development pathways. Criteria should be aligned between provider-based kaiako, workplace-based kaiako, and workplace training advisors for labour mobility and efficiency. Let's also make these criteria based on excellence rather than the achievement of quality assurance milestones, but let's make sure to logically include these requirements in the pathways too.

We can remain cognisant of the fact that any framework is likely to miss something for some kaiako, but that there are fundamental capabilities and needs that are common or universal. These capabilities have not been articulated in any agreed way across the system, and this absence has created ambiguity – let's do that for a start: let's put a stake in the ground to work towards and iterate from there. We should communicate these through the sector and to prospective kaiako.

National criteria might be best for this, with sectoral or context-specific criteria emerging over time from these. The F&F sector has a good starting point with the Food and Fibre CoVE VET excellence framework. These may require extrapolation to be relevant to individual kaiako rather than providers, though. The C&I sector could look to this framework for inspiration or collaborate with F&F or wider sectors to create something for the C&I sector.

Let's leave the practising requirements for VET kaiako where they are now to retain flexibility – we do not want to further create barriers to entry for what is already a scarce talent pool. To raise the status of the profession and drive quality, let's instead come up with better ways to recognise the industry expertise that VET kaiako bring and build training culture and a shared career pathway for industry kaiako, such as a shared capability framework. We don't need the step into the profession to be higher; these are already experts who don't need a mountain to climb. They need support to transfer this expertise and make a difference for learners, refining this over time.

We suggest that the quality-assurance agencies controlling these few and flexible practising requirements provide additional guidance for kaiako quality – possibly using these national criteria for quality as a reference point or to articulate any further specific sectoral requirements.

Beyond these initial criteria, let's ensure providers and Kaiako can access shared and high-quality guidance and tools to identify their development needs against these criteria or to customise these

criteria based on their context. There is huge potential for advanced technology or systems to support these processes. We should develop or utilise software tools to identify new and current kaiako capability gaps and confidence levels, then use artificial intelligence (or just basic algorithms) and our VET leaders' expertise to create bespoke development reports and recommendations. These would create transformational development pathways rather than transactional ones that are based on meeting providers' quality assurance requirements for kaiako. Central hubs for excellence, such as Ako Aotearoa or sector-focussed Centres of Excellence would be good places to host guidance materials and tools and disseminate them across the sector.

Let's also make sure our development tools meet the needs of all kaiako. These should consider what the kaiako needs and when they need it, as well as what they might want.

We should also explore formal workplace learning options for our vocational educators. Many want to learn through doing and reinforce this with theory – workplace learning models support this and VET kaiako are familiar with these. Moreover, by definition, isn't this style of learning currently a necessity for *vocational* kaiako? They're almost all required to develop and maintain a large range of pedagogical and technical capabilities while they're in the role, so rather than pre-practice, perhaps we should start formalising this process rather than leaving it at the mercy of informality and variability across the sector.

Many also felt as though the adult education qualifications had great content and delivery in places, but that the timing of the learning or its practicality and relevance could be improved. Many kaiako claimed they would have benefited from a short and sharp foundational introduction to the profession with key skills and knowledge. Let's supplement these with smaller packages of learning that kaiako can apply in their teaching right away to feel confident more quickly, and offer modular options to gain essential skills according to their individual needs – such as classroom management, or guides to necessary compliances. Such stackable credentials may be good options to frame longer-term development around, but something is currently clearly missing in the early transition.

We should also acknowledge that the transition into the role of a kaiako is substantial in many ways and provide adequate support, time, and energy for this. Being more proactive with recruitment might support this, but so will developing the career pathways and labour mobility between VET kaiako roles through shared professional criteria. Having a shared roadmap for functions or capability should reduce the scale of the occupational transition for many. Additional funding would be great too, of course, but there are likely options to do more with what's currently there.

In a nutshell, let's develop and articulate a shared and agreed framework of 'great', while keeping that definition flexible for different contexts; provide guidance and efficient and innovative tools for assessing against this; create highly practical development tools to support the initial transition with other tools to support more advanced practice over the longer term. And, finally, let's treat (and respect that) the current transition to kaiako is a substantial journey, whilst also looking at ways to make the learning curve a bit smaller.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Outline of VET Kaiako Development System Conditions
Appendix 2	Research Approach and Methods
Appendix 3	Interview Consent Information, Schedules, and Survey Items
Appendix 4	High-level Overview of Kaiako Capability Framework Analysis

Appendix 1: Outline of VET Kaiako Development System Conditions

Full List of System Conditions

Table 10: Full List of VET Kaiako Development System Conditions.

Structural Conditions

The Profession and its Requirements

- There is a wide range of functions that VET kaiako could perform in their roles that vary by context.
- There are three distinctive VET kaiako roles within NZ: provider-based kaiako, workplace-based kaiako, and workplace training advisors.
- Kaiako functions can be distributed across teams. Larger providers were better able to do this than smaller providers.
- Some types of education providers have niche or deeper requirements of their kaiako.
- Programme management, programme structure, and learner demographics affect the scope of a kaiako role and its capability requirements.
- Kaiako career pathways were typically from tutor to senior tutor, followed in some cases by management or industry/educational specialisation.
- Many have difficulties acquiring kaiako and there is a large amount of attrition along the kaiako career pathway.
- VET kaiako require a mix of industry, educational, engagement, and professional capabilities in their role.
- Few formal practising requirements exist for VET kaiako. Most that exist are flexible and not required before entering the profession.
- Practising requirements that did exist were informed by providers' quality assurance requirements, rather than professional criteria.

Transition and Onboarding

- VET kaiako development pathways begin when they begin acquiring industry or educational capability – whichever comes first.
- Pathways into the profession were often informal, with few proactive workforce development activities.
- Few formal development activities were accessible to kaiako before beginning their role in a provider.
- The Adult Education and Training Qualifications were core development tools and were the backbone of most kaiako development pathways.
- Some new kaiako are being assigned advanced responsibilities too early; other kaiako are being gradually assigned these when they're ready.
- Most providers offered some type of welcome for new kaiako to foster a sense of belonging and help them make connections.
- The professional transition regularly involved a steep learning curve for kaiako.
- Onboarding systems and processes had varied levels of structure across the sectors and within providers.

- Onboarding quality varied within providers due to limited guidance for staff, resource, time available, and staff performance.
- Onboarding processes were frequently disconnected from longer-term kaiako development pathways and processes.
- Onboarding processes and tools were often more focused on organisational factors, rather than capability needs.
- Kaiako had varied lengths of time employed before delivery; many had a short amount of time before delivery, but some had weeks/months.
- Funding pressures and kaiako attrition were key drivers for the need to recruit and have new kaiako delivering quickly.
- Ineffective implementation limited the quality of onboarding processes in some cases.
- Remote kaiako had more limited onboarding experiences than central kaiako and with less guidance and support.
- Several key skills for the role were not considered in the onboarding process for many – principally, digital skills.
- Most kaiako roles required substantial industry experience, though kaiako transferred from different backgrounds in limited cases.
- Supplementary industry-capability development can be required when entering the profession to meet broad curriculum requirements.

