MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA

EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

NZCER
Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa

Joint Briefing Note: Education sector Research, Evaluation and Development (ERED) Strategy Update

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is a progress update on the development of the Education Research, Evaluation and Development (ERED) Strategy.

Summary

- The ERED Strategy is a 10-year plan that will support and guide research and development decisions across agencies to deliver on the government's education vision and priorities.

- As outlined in our last update [METIS 1272170] the Strategy is being delivered in partnership by the Ministry of Education, the Education Review Office (ERO) and the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER).

- We have started extensive sector engagement on the development of the Strategy. Our engagement plan follows Te Arawhiti guidance on Crown engagement with Māori and the principles contained in that guidance: Engage Early, Be Inclusive, Think Broadly.

- Engagement has been materially affected by Covid and groups have asked to defer hui during this period. We recently met with Komiti Pasifika of Universities New Zealand /Te Pōkai Tara and will meet the Mātauranga Iwi Leaders Group in late April. More time is needed to consider input from these groups and to understand the different requirements of iwi and hapū entities.

- From engagement so far, several themes are emerging and are summarised later in the report. There is widespread support for a national strategy as well as for an approach to design and implementation that honours the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Inclusiveness has emerged as a key theme and stakeholders have told us that, to be successful, we must hear and include the voices of those groups currently underserved by the system.

- We propose to develop high level strategic areas (domains) in conjunction with stakeholders to be tested with Ministers, prior to development of the final document.

- In parallel we are working on an implementation plan to support a launch in the second half of 2022. The implementation plan will guide the operationalisation and integration of the Strategy both internally and at an inter-agency level.

- Because of where we are in the engagement process, we do not yet know the extent of the work required to ensure comprehensive sector engagement and input. We propose to brief you in June on whether there needs to be:
    - a delay in our timeframe for the July launch date; and/or
    - a launch in July focussed on the strategic areas (domains) for development.

Proactive Release

a   **agree** that the Ministry of Education release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you.

Agree / **Disagree.**

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22//04//2022

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Strategic Context

1. The Ministry of Education, the Education Review Office and the New Zealand Council of Educational Research are codeveloping a 10-year ERED Strategy.

2. Through the Strategy, we aim to build a shared focus and vision for research, evaluation and development in the education sector that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and leads to improved educational outcomes for all ākonga and whānau, particularly for groups currently underserved by the system. The Strategy will contribute towards education becoming 'a system that learns' – a system where we commit to learning, inquiring and problem solving together in new ways[1].

3. The proposed framework of strategic goals and priorities will guide decision-making processes and investment priorities across agencies and increase shared foci across the wider research community for research, evaluation, and development. The Strategy aims to achieve the following outcomes:
    a. collaborate/partner with Māori to better understand and respond to their needs and priorities;
    b. strengthen coordination of ERED across the education sector to increase the impact of research, e.g., improving equity and inclusion;
    c. increase the usefulness of our evidence for all our communities, including delivery on wider national policy objectives, e.g., the NELP;
    d. enhance the impact of research and contributing to a stronger culture of evidence-informed decision making in all parts of the education system, e.g., contributing to improved teaching and learning and informing the ongoing development of curricula;
    e. develop capacity and capability to undertake ERED which contributes to Education Work Programme (EWP) goals;
    f. increase visibility and alignment with the wider national Research Science and Innovation Strategy (RSI).

4. The Strategy delivers on the expectation set in the Education Work Programme (EWP) that agencies work to strengthen the base for the EWP to deliver excellent and equitable outcomes for all ākonga [METIS 1272170 refers].

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[1] Curriculum Progress and Achievement Advisory Group, June 2019

5. To achieve these outcomes, we need to set strategic priorities for research and evaluation over a ten-year period that will deliver increased knowledge in key focus areas. Areas of focus and potential priorities are the subject of ongoing engagement but might include ERED that:

   a. contributes to government priorities set out in the National Education and Learning Priorities (NELP); The Tertiary Education Strategy (TES); Ka Hikitia, Ka Hāpaitia; The Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-30; the Learning Support Action Plan and other strategies;

   b. delivers research in a way that honours our responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi;

   c. delivers research that is RSI aligned;

   d. increases our overall understanding and knowledge of the education system to inform strategic investment;

   e. grows research capability to support the EWP, for example growing capability that supports a kaupapa Māori research approach;

   f. increases the status of education within the wider research sector.

