

Education Report: Formalisation of a cross-Workforce Development Council Māori advisory committee

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
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Purpose

This paper provides you with an update on formalising Te Kāhui Ahumahi as part of the establishment of Workforce Development Councils (WDC). You have agreed to consider formalising Te Kāhui Ahumahi in response to submissions received during the WDC Order in Council consultation process.

Recommended Actions

The Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) recommend that you:

- note** that there is support for the formalisation of a cross-Workforce Development Council Māori advisory committee (Te Kāhui Ahumahi) from the Order in Council consultation process, and the interim Establishment Boards (IEBs);
- note** that TEC will work with WDCs to support formalisation of Te Kāhui Ahumahi within current settings;
- note** that within current settings, it will be up to WDCs to decide whether to continue with Te Kāhui Ahumahi model and officials expect that they will;

- d. **note** that the TEC will report to you on Te Kāhui Ahumahi, as part of reporting on WDCs, including any changes that may be considered to support its role, including legislative change;
- e. **agree** that this paper will be proactively released.

Agree / Disagree



Katrina Sutich

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02/07/2021



Gillian Dudgeon

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Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of Education

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You have asked us to explore options to formalise Te Kāhui Ahumahi

1. Te Kāhui Ahumahi is a self-formed group made up of the Māori members of the six interim Establishment Boards (iEB). Te Kāhui Ahumahi was formed to provide specific Māori expertise across multiple industry perspectives prior to and during the establishment of the Workforce Development Councils (WDCs). Currently, Te Kāhui Ahumahi is supported by the Establishment Unit (EU) and does not have a ring-fenced budget. It also does not have a formalised structure or agreement, such as a terms of reference.
2. During the establishment phase, Te Kāhui Ahumahi has provided advice to inform decision making of the iEBs. This role has included supporting the development of WDCs' operating model and advising on all establishment activities to enable WDCs contribution to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and support Māori-Crown relationships. It has also supported identifying the skills, capabilities, and capacity that WDCs require to undertake this role.
3. Two submissions received during the WDC consultation process [METIS 1250938 refers] requested the formalisation of Te Kāhui Ahumahi in an ongoing role, including through the establishment process, in order to not lose momentum or institutional memory. The continuation of Te Kāhui Ahumahi is also supported by all of the iEBs.
4. You agreed to consider the formalisation of Te Kāhui Ahumahi and indicated that if there is strong support for Te Kāhui Ahumahi, this should be embraced. You also indicated that you were open for formalisation to be enabled by a change in legislation if required.
5. Officials consider that formalisation of Te Kāhui Ahumahi can be achieved within current settings. This approach is supported by Te Kāhui Ahumahi and the iEBs, although some members suggest additional support or formalisation may be needed in the future.

The EU is proposing to have a number of cross WDC groups to support collaboration and share knowledge within current settings

6. The EU has developed a proposed framework of shared committees for WDCs, including a committee of Chairs and a committee of Chief Executives. These committees can support collaboration and knowledge sharing and ensure alignment of approach between WDCs. However, they will not have any powers over the WDC and do not remove the requirements on WDCs to meet their obligations and responsibilities.
7. The iEB Steering Committee is proposing that Te Kāhui Ahumahi should be established as one of these cross WDC committees. They consider that the role of Te Kāhui Ahumahi should be to provide advice on relevant issues pertaining to Māori, at a governance level, including on how WDCs can contribute to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supporting Māori-Crown relations.
8. As WDCs are established they will make decisions on which committees they will establish, based on EU advice and iEB recommendations. These decisions includes

whether to establish Te Kāhui Ahumahi as a cross WDC committee, as recommended. As part of this they will also make operational decisions, such as:

- Formalisation mechanisms, such as a Terms of Reference
 - Membership and appointment processes
 - Resourcing and funding levels and support mechanisms required
9. To ensure that the role of Te Kāhui Ahumahi continues to exist with the transition from iEBs to WDCs, the EU will provide support for Te Kāhui Ahumahi initially. Once WDC's have their establishment plans and budgets approved, support for the agreed committees will shift fully to them, or their shared services entity.
10. We expect that WDCs will decide to continue with Te Kāhui Ahumahi model, given iEB endorsement. The role of Te Kāhui Ahumahi will be supported by TEC guidance on expectations to each WDC Chair and through ongoing engagement. The TEC will also work with WDCs to identify if anything further needs to be reflected in the TEC's operational policy for WDCs, including monitoring.
11. It will be essential to ensure that the role of Te Kāhui Ahumahi is not confused with each WDC's obligations of in relation to the Māori and iwi industries they support. It is highly likely that each WDC will have Māori leadership and staff. There will be further opportunities for collaboration across WDCs and with RSLGs on Māori and iwi opportunities and issues.

Longer-term Te Kāhui Ahumahi requirements

12. We expect that WDCs will use their autonomy and current settings to meet their requirements to contribute to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supporting Māori-Crown relations. The advice provided by Te Kāhui Ahumahi will support WDCs to do this.
13. The TEC will continue to engage and monitor WDCs regularly, including the work of Te Kāhui Ahumahi. As part of that function, TEC will consider the effectiveness of these arrangements. TEC will work with MoE if, in the future, they consider that legislative changes may be required either to the OiCs or primary legislation. Such a process could also look at non-legislative options, including how Te Kāhui Ahumahi is funded.

Next steps

14. The iEBs will hand over the proposed committee structure that they have endorsed, which includes Te Kāhui Ahumahi group, to the WDCs as part of their establishment. The EU will support the drafting of terms of reference as required and provide support until WDCs are fully established. The WDCs will then decide whether to take Te Kāhui Ahumahi forward.
15. The TEC will report back to you on progress with the formalisation of Te Kāhui Ahumahi as part of reporting on WDCs.