Ongoing Development

- Some providers had organisational structures focused on kaiako support and development – people, teams, or units.
- Ongoing development needs were largely self-identified, or with manager support, but were also informed by programme/learner feedback.
- Professional development was generally focused on formal activities, rather than informal or non-formal methods.
- There is a lack of formal workplace learning for vocational educators.
- Formal development activities were often accessed through application processes by the kaiako, though other methods for access existed.
- Professional development was based on milestones rather than full pathways, mostly the adult education qualifications.
- Some providers offered capability frameworks for their kaiako, but this was not the norm.
- Current development pathways are missing aspects of customisation based on kaiako needs – most are implemented in a standard way.
- A range of tools and methods were used to maintain industry currency – those involving direct industry interaction were highly valued.
- Some industry licenses or certifications had continuous development or currency requirements which drove currency efforts.
- Industry integration with programmes supported professional development and the currency of industry capability.
- Most enter the role with little direct experience with education, though many have transferable capability through past roles or experiences.
- Mentoring, communities of practice, and qualifications were the primary development tools for educational capability.
- The Adult Education and Training qualifications suite was commonly offered or recommended to develop kaiako.
- Industry connections were mandated in some programmes and contexts.
- Kaiako were often provided little formal support to develop professional and workplace capabilities.
- Structure was important to the success of kaiako development efforts, though there was no single most effective way to structure arrangements.

- Communities of practice could be difficult to form and maintain, particularly when unstructured or unfocused.
- Many providers have few resources and little funding available for professional development of staff and kaiako.
- Many providers have dedicated annual budgets for kaiako professional development, some feel these are insufficient.
- Pressures on providers for revenue disincentivised development activities and shifted focus from kaiako practice to outcomes.
- New or untested programmes received less investment in kaiako development.
- Part time tutors had less investment in their development or had less ability to access development activities.
- Some providers dedicated time for professional development, particularly early in the role, through non-contact hours and other means.
- Many providers have little capacity to backfill classes, leaving kaiako unable to be released for development activities.
- Kaiako had little time to access formal development activities or to focus on their development in their role.
- Some in manager, mentor, or support roles didn't have the capability to provide effective mentoring to kaiako.
- Some professional development approval processes are complex and involved multiple approvers.
- There is a lack of criteria for kaiako development at a professional or occupational level, and limited consensus for development pathways.
- Some providers used capability frameworks, though this was not the norm.
- Organisational processes relating to development were often poorly integrated into HR processes and disconnected.
- VET sector reforms have created uncertainty within some providers and have paused some divisional efforts for kaiako development.
- Some kaiako and providers had difficulty identifying the best development tools for their needs.
- Some kaiako reported they had few formal development tools available to them, both longer and shorter course and programmes.
- The Adult Education and Training qualifications were less accessible to some due to time, distance, fixed course start times, or otherwise.

Relational Conditions

The Profession and its Requirements

- Many kaiako felt a part of a profession, despite a lack of professional or occupational boundaries or criteria.
- Kaiako advancement within career pathways involved multiple organisational stakeholders, sometimes complexifying the process.

Transition and Onboarding

- Workplace culture was different between education providers and industry workplaces which required adjusting kaiako behaviour.
- In some cases, senior kaiako were unwilling to share their programme resources and tools to new kaiako to support their development.
- Kaiako direct managers play a key role in kaiako support and development during the onboarding process, and over time.

Ongoing Development

- Confidential kaiako support and development teams enabled honest development discussions, minimising power differences and biases.
- Managers would identify kaiako development needs through performance management and make development recommendations.
- There was limited collaboration between providers and other stakeholders for kaiako development.
- Many kaiako brought stakeholder relationships with them into the role that were important to their work.
- Formal and informal communities of practice and educational qualifications support connections between educational stakeholders.
- Peer development mechanisms were beneficial and could reduce power differences that came from feedback through managers or others.
- Communities of practice could contribute to professional identity and belonging.
- Team members sharing their learning from development activities multiplied development benefits across teams and departments.
- Providers reported competition in the sector getting in the way of collaboration for kaiako development.
- Managers, mentors, and key kaiako supports can have high workloads, leaving little time available to support their kaiako.
- Some kaiako didn't have accessible mentors or supports from their occupational discipline to provide guidance for discipline-specific issues.
- Managers were key to championing development requests for kaiako and advocating for these requests within the organisation.
- Internal stakeholders were sometimes resistant to change or provided limited collaboration for kaiako development structures and processes.
- VET sector reforms have resulted in a loss of capability and capacity for kaiako development and support within some teams.
- Internal staff were unwilling to collaborate on development processes in some cases due to 'patch guarding' and other things.
- Some cultures, including Māori, can have difficulties utilising self-report or self-advocacy to access development.

Attitudinal Conditions

The Profession and its Requirements

- Most believe kaiako roles should have functional boundaries, but kaiako should have some capability in a broad range of areas.
- There are two main, mutually inclusive identity attitudes for kaiako: that of an industry-tutor and a scholarly/academic tutor.
- The two key motivations for joining the profession were to transfer expertise and make a difference for learners.
- Many wanted younger kaiako within the system for their ability to relate to younger learners, among other things.
- Most believed that certain personal traits or factors differentiated a good kaiako from great kaiako.
- Most believed that high practising requirements would be inappropriate for the NZ context, flexibility here was valued.

- Some felt that education provider environments needed to more closely resemble the cultural environments from industry.

Transition and Onboarding

- Many kaiako believe that the sum of their life experiences and skills can be brought into their kaiako role.
- Transitioning VET kaiako are not beginners: they are well-qualified, experts in their own right, and the only ones who can do the job.
- Kaiako often did not understand the role's requirements or expectations of them well when entering the profession.
- Many industry practitioners feel they are starting something new when they enter the kaiako role.
- Some kaiako feel like an imposter when entering the profession and experience psychological pressure during delivery.
- Most believed that kaiako should understand the wider organisational and systemic context, as well as their role in it.
- Many kaiako were dissatisfied with their onboarding experiences and felt unprepared and not confident for their new role.
- Kaiako generally wanted more structure to their onboarding processes.
- Some new kaiako were unclear about expectations of them, their responsibilities, and their delegated authority for long periods.
- Many kaiako felt pressure to develop educational capability quickly in their role, due to the steep learning curve and quick transition.

Ongoing Development

- Professional development was highly valued by organisations and kaiako.
- Several felt becoming a kaiako is like developing a craft/mastery – kaiako hone their skills in the role, like in their industry backgrounds.
- Most thought that professional development for kaiako could be a range of activities and is good when it adds value for the provider or learner.
- To some, formal development activities for kaiako are seen as higher status than other methods.
- Many wanted more customised development pathways for kaiako that were based on their needs, and when they needed development.
- Some kaiako wanted to pursue further industry-related development and specialism to support their roles.
- Most felt that educational capability needed to be actively developed or taught.
- Some felt the development pathway to become a highly capable kaiako took between two to four years.
- Many felt the ability to form relationships and connections with stakeholders differentiates high performing kaiako from others.
- Some thought that personal characteristics couldn't be developed in people, or through development efforts for kaiako.
- Kaiako want to develop in their profession by learning from and through others, as well as within workplace contexts.
- Some felt as though additional funding was essential; others felt there were opportunities to do better with current funding levels.
- Some believe the Adult Education and Training qualifications don't offer sufficient practical delivery skills, they're too theory based.
- Some believe that the Adult Education and Training qualifications are less relevant to some VET sectors or disciplines.