Engagement approach

6. The purpose of our engagement plan is to understand those areas where the Strategy will need to focus, and the groups we need to work with, if we are to achieve our desired outcomes. We have adopted the following guiding principles that are driving our approach to engagement:

   a. giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the way we engage, including identifying future partners for the design and implementation phases of the Strategy;

   b. hearing the key priorities and challenges for diverse groups;

   c. understanding how a strategy could better meet the needs of these groups;

   d. understanding how a strategy can most impact on our system's ability to address inequities and meet the needs of all ākonga and their whānau.

7. We recognise that participation and ownership from and by the sector is key to the Strategy delivering long-term positive outcomes. To achieve this, we are primarily engaging across three often overlapping groups of stakeholders: funders, researchers, and end-users of the education system – ākonga and their whānau. We know we need to bring all these groups into the kōrero and understand their priorities and issues if the Strategy is to be a success. The list of stakeholders has been revised to incorporate

earlier Ministerial feedback regarding greater representation from LGBTQIA+ student, migrant and refugee communities.

8. As outlined in our previous briefing [METIS 127170], we have adopted a four-stage approach to engagement – kaupapa, engagement on the draft, engagement on the final strategy and launch. The purpose of the kaupapa phase is to seek a wide range of views on which to base our design work, identify interested parties and to ensure the final strategy reflects the priorities of our partners and sets a widely accepted direction for ERED in Aotearoa.

9. Broad and early engagement will also support future partnering with Māori, honouring our Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsibilities. It allows us to understand priorities and concerns as well as to identify those groups interested in a more enduring partnership during the implementation phase, for example through a governance role.

10. At this first phase, stakeholders are offered:

    a. kānohi ki te kānohi (face to face) meetings.
    b. the opportunity to participate via our ERED page on the Kōrero Mātauranga conversation website.

11.   To support these conversations, we have developed two key resources:

    a. the engagement kete to support kānohi ki te kānohi (face to face) meetings. The content, style and language of the kete was tested with several peak bodies and subsequently updated to reflect their feedback, including incorporating a stronger te ao Māori approach. A copy of the kete is included at Annexe 1.
    b. an ERED page on the Kōrero Mātauranga conversation website which supports lighter touch engagement for a more extensive list of stakeholders. If groups indicate a desire for greater involvement, we will do our best to accommodate this.

Engagement to date

12. The engagement plan has been impacted by Covid, and many groups have asked to defer engagement on the Strategy. As a result, we are still at the kaupapa stage of engagement, gathering information needs, current challenges, and key dependences from stakeholders.

13. Since our last update [METIS 1272170], we met with a number of organisations, including:

- Council of Deans of Faculties of Education (Universities)
- Te Hunga Rangahau Mātauranga O Aotearoa (NZARE)
- 2021 Student Voice Summit
- AKO Aotearoa, Executive
- Tertiary Education Commission
- OECD
- Komiti Pasifika, Universities New Zealand / Te Pōkai Tara

14. We are in regular contact with the following organisations but have not been able to formally meet yet due to Covid-related pressures:

- Mātauranga Iwi Leaders Group – *meeting scheduled for 27th April 2022*
- Māori Collective Peak Body

15. Because of the difficulties in meeting kānohi-ki-te-kānohi (face to face) we are opening the Kōrero Mātauranga conversation site to all stakeholders and will follow up with meetings when possible. This offers an opportunity to learn about the intent of ERED and to provide some level of input now, with a more granular conversation to follow as sector resourcing and priorities permit.

