



## Briefing Note: Meeting with English Language Partners New Zealand

<b>To:</b>	Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	30 May 2023	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1310468
<b>Drafter:</b>	Isabel Ross	<b>DDI:</b>	9(2)(a)
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<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	No	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose of Report

This paper provides you with background information and talking points for your meeting with English Language Partners New Zealand (ELPNZ) on Thursday 1 June at 11:30am – 12pm via Zoom.

### Summary

1. You are meeting Rachel O'Connor (CEO), Karun Shenoy (Board Chair) and Jane von Dadelszen (Deputy Chair) from ELPNZ. They have indicated they would like to talk about funding support, service delivery, and your priorities for adult community education.
2. As this is your first meeting with the organisation, it is also an opportunity for you to get to know about it and what it does.
3. Talking points are provided, including suggested questions to ask ELPNZ and information to respond to points they might raise.

### Proactive Release

The Ministry of Education recommends that you:

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

  
Freddy Ernst  
Senior Manager  
Te Pou Kaupapahere

30/05/2023

  
Hon Jan Tinetti  
Minister of Education

06/06/2023

Agree / Disagree

## Background

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1. English Language Partners New Zealand (ELPNZ) teaches English to people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, in order to help them to settle well and succeed in Aotearoa. It is governed by a board, which is informed by an ethnic advisory group. It has a national office which supports the 22 centres throughout the country.
2. As this is your first meeting with ELPNZ, it is an opportunity for you to get to know about the organisation and what it does, as well as hear about issues that are a priority for it.

## Meeting attendees

3. You are meeting with Rachel O'Connor, Karun Shenoy, and Jane von Dadelszen.
4. Rachel O'Connor is the Chief Executive of ELPNZ. She has worked in the refugee and migrant sector for the past fifteen years, and has a Masters of Migration Studies focused on integration and belonging. She was previously the lead advisor to the Race Relations Commissioner at the Human Rights Commission.
5. Karun Shenoy is the Board Chair. He was born in India and came to New Zealand in 1998. He has a career in IT, and has volunteered for ELPNZ's job mentoring service for several years.
6. Jane von Dadelszen is the Deputy Chair. She was previously the Deputy Chief Executive, Quality Assurance at NZQA and has also worked at the Ministry of Education.

## Discussion topics

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7. English Language Partners New Zealand has indicated it would like to discuss the following:
  - a. The benefits of expanding eligibility criteria for people to access funded English classes. This includes people on work visas, exceptional circumstances and humanitarian or emergency visas.
  - b. Reinstating Immigration Levy funding support which was paused after COVID-19 border restrictions.
  - c. Updates on its service delivery.
  - d. Understanding your priorities for adult education, and how it can contribute.

## Eligibility criteria for funded English classes

8. Earlier in 2023, ELPNZ approached NZQA, raising concerns about learner groups being unable to access their services as they are considered international students.
9. The Education (Domestic Students) Notice 2023 sets out instances where people are granted domestic student status. As domestic students, they are eligible for publicly-funded education and pay domestic fees.
10. The classes of people include:

- a. A person who has, or who is the dependent child of any person who has, made a claim to be recognised as a refugee or a protected person in accordance with Part 5 of the Immigration Act 2009, and who is the holder of a valid temporary visa. (Section 2(i))
- b. A person who has, or is the dependent child of any person who has, been recognised as a refugee or a protected person in accordance with Part 5 of the Immigration Act 2009, and who is the holder of a valid temporary visa. (Section 2(j)).

This is likely to cover some of the people ELPNZ are concerned about.

11. In July 2022, the Accredited Employer Work Visa was introduced, replacing six types of temporary work visas. People on these visas are not granted domestic student status.
12. In approving the implementation of the unified funding system for the Reform of Vocational Education in 2022, Cabinet removed training subsidy eligibility for non-domestic tertiary students. Previously, those who came in on work visas could access industry training as domestic students.
13. There is a targeted exemptions process if work-based learning is deemed to be in the national interest. There is a specific list of courses that are exempted, which aligns with the Green List and Sector Agreements developed by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment as part of the Immigration Rebalance. It does not include English classes.
14. While the list is subject to change, there are no plans for English classes to be added to it. When people come to New Zealand on Accredited Employer Work Visas their employer needs to ensure that they have enough English to perform the job satisfactorily. Therefore, there would not be an instance where English classes for this cohort were considered necessary or to be in the national interest.

#### **Immigration Levy funding support**

15. The Immigration Levy is payable on certain visa applications and is intended to fund a range of activity including programmes to assist the successful settlement of migrants.
16. In 2015, Cabinet agreed to the allocation of \$6.990 million annually from the Immigration Levy to fund cross-agency settlement services, including English language tuition.
17. In 2017, Cabinet agreed that the Immigration Levy settlement funding allocations would be for a four-year period and that Ministers of Immigration and Finance could make the final decisions within that period on any adjustments to the allocations within the overall funding. It also agreed to the settlement services funded through the Immigration Levy settlement allocations for the four-year period from 2017/18 to 2020/21.
18. Cabinet approved an allocation of \$4.798 million for the 2021/22 financial year as transition funding, while a review of the immigration funding model was being undertaken. This included \$426,000 for ESOL provision for adult migrants.

19. The 2022 Immigration Fee and Levy Review, undertaken by MBIE, sought to bring fees and levies closer to an appropriate level of cost recovery. It found that immigration revenue was insufficient to cover costs, and most visa fee and immigration levy rates were subsequently increased.
20. The allocation of Immigration Levy revenue, as part of the 2022 review, only took into account baseline costs already set to continue beyond 2021/22. Time-limited funding, including that for ESOL for adult migrants, was not considered.
21. At this stage there are no plans to reinstate funding for ESOL for adult migrants.

### **English Language Partners New Zealand service delivery**

22. ELPNZ provides a range of programmes across 22 centres in New Zealand. These include:
  - a. Classes (English language groups, ESOL Literacy, ESOL Intensive, New Zealand Certificate in English Language, and ESOL Road Code)
  - b. Programmes for work (courses for job seekers and employees, and they work with employers to customise training for their workforce)
  - c. Programmes at home (ESOL home tutoring, 'English for Migrants', and volunteer ESOL home tutoring).
23. Learners might access more than one programme. English language groups are the most popular programme. These are available in all centres and involve 2-4 hours per week. They include learning 'Kiwi English' and about New Zealand culture in class and going into the community on day trips.
24. During COVID-19 lockdowns, ELPNZ adapted and began delivering online classes.

### **Priorities for adult education**

25. Government funding for adult community education (ACE) is and continues to be available for courses that improve employability, promote social and cultural inclusion and participation, raise foundational skills, or improve health and wellbeing. There is no intention to expand these further after they were expanded, and funding reinstated, in 2021.
26. Foundation skills (literacy and numeracy) and cultural inclusion (languages) continue to be focuses for ACE, but the current range of priorities also gives the Tertiary Education Commission the ability to fund courses that meet emerging community needs. Examples of these could be community resilience, or the transition to a low-emission economy.

### **Next Steps**

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27. It is recommended that this Briefing Note is proactively released, with any information needing to be withheld done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

## Annexes

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The following are annexed to this paper:

Annex 1: Talking Points

Proactively Released

Proactively Released

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