- Some believe the Adult Education and Training qualifications don't offer a full 'certification' for a quality kaiako.
- Kaiako want smaller and more timely development tools that are a part of a holistic and clear development pathway.
- Some kaiako and managers viewed formal educational development activities as compliance rather than meaningful development.
- Some kaiako reportedly had attitudes of 'I know that already', limiting their participation in some development areas.
- Some kaiako had 'old school' approaches to delivery that were difficult to change.
- Some kaiako may be less willing or confident to participate in formal learning due to previous negative experiences with education.

Conditions most Relevant to Shift 1

Table 11: System Conditions that may need to be considered or addressed to enable **Shift 1**.

The profession and its development pathways need to be better defined and communicated.

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

There is a lack of criteria for kaiako development at a professional or occupational level, and limited consensus for development pathways.

Practising requirements are informed by providers' quality assurance requirements rather than professional criteria.

Few providers offered capability frameworks for their kaiako.

There are three distinctive VET kaiako roles within NZ: provider-based kaiako, workplace-based kaiako, and workplace training advisors.

Kaiako career pathways were typically from tutor to senior tutor, followed in some cases by management or industry/educational specialisation.

RELATIONAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

There was limited collaboration between providers and other stakeholders for kaiako development.

Kaiako advancement within career pathways involved multiple organisational stakeholders, sometimes complexifying the process.

ATTITUDINAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Kaiako often did not understand the role's requirements or expectations of them well when entering the profession.

Many kaiako wanted more customised development pathways for kaiako that were based on their needs, and when they needed development.

Kaiako want smaller and more timely development tools that are a part of a holistic and clear development pathway.

Conditions most Relevant to Shift 2

Table 12: System Conditions that may need to be considered or addressed to enable **Shift 2**.

The transition into the profession needs to be managed more effectively.

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Pathways into the profession were often informal, with few proactive workforce development activities.

Few formal development activities were accessible to kaiako before beginning their role in a provider.

Onboarding systems and processes had varied levels of structure across the sectors and within providers.

Onboarding processes were frequently disconnected from longer-term kaiako development pathways and processes.

Onboarding quality varied within providers due to limited guidance for staff, resource, time available, and staff performance.

Ineffective implementation limited the quality of onboarding processes in some cases.

Remote kaiako had more limited onboarding experiences than central kaiako and with less guidance and support.

Onboarding processes and tools were often more focused on organisational factors, rather than capability needs.

Several key skills for the role were not considered in the onboarding process for many—principally, digital skills.

Supplementary industry-capability development can be required when entering the profession to meet broad curriculum requirements.

Kaiako had varied lengths of time employed before delivery; many had a short amount of time before delivery.

Funding pressures and kaiako attrition were key drivers for the need to recruit and have new kaiako delivering quickly.

Some new kaiako are being assigned advanced responsibilities too early; other kaiako are being gradually assigned these when they're ready.

RELATIONAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Workplace culture was different between education providers and industry workplaces which required adjusting kaiako behaviour.

Some in manager, mentor, or support roles didn't have the capability to provide effective mentoring to kaiako.

In some cases, senior kaiako were unwilling to share their programme resources and tools to new kaiako to support their development.

ATTITUDINAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Kaiako often did not understand the role's requirements or expectations of them well when entering the profession.

Many industry practitioners feel they are starting something new when they enter the kaiako role.

Many kaiako were dissatisfied with their onboarding experiences and felt unprepared and not confident for their new role.

Some new kaiako were unclear about expectations of them, their responsibilities, and their delegated authority for long periods.

Some kaiako feel like an imposter when entering the profession and experience psychological pressure during delivery.

Kaiako generally wanted more structure to their onboarding processes.

Conditions most Relevant to Shift 3

Table 13: System Conditions that may need to be considered or addressed to enable **Shift 3**.

Development practices and processes need to be holistic, adequately structured, and 'kaiako-centric'.

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Professional development was generally focused on formal activities, rather than informal or non-formal methods.

Current development pathways are missing aspects of customisation based on kaiako needs – most are implemented in a standard way.

Kaiako were often provided little formal support to develop professional and workplace capabilities.

Many providers have few resources and little funding available for professional development of staff and kaiako.

Part time tutors had less investment in their development or had less ability to access development activities.

Kaiako had little time to access formal development activities or to focus on their development in their role.

Ongoing development needs were largely self-identified, or with manager support, but were also informed by programme/learner feedback.

Professional development was based on milestones rather than full pathways, mostly the adult education qualifications.

Practising requirements that did exist were informed by providers' quality assurance requirements, rather than professional criteria.

Most enter the role with little direct experience with education, though many have transferable capability through past roles or experiences.

Some professional development approval processes are complex and involved multiple approvers.

RELATIONAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Managers, mentors, and key kaiako supports can have high workloads, leaving little time available to support their kaiako.

Team members sharing their learning from development activities multiplied development benefits across teams and departments.

ATTITUDINAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Many wanted more customised development pathways for kaiako that were based on their needs, and when they needed development.

Kaiako want to develop in their profession by learning from and through others, as well as within workplace contexts.

Some kaiako and managers viewed formal educational development activities as compliance rather than meaningful development.

Several felt becoming a kaiako is like developing a craft/mastery – kaiako hone their skills in the role, like in their industry backgrounds.

Most felt that educational capability needed to be actively developed or taught.

Kaiako want to develop in their profession by learning from and through others, as well as within workplace contexts.

Conditions most Relevant to Shift 4

Table 14: System Conditions that may need to be considered or addressed to enable **Shift 4**.

Development tools need to effectively meet VET kaiako needs.

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

There is a lack of formal workplace learning for vocational educators.

Some kaiako reported they had few formal development tools available to them, both longer and shorter course and programmes.

The Adult Education and Training qualifications were less accessible to some due to time, distance, fixed course start times, or otherwise.

Mentoring, communities of practice, and qualifications were the primary development tools for educational capability.

Communities of practice could be difficult to form and maintain, particularly when unstructured or unfocused.

Some kaiako and providers had difficulty identifying the best development tools for their needs.

RELATIONAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Some kaiako didn't have accessible mentors or supports from their occupational discipline to provide guidance for discipline-specific issues.

Formal and informal communities of practice and educational qualifications support connections between educational stakeholders.

ATTITUDINAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Some believe the Adult Education and Training qualifications don't offer sufficient practical delivery skills, they're too theory based.

Some believe that the Adult Education and Training qualifications are less relevant to some VET sectors or disciplines.

Some believe the Adult Education and Training qualifications don't offer a full 'certification' for a quality kaiako.

Kaiako want smaller and more timely development tools that are a part of a holistic and clear development pathway.

Some kaiako and managers viewed formal educational development activities as compliance rather than meaningful development.