Emerging themes

16. Overall, the concept of an ERED Strategy has been well-received by stakeholders with general agreement that it will contribute to greater coherence and strategic use of resource across agencies, increasing the visibility and impact of research and evaluation in the sector. We have identified the following high-level themes and points from the hui that have taken place so far:

    a. General support for the strategy being Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led, and recognition that this will require time to work with stakeholders in appropriate ways.

    b. For the Strategy to be successful, there must be a commitment to sector engagement during the implementation phase. Priorities evolve as context changes and new research emerges, and feedback mechanisms are needed to ensure the Strategy is dynamic.

    c. The commitment to on-going engagement, and the form this takes, will be an important outcome for our stakeholders, alongside the understandings we gain through that engagement.

d. A desire for an operating model that ensures on-going agency commitment to the Strategy and ensures research gets to where it has the most impact.

e. There was some discussion about shared language and understandings. Importantly, different groups are providing perspectives on key concepts for priorities which means we will have a richer picture and more differentiated understanding. For example, the concept of 'well-being' is viewed in a range of ways.

f. Making a difference for our tamariki, teachers and leaders, whānau, and communities (research impact) is emerging as a key priority. Each group had slightly different interpretations of this. Inclusiveness is part of the framing, with the learner at the centre, and also a concern for research that is translational. There was a strong commitment to seeking ākonga voice across all aspects, not just ākonga as end-users.

g. The focus areas of the strategy should cover the full life course of a learner's journey.

Implementation planning

17. As we develop the Strategy, we are exploring how best to ensure its success once it is launched. We are considering the co-ordination and processes that will sit across the work and the nature and role of ongoing sector ownership of and input into implementation of the Strategy, including partnering with Māori. We know that successful implementation will require a 'system that learns' approach including adjustments to incorporate new research findings as well as the changing priorities and challenges faced by our stakeholder groups.

18. Although still emerging, it is likely that implementation will focus on:

   a. Coordinating research investment decisions to support the focus areas in the strategy; and

   b. supporting agencies and others to develop complimentary work programmes and sharing areas of expertise to progress key priorities.

19. We have started discussions with our partner agencies and the Mātauranga Iwi Leaders Group about the steps needed to implement and support the ongoing development of the strategy.

20. We intend to progress our thinking on implementation alongside Strategy content development and will provide further information on implementation in our next briefing.

Key Risks and Benefits

21. The key risks for the programme largely remain as outlined in the previous update. The risk of sector engagement fatigue remains high considering the current Covid environment.

22. The demand for wide and deep engagement is also a risk. We want to meet kānohi ki te kānohi with as many groups as want this approach to build a deep understanding of diverse groups, their priorities and challenges. However, time, budget and resources may mean we are unable to meet demand for this approach.

23. Previously we identified July as appropriate timing for the launch of the full strategy. Delay in engaging with key groups identified above, especially the Mātauranga Iwi Leaders Group, means this date is at risk. We will continue to develop the strategy and will brief you closer to the time on whether there needs to be:
    - a short delay in our timeframe; and/or
    - a launch focussed on the strategic areas (domains) for development, agreed with the stakeholders, with the fully developed strategy to follow.

24. The primary benefit of undertaking extensive sector engagement is a higher level of support and endorsement for the Strategy across the sector. This is likely to result in better uptake and adoption of the Strategy at the implementation phase.

25. Feedback from the two-pronged engagement process will also help highlight any further areas or perspectives that need to be considered in the development of the Strategy

Next steps

26. We will continue to engage with the sector on the Strategy during April and May, including on a name for the Strategy that best reflects its purpose and the partnering approach that underpins its development.

27. The next step is to consolidate sector feedback into key themes and priorities which will inform the final draft strategy presented to Ministers.

28. In parallel to developing the themes and content of the Strategy, we are preparing an implementation plan to support a launch in the second half of 2022. The implementation plan will guide the operationalisation and integration of the Strategy both internally and at an inter-agency level.

29. Because of where we are in the engagement process, we do not yet know the extent of the work required to ensure comprehensive sector engagement and input. We propose to brief you in June on whether there needs to be:
   - a delay in our timeframe for the July launch date; and/or
   - a launch focussed on the strategic areas (domains) for development in July, agreed with stakeholders, with the fully developed strategy to follow.

Annexes

- Annexe 1: Revised ERED Engagement kete