

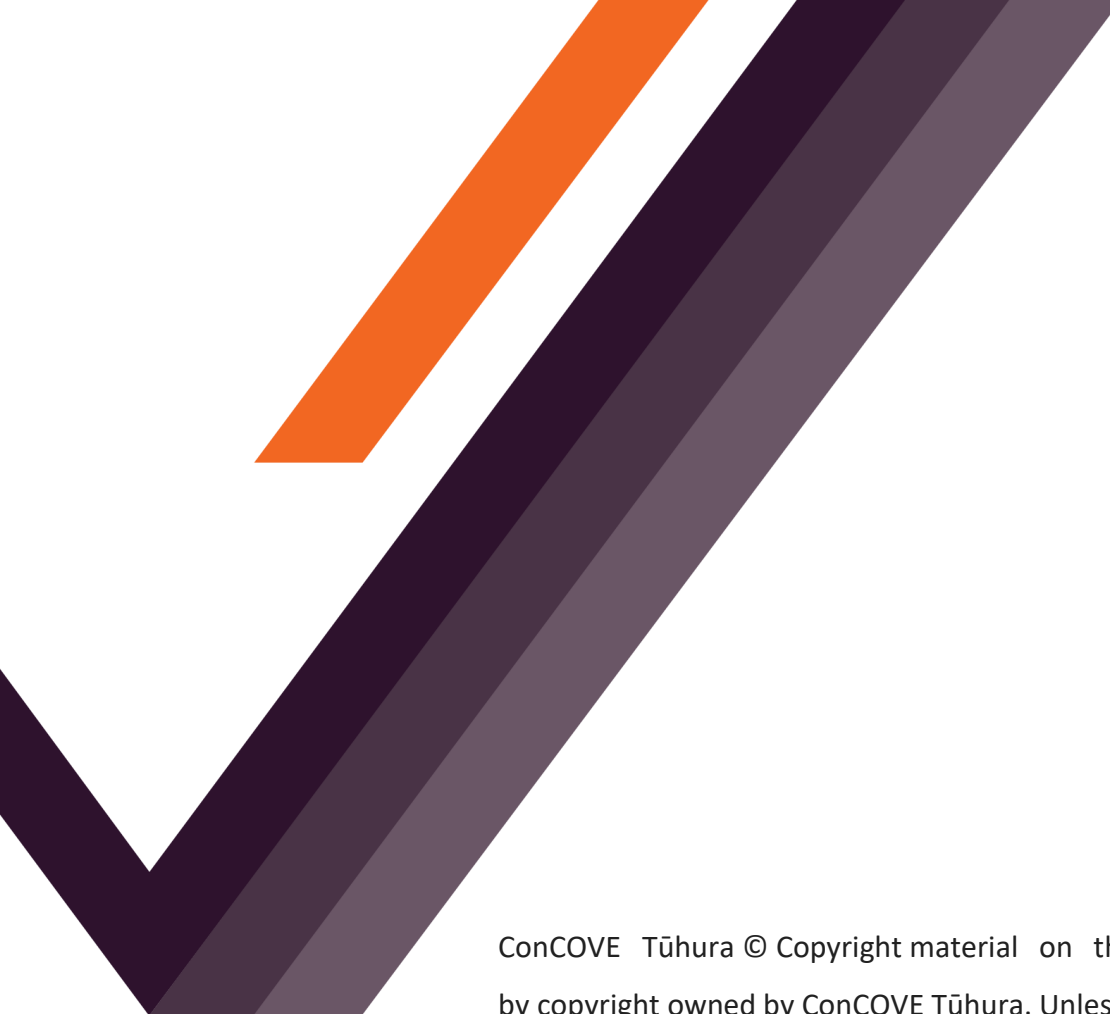
CONCO>E TŪHURA

Funding of Construction and Infrastructure TVET

Methodology and Bibliography

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1. Introduction

This report presents the methodology used to produce the technical background reports to a discussion paper on the funding of TVET for the construction and infrastructure sector

Note on terminology

In this report, the term *TVET (technical and vocational education and training)* signifies any tertiary education that is focused on a particular occupation or career.

The authors of this report have deliberately sought to cover the whole system of human capital formation encompassing the full mix of foundational skills, vocational education, and more advanced learning required by the construction and infrastructure sector and the role of professional and industry organisations in deepening the skills and competencies of their members.

In our view, the case for distinguishing as strongly as the New Zealand system does between (principally) sub-degree and other forms of advanced learning and vocational education is mistaken for reasons we address in this paper.

In essence, we think it is a trap to treat training for plumbers separately from professional engineers, or to assume that education and training starts and ends at the conclusion of a learner's enrolment with a tertiary education organisation.

Generally, we use the term tertiary education organisation (TEO) or providers to refer to all those organisations that deliver and arrange TVET for the construction and infrastructure sector.

In some cases, for ease of understanding, particularly when it is necessary to distinguish between the kinds of education and training that was provided historically, we refer to institutes of technology and polytechnics (or simply polytechnics) and industry training organisations as separate entities.

Approach

This report employs a mixed-methods research design, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of TVET funding for the construction and infrastructure sector in New Zealand.

The research began with an extensive literature review, which provided a foundational understanding of the economic rationale, costs and benefits, and incentive structures underpinning tertiary education with a particular focus on vocational education.

The literature review examined international and domestic research on vocational education systems, funding models, economic and social returns, and equity considerations. Particular attention was given to comparative international models, exploring their applicability to the New Zealand context.

To complement the literature review, primary qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with 49 key informants. Participants included industry employers and leaders, vocational education providers, government officials responsible for tertiary education policy, and other stakeholders familiar with the funding system's design.

These interviews were structured around core themes identified from the literature review, including alignment between education outcomes and workforce needs, industry-government partnerships, equity in access and outcomes, and innovation in teaching and learning practices.

Interview data were analysed thematically to identify recurring themes, tensions, and insights regarding the current funding model's effectiveness. Particular attention was paid to identifying systemic barriers affecting traditionally underserved groups (Māori, Pacific peoples, women, and disabled learners). Interviews also explored informants' perspectives on funding incentives, work-integrated learning (WIL), employer contributions to training costs, and institutional flexibility.

Quantitative analysis was conducted using secondary data sources from government administrative datasets (such as Ministry of Education statistics), industry reports (e.g., BDO Construction Sector Reports), and research studies examining labour market outcomes from vocational qualifications. These data provided insights into learner participation trends, completion rates, employment outcomes, earnings premiums associated with VET qualifications, attrition rates within apprenticeships, and demographic patterns in participation.

Findings from both qualitative interviews and quantitative analyses were triangulated with existing literature to ensure robustness of conclusions. The report also critically evaluates current performance measurement practices within New Zealand's TVET system—identifying gaps such as insufficient tracking of workforce retention or employer satisfaction—and proposes areas for future development.

Ethical considerations were addressed by providing participants with clear information about the purpose of the study prior to interviews (see Participant Information Sheet in Appendix B).

Participants gave informed consent before contributing their insights. Interview data was analysed thematically to identify key themes related to funding structures, system alignment with workforce needs, equity considerations, and stakeholder experiences.

Finally, implications drawn from this combined methodological approach informed recommendations aimed at improving VET funding structures. These recommendations are intended to guide policy discussions detailed further in the companion discussion paper.

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