Kaiako want to develop in their profession by learning from and through others, as well as within workplace contexts.

Some kaiako reportedly had attitudes of 'I know that already', limiting their participation in some development areas.

Some kaiako may be less willing or confident to participate in formal learning due to previous negative experiences with education.

Conditions most Relevant to Shift 5

Table 15: System Conditions that may need to be considered or addressed to enable **Shift 5**.

Greater collaboration is needed for kaiako development within providers, within these sectors, and across the VET system.

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

There is a lack of criteria for kaiako development at a professional or occupational level, and limited consensus for development pathways.

VET sector reforms have created uncertainty within some providers and have paused some divisional efforts for kaiako development.

Industry integration with programmes supported professional development and the currency of industry capability.

Some providers had organisational structures focused on kaiako support and development – people, teams, or units.

RELATIONAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

There was limited collaboration between providers and other stakeholders for kaiako development.

Providers reported competition in the sector getting in the way of collaboration for kaiako development.

Internal stakeholders were sometimes resistant to change or provided limited collaboration for kaiako development structures and processes.

Internal staff were unwilling to collaborate on development processes in some cases due to 'patch guarding' and other things.

Many kaiako brought stakeholder relationships with them into the role that were important to their work.

ATTITUDINAL CONDITIONS TO ADDRESS

Some kaiako reportedly had attitudes of 'I know that already', limiting their participation in some development areas.

Most thought that professional development for kaiako could be a range of activities and is good when it adds value for the provider or learner.

Some felt that education provider environments needed to more closely resemble the cultural environments from industry.

Most believed that kaiako should understand the wider organisational and systemic context, as well as their role in it.

Appendix 2: Research Approach and Methods

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the development pathways for institution-based VET kaiako in the construction & infrastructure and food & fibre sectors of Aotearoa New Zealand. The research aimed to understand the current state of kaiako development, identify best practices, and uncover challenges within the system. The study was guided by a systems change framework, focusing on structural, relational, and attitudinal conditions present in the VET kaiako development context.

The overall research question driving this project was: *What are the current development pathways for institution-based VET kaiako in the construction & infrastructure and food & fibre sectors, and how well do these pathways meet kaiako development needs?* This was further broken down into three sub-questions:

1. What are the common elements of institution-based VET kaiako quality?
2. What are the initial and continual development pathways for institution-based VET kaiako for the NZ construction and infrastructure, and food and fibre sectors?
3. How relevant and effective are current development pathways for institution-based VET kaiako in the construction and infrastructure, and food and fibre sectors?

Participants and Recruitment

The study targeted three main participant groups:

1. **VET Kaiako:** Current or former (within the last 5 years) institution-based kaiako teaching in the fields of construction and infrastructure or food and fibre.
2. **Kaiako Managers or Learning and Development Staff:** Professionals working within VET organisations who support kaiako development.
3. **System-level Stakeholders:** Individuals with a broad understanding of VET kaiako development pathways, such as experienced researchers or academic leads.

Recruitment was facilitated through a multi-step process:

1. Email invitations were sent to contacts within Vocational Education and Training institutions that provide programs in the construction and infrastructure sectors and/or the food and fibre sectors.
2. Relevant institutional contacts that were identified were asked to sign organisational consent forms relating to participation by their staff before forwarding the invitation to relevant staff members. These staff members could then voluntarily and confidentially contact the research team.

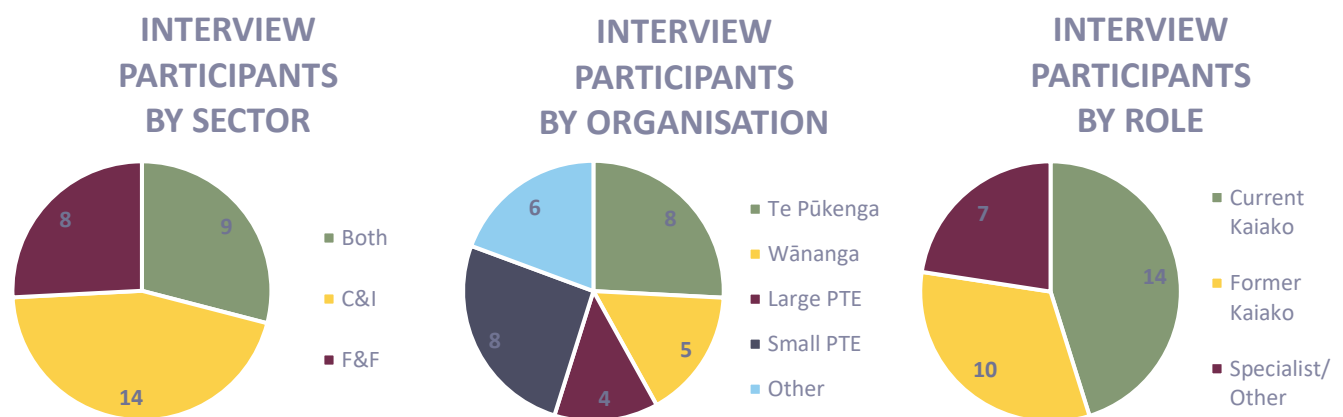
3. An advisory group, comprising representatives from relevant institutions such as Te Pūkenga, Wānanga, Private Training Establishments (PTE), and Ako Aotearoa, also assisted in sharing participation opportunities within their networks.

The recruitment process was designed to ensure that potential participants could make informed decisions about their involvement without pressure from their employers. Kaiako were asked to contact the research team directly if they wished to participate or had any questions, ensuring that their decision to participate would not be known by their employer/institution.

Data Collection

Semi-structured Interviews

The primary method of data collection was semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted online using Microsoft Teams or Zoom and lasted between 60 to 90 minutes each. Up to 40 interviews were planned, aiming for an even split between the Construction and Infrastructure and Food and Fibre sectors where possible. The final number of interviews was 31.



The interview questions and prompts were tailored to each stakeholder group, focusing on their experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding kaiako development pathways. The interviews explored themes such as:

- Initial and ongoing development processes
- Barriers to quality development
- Ideal conditions for development
- Sectoral differences in development approaches
- Perceptions of kaiako quality and effectiveness
- Systemic challenges and opportunities in kaiako development

Participants were given the choice of when to conduct the interview, with most opting for during work hours. The research team was flexible to accommodate a range of schedules.

Interviews were recorded using the recording and transcription functions of Microsoft Teams or Zoom, capturing both video and audio. These recordings were used to generate initial transcripts, which were then reviewed and refined by the research team.

Participants were given the right to view, correct, supplement, or remove parts of their transcript/summary within two weeks after the interview date. This ensured accuracy and gave participants control over their contributions to the study.

Online Survey

An online survey was initially implemented to complement the interview data. The survey was designed based on themes emerging from the initial interviews and literature scan. It included both quantitative items (primarily 5-point Likert-type scales) and qualitative open-ended questions. The survey was distributed through participating institutions, via email or internal digital communications, but primarily through ConCOVE and Food and Fibre CoVE social media channels (LinkedIn).

However, due to a low response rate, the quantitative results from the survey were not used in the final analysis. The qualitative responses from open-ended questions were still incorporated into the overall dataset and analysed alongside the interview data.

Literature Scan

In addition to primary data collection through interviews and surveys, the research team conducted a focused literature scan. This scan served multiple purposes:

- To inform the development of data collection instruments, ensuring that interview questions and survey items were grounded in current understanding of VET kaiako development.
- To provide context for the findings, allowing for high-level comparisons between the study's results and existing knowledge in the field.
- Most importantly, to gather sectoral and international perspectives on what constitutes a 'good' or 'effective' VET kaiako.

The literature scan encompassed academic articles, policy documents, and industry reports from both New Zealand and international sources. It focused particularly on identifying key competencies, skills, and attributes associated with effective VET teaching across various contexts. This information was crucial in framing the study's exploration of kaiako development pathways and in providing a benchmark against which to consider the study's findings.

While not exhaustive, this targeted literature review provided valuable insights that complemented the primary data collection, offering a broader context for understanding VET kaiako effectiveness and development needs in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data from both interviews and open-ended survey responses were analysed using thematic analysis. This process was facilitated by QDA Miner software, which allowed for systematic coding and analysis of the data.

The analysis was structured around the systems change framework, examining structural, relational, and attitudinal conditions within the VET kaiako development system. This approach allowed researchers to explore the interrelationships between various aspects of the system and identify key factors influencing kaiako development pathways.

The coding framework also included the following main categories:

- KAIAKO CAPABILITIES: Knowledge, skills, attributes, and capabilities of effective kaiako.
- TRANSITION/ONBOARDING: Processes for integrating new kaiako into the VET system.
- THE PROFESSION: Perceptions and realities of the kaiako profession.
- PRACTISING REQUIREMENTS: Formal and informal requirements for practicing as a kaiako.
- BARRIERS TO QUALITY DEVELOPMENT: Challenges and obstacles in kaiako development.
- IDEAL DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS: Optimal circumstances for effective kaiako development.
- ONGOING DEVELOPMENT: Continuous professional development practices and opportunities.
- SECTORAL DIFFERENCES: Variations in development approaches between sectors.
- VET SYSTEM (OTHER): Additional systemic factors influencing kaiako development.

The analysis process involved several steps:

1. Familiarization with the data through multiple readings of transcripts.
2. Initial coding using the predefined categories.
3. Refinement of codes and identification of sub-themes within each category.
4. Review of themes and codes to ensure consistency and accuracy.
5. Synthesis of findings to identify overarching patterns and relationships.

Throughout the analysis, researchers paid attention to both common themes across participants and unique perspectives that provided insight into the complexity of the VET kaiako development system.

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted with approval from the Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC). Key ethical considerations included:

1. **Informed Consent:** All participants were provided with detailed information about the study, including its purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits. Written consent was obtained from interview participants, while survey participants gave implied consent by completing and submitting the survey.
2. **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** Strict measures were taken to ensure participant confidentiality. Personal and identifying information was stripped from the data during processing and analysis. In the final report, data was presented in aggregated form or without identifiers or pseudonym classifications to prevent identification of individual participants.
3. **Data Protection:** All data was stored securely on password-protected computers with multi-factor authentication. Recordings were deleted after transcription, and genericized data will be retained for 12 months post-study before deletion. Consent forms are stored separately in a secure location at MIT Tech Park.
4. **Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw:** Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point leading up to and during the interview, and up to two weeks after the interview date. For survey participants, they were informed that they

could stop the survey at any point before submission but could not withdraw data once submitted due to the anonymous nature of the survey.

5. **Cultural Responsiveness:** The study sought representation from Wānanga organisations and made efforts to incorporate diverse perspectives, including those of Māori participants. A representative from a Wānanga organisation was included in the project's steering group to support engagement with these groups.
6. **Minimizing Harm:** The research team was prepared to manage any emotional distress that might arise during interviews. Procedures were in place to stop sessions if needed and provide support or referrals to appropriate services.
7. **Conflict of Interest Management:** Potential conflicts of interest, such as the research organisation's connection to some VET institutions, were disclosed and managed through transparent communication and emphasis on voluntary participation.

Limitations

This study faced several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results:

1. **Survey Response Rate:** The main limitation was the low response rate to the quantitative portion of the online survey, which prevented the use of this data in the final analysis. This limited the ability to quantify and generalize some findings across the broader population of VET kaiako.
2. **Potential Self-Selection Bias:** Participants who chose to be interviewed might have had particularly strong views or experiences regarding kaiako development, potentially skewing the data towards more extreme perspectives.
3. **Sector-Wide Changes:** During the period of this study, the VET sector in Aotearoa New Zealand was undergoing significant consultation and structural change. These ongoing transformations may have affected the availability of some key stakeholders to participate in the research. The timing of the study amidst these changes might have influenced the perspectives shared and the overall representativeness of the data collected.
4. **Access Challenges:** The research team encountered some challenges in navigating the authorizing environments necessary to access potential participants. These difficulties were partly due to the sectoral changes, which may have created uncertainty about proper channels for external research engagement. Additionally, in some cases, there appeared to be a lack of established structures or processes for external researchers to access internal populations within VET institutions. These access challenges may have affected the diversity and representativeness of the participant pool. Another factor might have been the combined organisational and individual consent process which may have put some participants or organisations off contributing.
5. **Evolving Context:** Given the dynamic nature of the VET sector during the study period, it's important to note that the findings represent a snapshot of a rapidly evolving landscape. Some perspectives or experiences shared by participants may have been influenced by transitional factors that could change as new structures and processes are fully implemented. The research team did their best to understand which perspectives about kaiako development were longstanding and which were affected by recent changes.

Despite these limitations, the rich qualitative data from both interviews and open-ended survey responses provided substantial insights into the research questions, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the VET kaiako development system in Aotearoa New Zealand. The study's findings should be considered within the context of a sector undergoing significant change, potentially offering valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities presented by such transitions.

Appendix 3: Interview Consent Information, Schedules, and Survey Items

Participant Information Sheet

SKILLS GROUP

Research Project Title: Industry Skilled Professional to Kaiako

Synopsis of project:

The Construction and Infrastructure Centre of Vocational Excellence (ConCOVE) and the Food and Fibre CoVE have contracted the Skills Consulting Group (SCG) to research the current systems and pathways to develop VET Kaiako (teachers/tutors). Specifically, those that are used to develop institution-based VET Kaiako in the Construction and Infrastructure and Food and Fibre sectors.

What we are doing

As part of this research, we are seeking to talk with VET Kaiako, and those who have knowledge of their development pathways, to understand what's currently being implemented and how these pathways might be improved. Findings from this research will be used to strengthen Kaiako development pathways by informing policy and practice.

We want to invite you to contribute to the research; your knowledge and insights will be valuable. Further information about participating and what you should expect from us is outlined below.

Why have I been asked to participate?

SCG, ConCOVE and Food and Fibre CoVE networks have identified you as an individual who has knowledge of VET Kaiako development, through your own context and experience or otherwise. This may be because you are a VET Kaiako practicing in the Construction and Infrastructure or Food and Fibre sectors, because you have completed research in the area, or because you manage VET Kaiako in some way.

What it will mean for you

As a participant, we would like to arrange to talk with you in a one-on-one interview. This will take approximately 60-90 minutes of your time.

If you would like someone to accompany you in this interview, you may elect to do so. You must nominate this person and work with us to gather their consent to support you in the session.

The interview will be either online or by telephone at a time that suits you. We can discuss these options with you and can be flexible around your needs.

You will not be obliged to share any information you do not want to contribute, and you may refuse to answer any question asked during the session.

You will be asked to sign a consent form if you agree to participate. This does not stop you from changing your mind if you wish to withdraw from the project. However, because of our schedule, any withdrawals or amendments after the interview must be done within 2 weeks after we have



interviewed you. You may also view any statements you have made up until the data is deleted – one year after the project has been completed.

Your name and information that may identify you will be kept completely confidential. All information collected from you will be stored on a password-protected file, and only you and the researchers will have access to this information.

Please contact us if you need more information about the project. At any time if you have any concerns about the research project you can contact the SCG project lead Josh Williams at josh.williams@scgnz.org or the main researcher for this study David Penney at david.penney@scgnz.org



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Web skillsconsultinggroup.com

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2023-1053

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee 30/01/2024 to 30/01/2025. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Administrator (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 7079, ethics@unitec.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.



Participant Consent Form

Skills Group

Research Project Title: Industry Skilled Professional to Kaiako

I have had the research project explained to me and I have read and understand the information sheet given to me.

I understand that I don't have to be part of this research project should I chose not to participate and may withdraw at any time prior to interview and up to 2 weeks after the interview date.

I understand that everything I say is confidential and none of the information I give will identify me and that the only persons who will know what I have said will be the researchers. I also understand that all the information that I give will be stored securely in Skills Consulting Group storage.

I understand that my discussion with the researcher will take between 60-90 minutes.

I understand that my discussion with the researcher may be recorded and transcribed.

I understand that I can see the finished research document.

I have had time to consider everything and I give my consent to be a part of this project.

I have had a chance to ask questions about the research and your involvement.

I understand that I may raise a concern or make a complaint and know how to do this.

Participant Name:

Participant Signature: Date:

Project Researcher: Date:

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Organisational Access Information Sheet

Skills Group

About this research

The Skills Consulting Group (SCG) has been contracted by the Construction and Infrastructure Centre of Vocational Excellence (ConCOVE) to undertake research into the current systems and pathways that are being used to develop VET Kaiako. Specifically, those that are used to develop institution-based VET Kaiako in the Construction and Infrastructure and Food and Fibre sectors.

As part of this research, we are seeking to talk with VET Kaiako, and those who have knowledge of their development pathways, to understand what's currently being implemented and how these pathways might be improved. Findings from this research will be used to strengthen Kaiako development pathways by informing policy and practice. To complete this research, the SCG team requires access to VET Kaiako and Kaiako development managers such as academic leads.

We would like to work with you to offer your relevant staff the opportunity to participate in one-to-one interviews, as well as to offer the opportunities for VET Kaiako to participate in a survey about this. Each interview would require approximately 60-90 minutes of a staff member's time, and each survey would require approximately 5-15 minutes. Interviews would generally be during working hours and surveys would be completed at any time convenient to the respondent.

Further information about taking part and what you should expect from us is outlined below.

Why have I been asked to support this research?

SCG, ConCOVE, and Food and Fibre CoVE networks have identified you as an organisation that has relevant staff to this study. We would like to access these people to offer them the opportunities to participate and share their perspectives in this research.

What might this involve?

We would like your support with the following areas:

1. Giving permission for us to advertise this opportunity to your relevant staff.
2. Giving permission for your staff to participate during their working hours.
3. Working with our team to distribute information about this study however relevant within your organisation. This could be through notifying your team, sending emails to staff, or displaying posters with links to our surveys.

We would like to work with you to identify the best ways to do this and are flexible around your needs and willingness to contribute to this process.

Do I have to take part and can I withdraw if I do?

Supporting this research is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw your agreement to do so at any time. You may withdraw permission for the Skills Group to advertise this research through your organisation, or for staff to participate during their working hours, at any stage and for any reason. To do so, please notify the interview team in writing. Please note, however, that if we have already

advertised an opportunity to your staff that they may still participate in their own time, still in an individual capacity.

You may also choose how you would like to support this work. From simply forwarding an email to your staff to allowing us to embed advertisements in your regular communications to staff, we would be grateful for any support.

We acknowledge that participation in this research does impose on your time and other commitments, and we are grateful for any support that you are able to provide us.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Your personal or organisational information will not be present in any materials published from this study. All data collected will be stored securely and to the standards set by the NZ government and SCG.

What should I do if I would like to support this?

If you would like to support this research, please respond to SCG or the representative who has supplied you with this letter. The best method will be to respond directly to david.penney@scgnz.org

Who can I contact?

If you have any comments or concerns about the research, please contact the SCG project lead Josh Williams at josh.williams@scgnz.org or the main researcher for this study David Penney at david.penney@scgnz.org

Thank you kindly for your time and consideration.



David Penney

Consultant

Skills Group

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Web skillsconsultinggroup.com

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Employer Consent Form

Skills Group

About this research

The Skills Group (SCG) has been contracted by the Construction and Infrastructure Centre of Vocational Excellence (ConCOVE) to undertake research into the current systems and pathways that are being used to develop VET Kaiako. Specifically, those that are used to develop institution-based VET Kaiako in the Construction and Infrastructure and Food and Fibre sectors ([LINK](#)). Findings from this research will be used to strengthen Kaiako development pathways by informing policy and practice.

To complete this research, the SCG team requires access to VET Kaiako and Kaiako development managers such as academic leads. The team would like to offer your relevant staff the opportunity to participate in one-to-one interviews, as well as to offer the opportunities for VET Kaiako to participate in a survey.

Each interview would require approximately 60-90 minutes a staff member's time, and each survey would require approximately 5-15 minutes. Interviews would generally be during working hours and surveys would be completed at any time convenient to the respondent.

This form, when signed and returned to the research team, will be consent for the SCG team to offer participation opportunities to staff within your organisation, supported by you. Alternatively, consent may be given in an alternative written manner (e.g., by email) by clearly accepting the terms of participation and acknowledging this form and accompanying information sheet.

Contacts

SCG project lead, **Josh Williams**, josh.williams@scgnz.org
Primary researcher, **David Penney**, david.penney@scgnz.org
ConCOVE project manager, **Kylie Taffard**, kylie.taffard@manukau.ac.nz

By signing this form you agree that:

- You allow the Skills Group to advertise this research and the opportunities to participate in it to your relevant staff and have the authority to do so.
- You will support the dissemination of opportunities to participate within your organisation in a mutually agreed way, respecting the rights of individuals to volunteer their time as well as their privacy – you will not know who volunteers to participate.
- You give permission for your staff to participate in this research during their allocated work hours, as appropriate.
- You understand any potential risks to your involvement.
- You have had a chance to ask questions about the research and agree the scope of your involvement.

- You have read, understood, and accept the accompanying information sheet.
- You understand that you may raise a concern or make a complaint and know how to do this.
- You understand that you may withdraw this permission for the Skills Group to advertise this research through your organisation, or for staff and learners to participate during their working hours, at any stage and for any reason. Though, you acknowledge that individuals who wish to participate after this may still volunteer in their own time and in an individual capacity.

Please electronically sign by double-clicking the field above.

Name:

Date:



David Penney

Consultant

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Mobile +64 21 536 241

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Web skillsconsultinggroup.com

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Interview Schedules

The interviews that will be conducted are semi-structured and necessarily need to adjust to individual circumstances, experiences, and perspectives. These schedules are a guide for the interviewer, with the key questions being the throughline to return to.

Pre-interview blurb:

“Before we begin the session, I know that you have read through the information sheet and have returned the consent form, but I would like to quickly reiterate a few important points regarding the interview process. First and foremost, your participation in this interview is highly valued, and we appreciate your time and insights.

Anything discussed during this interview will be treated with strict confidentiality and care. Personal information, including the name of your employer, will not be included in any way in final report.

You have the right to withdraw from the interview at any point, and your decision will be respected without any consequences. You also have the right to view, amend, or remove any statements that you have made. This information will be handled with care and in accordance with relevant data protection standards.

We would like to request your permission to record this session for the purpose of accurate transcription. The recording will be used solely for this purpose and all recorded data will be deleted immediately after the transcription is complete. Is this okay with you? If not, we are happy to proceed without the recording too.

[SEEK APPROVAL]

Next steps:

Once this interview and the subsequent transcription are completed and sent to you, you have two weeks to withdraw your data or a portion of your data if you wish without giving a reason.

As well as the completion of the report, the information from this interview will be used to write articles for journals or other such publications and present at conferences.

Do you have any final questions or comments before we begin?”

Institution-based VET Kaiako:

1. I'd like to start by getting an understanding of your role within your institution.
Would you please describe your role and what you do?
 - a. In what contexts do you deliver learning? – Knowledge-based, skills-based, workplace delivery? Classroom, workshop, workplace? Sector?
 - b. Who supports you in your role and what do they do?
 - c. **In your role, what, if any, are your responsibilities to** [where not already mentioned]:
 - i. Your workplace/institution/provider? ['corporate' responsibilities]
 - ii. The VET Kaiako profession?
 - iii. The VET sector?
2. I'd like to get a bit more background about your journey to becoming a Kaiako.
How did you get to the role you're currently working in?
 - a. What made you interested in working as a Kaiako?
 - b. What has been your career journey?
3. We'd like to understand what requirements you needed to meet to begin working as a VET Kaiako. For example, any **qualifications, skills/competencies, or experience** that you needed to have before you started.
What were the requirements you needed to meet for your first VET Kaiako role/this role?
 - a. Were there any mandatory or statutory requirements? What were these?
 - b. Did your institution/provider/professional body have any requirements for you to meet? What were these?
 - c. How easy were these requirements to identify and understand? Why?
 - d. How did you meet these requirements [e.g., qualifications or development processes]?
 - e. Were you **supported** to meet these requirements? If so, how?
4. We'd also like to understand what you think about these requirements for Kaiako and how effective they are. So, I'd like you to think back to your first experiences as a Kaiako:
How prepared did you feel for your first VET Kaiako role and why?
 - a. Were you supported as a new Kaiako? How? By whom [Institution, others]?
 - b. Did you feel like you had the right knowledge and skills to start the role? Why or why not?
 - c. Do you think that the requirements you needed to meet to begin as a Kaiako set you up for success as a Kaiako? Why or why not?
5. Now, I'd like you to think on how you've developed as a Kaiako over time and any professional development opportunities and experiences you've had. We'd like to understand your development journey after beginning as a Kaiako.
 - a. Are there any requirements for you to participate in professional development? What are these?
 - b. Is there any structure or plan for your development?
 - i. What is this plan?
 - ii. Who developed and manages this?
 - iii. Do you contribute to this plan?
 - c. Is your performance assessed? If so, how? And what criteria are you evaluated against?
 - d. What areas have you received professional development in?
 - e. From your perspective, have you had sufficient access or opportunities for professional development? Why or why not?
 - f. What support have you had for your professional development? (prompts: training, quals, sabbaticals, secondments/internships, etc)
 - i. Who supports your professional development? (and how do they do this?)
 - g. Are there any barriers to your professional development? (Prompts: lack of support, policy, time, etc.)
6. I'd now like to understand how you think VET Kaiako should be developed and supported, both at the start of their roles and over time.
What does a good Kaiako development pathway look like to you? (Prompt: basic training and development path, intermediate and advanced pathways)

- a. Do you think there are any issues with the current ways that Kaiako are developed and supported?
 - b. Can you think of any barriers to good Kaiako development pathways?
 - c. What capabilities should Kaiako have before they start their roles? And what should they develop over time?
8. **Do you have any other perspectives on Kaiako development pathways that you would like to share?**
- a. How things are, how they should be, anything else from your experiences?

Kaiako Capability Experts

(Such as managers, researchers, or academic leads):

1. We'd like to understand your perspectives on Kaiako capabilities so that we can get a broad picture of what the 'destination' of Kaiako development pathways should be.
What capabilities do VET Kaiako, within institutions, need to be effective?
2. I'd like to understand the minimum requirements of VET Kaiako and the ways in which they are first developed into the profession.
What requirements do VET Kaiako need to meet to enter the profession?
 - a. How are these requirements being met? (Frequently)
 - b. Do these initial requirements of VET Kaiako support the development of effective Kaiako? Why or why not?
 - c. How well do you think new Kaiako are supported into the profession? Why?
 - d. Is there anything that is needed to improve initial Kaiako development pathways? What is needed and why?
3. I'd now like to understand more about Kaiako professional development to get a sense for what development pathways look like when in the profession.
How are VET Kaiako currently being developed over time?
 - a. In your opinion, how well do these current professional development systems and processes work?
 - b. From your perspective, what does good professional development for VET Kaiako include or look like?
 - c. What do you think the barriers to good Kaiako professional development are?
 - d. Is there anything that is needed to improve Kaiako professional development pathways? What is needed and why?
4. **Is there anything else that you'd like to add regarding the effectiveness of current Kaiako development pathways, or how these should be designed?**
 - a. Prompts: Transparent and clear requirements; pathway and entrance flexibility; financial support; sectoral collaboration; Continuous development needs/importance.

Kaiako Survey Template

Introduction page:

Welcome to our survey

Research Project Title: Industry Skilled Professional to Kaiako

Synopsis of project:

The Construction and Infrastructure Centre of Vocational Excellence (ConCOVE) and the Food and Fibre CoVE have contracted the Skills Consulting Group (SCG) to research the current systems and pathways to develop VET educators. Specifically, those that are used to develop institution-based VET educators in the Construction and Infrastructure and Food and Fibre sectors.

What we are doing

As part of this research, we are seeking responses from VET educators, and those who have knowledge of their development pathways, to understand what's currently being implemented and how these pathways might be improved. Findings from this research will be used to strengthen educator development pathways by informing policy and practice.

We want to invite you to contribute to the research. Further information about participating and what you should expect from us is outlined below.

Why have I been asked to participate?

This survey is for vocational educators who are currently delivering, or have previously delivered, vocational education in an education organisation. We would like to understand what experiences you have had relating to your development and how you think educator development should be done.

What it will mean for you

We anticipate this survey will take approximately 5-15 minutes.

The survey is completed online and your responses will be anonymised, including the removal of IP address.

Completion of this survey is voluntary and you can stop at any time during the survey. Your responses will not, however, be able to be removed once you have submitted them.

Please contact us if you need more information about the project. If you have any concerns about the research project you can contact the SCG project lead Josh Williams at josh.williams@scgnz.org or the main researcher for this study David Penney at david.penney@scgnz.org

MIT ETHICS REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2023-1053

This study has been approved by MIT Ethics Committee from 30 January 2024 to 30 January 2025. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact MIT Ethics Committee at mitethics@manukau.ac.nz. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Inclusion question/population discriminator:

- Do you have experience working **as a vocational educator** within an education organisation? (Private training establishment, Wananga, Polytechnic, Te Pūkenga, dedicated training organisation within industry, or otherwise)
 - a. Yes, I currently work full-time in an education provider
 - b. Yes, I currently work part-time in an education provider
 - c. Yes, I have previously worked in an education provider
 - d. No, I haven't worked within an education provider before

Demographic Questions:

- How old are you?
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-24
 - c. 25-34
 - d. 35-44
 - e. 45-54
 - f. 55-64
 - g. 65+
 - h. I'd rather not say
- What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Gender diverse
 - d. I'd rather not say
- Which ethnicities do you identify with? Please select all that apply.
 - a. NZ European
 - b. Māori
 - c. Pacific peoples
 - d. Asian
 - e. Middle Eastern
 - f. Latin American
 - g. African
 - h. Other (please specify)'
 - i. 'I'd rather not say'.
- How many years have you worked as a vocational educator within an education organisation?
 - a. Blank numerical field
- What is the main sector you provide training in?
 - a. Construction and Infrastructure
 - b. Food and Fibre
 - c. Service Industries
 - d. Social and Community Services
 - e. Creative Industries
 - f. Manufacturing and Technology
 - g. I'd rather not say

Your experiences with development:

[NOTE: When referencing an agreement scale in the questions below a 5-point Likert-type scale was used. This includes the categories of 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'Neither agree or disagree', 'agree', and 'strongly agree'.]

- Please indicate your agreement with the following statements about your **first six months** working as a vocational educator within an education organisation. [Agreement scales]
 - I was effectively onboarded into the organisation.

- I felt confident to deliver learning experiences.
- I was offered enough opportunities to learn and develop.
- The organisation supported my development.
- I was given all the tools and resources I needed to succeed.
- The development I received in my first six months met my needs.
- What professional development methods does your organisation offer you or support you to undertake? Please select all that apply.
 - Adult and tertiary teaching qualifications
 - Other Qualifications
 - Mentorship from senior kaiako
 - Community of practice with other educators.
 - Industry engagement and knowledge building.
 - The organisation does not/did not offer me development opportunities.
 - Other/s (please specify)
- Please indicate your agreement with the following statements about your **professional development over time** as a vocational educator over time. [Agreement scales]
 - My organisation effectively supports my development.
 - I have sufficient access to development opportunities.
 - The education qualifications I have completed were effective.
 - I understand what my development needs are.
- Overall, how satisfied are you with the development you received to become a vocational educator?
 - Very satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied

How development pathways could be improved:

- Why were you [PREVIOUS ANSWER] with the development you received to become a vocational educator?
 - Short answer field.
- How do you think the development for vocational educators could be improved?
 - Short answer field.
- What, if anything, is getting in the way of effective development for vocational educators?
 - Short answer field.

Appendix 4: High-level Overview of Kaiako Capability Framework Analysis

Table 16: Comparison of VET kaiako Capability Frameworks.

FRAMEWORK	CAPABILITY AREA ALIGNMENT			
	INDUSTRY CAPABILITY	EDUCATIONAL CAPABILITY	ENGAGEMENT CAPABILITY	PROFESSIONAL & PERSONAL TRAITS
Food and Fibre CoVE Vocational Excellence Rubrics (FFCoVE, 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domain knowledge. Maintaining knowledge of current policy and regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and adult education methods. Consideration of learners' needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connections to industry. Connections to education communities. Reflective, inclusive, and culturally appropriate approaches to practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal factors, including a willingness to develop themselves, a passion for teaching, and an ability to inspire learners and earn their respect and trust.
OECD Preparing Vocational Teachers and Trainers (OECD, 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both theoretical and practical knowledge and skills, and sometimes require work experience too. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The capacity to effectively transfer their knowledge and skills to learners, including subject-independent content such as digital and socio-emotional skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with students with diverse backgrounds, motivations, and aspirations. Ability to engage with learners at risk of dropout, with lower levels of basic skills, and other features. 	
NCVER Building capability and quality in VET teaching (Misko, Guthrie, & Waters, 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dual professional issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional knowledge and practice of teaching and assessment. Knowledge of pedagogy and subject content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional engagement and collaboration. Understanding individual student needs. Knowledge of cultural diversity and social inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional values and commitment. Professional and ethical values. Knowledge and application of basic and/or advanced digital skills and technologies. High-level corporate responsibilities.
IBSA VET Practitioner Capability Framework (IBSA, 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry Collaboration: Vocational Competence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching: Theory, Design, Facilitation, and Evaluation Assessment: Theory, Products, Processes, and Validation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry Collaboration: Engagement, Networks, Workforce Development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems and Compliance: System Standards, System Stakeholders, Products, and Processes. Cross-cutting: Teamwork and Communication; Leadership; Ethics; Cultural competence; Innovation; Evidence-Based Practice and Research.

CAPABILITY AREA ALIGNMENT

FRAMEWORK	INDUSTRY CAPABILITY	EDUCATIONAL CAPABILITY	ENGAGEMENT CAPABILITY	PROFESSIONAL & PERSONAL TRAITS
Smith and Yasukawa Quality VET teacher research (Smith & Yasukawa, 2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry/disciplinary expertise and standing. • Expertise and standing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogy knowledge and expertise (including assessment). • Pedagogy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with and attitudes toward students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism.
CEDEFOP and Finnish National Board of Education Competence Framework for VET Professions (Volmari, Helakorpi, & Frimodt, 2009)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training; Planning; Facilitation of Learning; Assessment and Evaluation. • Development and Quality Assurance: Developing Oneself; Developing Institution; Quality Assurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking: Internal networking; External networking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration: Organisation and Planning; Project Management. • Development and Quality Assurance: Developing Oneself; Developing Institution.
CEDEFOP Guiding principles for VET trainers (workplace-based) (CEDEFOP, 2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competences related to their specific technical domain or sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competences related to training (Pedagogical/didactical competences). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competences related to serving a company's strategy and improving its competitiveness through training. • Transversal competences that enable or help the educator to support the learning process.