



Freephone 0800 558 558
www.socialservices.org.nz
info@tkaito.co.nz
Fax 04 915 7831

5-7 Willeston St
Exchange Place, Wellington
P O Box 2637, Wellington 6140

The Social Services ITO

Industry Initiatives - Feasibility Study

FINAL REPORT

To The Ministry of Social Development

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<h2>Social Services Agencies In-house Training Recognition and Support Services</h2>

Author
Jac Lynch

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Social Services ITO conducted a feasibility study in 2008/09 into establishing a service to recognise the in-house training programmes that social services agencies offer their paid and volunteer staff.

A Ministry of Social Development (MSD) contract was secured to fund the study and a project manager was appointed in July 2008. Fourteen social services were selected to participate on the basis of their location, size and service type.

By the end of the study in July 2009, 13 of the 14 organisations had participated in two key activities:

- the alignment of their in-house training programmes to unit standards
- and internal and external reviews of their training systems.

Representatives from the participant organisations were involved in the external review teams as “peers” to share learning across the groups.

Where the alignment with unit standards met the Tertiary Education Commission’s criteria, Limited Credit Programmes (LCPs) were approved. These LCPs are relevant to nine of the organisations. By the end of the study, the training programmes of two more organisations aligned with two entire national certificates. The remaining three organisations revised their approach to their training and did not finalise their unit standard mapping within the term of the study.

The training system reviews highlighted areas for development and also examples of good practice. The ITO hosted a well-attended seminar for the wider social services sector in April 2009 to showcase the training models of three organisations and to provide an update on the feasibility study.

By 7 July 2009, five of the participant organisations had submitted training agreements to the ITO so that some of their staff and volunteers could achieve unit standards through completing in-house training. As well as having training programmes aligned to unit standards, these organisations had also met the trialed criteria for their training systems. At least three more organisations were expected to submit training agreements by the end of July. ITO registered assessors will be involved in overseeing the programmes.

Feedback from participant organisations mostly confirmed that the service (as trialed):

- Created a professional pathway for staff and volunteers
- Strengthened their training systems and programmes
- Could contribute to enhancing quality control for service delivery
- May assist in developing appropriate sector qualifications
- Could acknowledge volunteer contributions
- Could provide a framework for planning training.

Due to early signs of effectiveness and viability, the ITO committed to a 0.5 fulltime equivalent role for one year from July 2009 to continue working with the study participants.

The financial viability of the service is linked to TEC funding for the new training agreements generated, and trainee fees.

The study has attracted more sector interest in the work of the ITO. Joint presentations with participants from the study will be made at the Industry Training Federation national conference in July 2009, the Volunteering New Zealand national conference in October 2009, and regional meetings of the Association of Non Government Organisations Aotearoa (ANGOA).

Conclusion

That the ITO's capacity (resources, systems and funding) and sector interest are sufficient to introduce the service.

Key Recommendation

That a three-year rollout plan for the service is implemented with a review in late 2012 to determine its future.

A total of five recommendations are made on page 23.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

The feasibility study arose from the Social Services ITO acknowledging that the potential of in-house training programmes to help paid social service workers and volunteers achieve national qualifications is untapped.

In March 2008, the ITO proposed that the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) support a study into the feasibility of establishing a new ITO service to recognise the in-house training of social service agencies.

The concept of such a service is in line with an important principle of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) - that skills, knowledge and understanding gained outside formal education or training is recognised¹.

The study aimed to assess both the ITO's capacity to offer the service and its usefulness to the sector. Tools and processes would be developed and trialed with five to 10 participant organisations (14 were eventually selected).

Preliminary discussions with social sector agencies and umbrella organisations before the study commenced indicated strong interest in such a service. These discussions identified

¹ NZQA website- <http://nzqa.govt.nz/for-learners/prior-learning.html> retrieved 30 June 2009

perceived benefits to social service agencies, their paid and unpaid workers and their communities. The longer-term nature of these benefits could not be assessed within the scope of this study, however, they could be used in evaluating service if it is established.

Potential Benefits to the Social Service Agency

- A whole-of-organisation view of training and assessment that works at all levels of the organisation rather than just with the individual.
- A more cohesive and holistic approach aligned with government workforce development strategies.
- A greater degree of ownership and responsibility for workforce training by the organisation.
- Validation of multi-level training from induction training to advanced specialist roles.
- A cost-effective way for agencies to build capability within their organisations.
- A developmental process leading to quality improvements within the organisation.
- Enhanced internal training leading to better practice outcomes and heightened team awareness of worker roles and objectives.

Potential Benefits to the Worker

- On-job training directly linked to the achievement of national social services qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework, enabling many workers to start their journey in acquiring a professional qualification/s.
- Portable qualifications providing access to career and educational pathways within agencies and across the sector.
- In-house training is legitimised and its status enhanced.
- Support for the agency to establish more advanced training programmes, creating a culture of ongoing professional development and career advancement.

Potential Benefits to the Community

- Recognition may enhance public confidence that agencies have professional staff development processes that meet NZQA and industry requirements.
- The process of recognition may lift the quality of training resulting in better trained staff.

MSD contracted the ITO to “develop and implement a plan for initiatives that will strengthen education and training within the social services sector”. The contract ran from 23 June 2008 to 30 June 2009 with \$160,000 (excl gst) allocated to the feasibility study.

A project manager familiar with the NQF and quality assurance processes and a background in working with non-government organisations was appointed on 21 July 2008. The ITO National Advisory Group, made up of sector representatives, formally endorsed the feasibility study on 4 August 2008.

A project plan was approved by the ITO management team on 8 August 2008, detailing timeframes, milestones and evidence of sector consultation. A Project Plan showing milestones and deliverables and a progress report for Phase 1 was submitted to MSD. (Appendix 1).

2.2 The ITO environment

During the course of the study the ITO was also:

- undertaking a project to develop degree-level unit standards for Youth Work and Social Work
- postponing reviews of the social service unit standards and qualifications until the outcomes of the degree development
- introducing an incentive scheme for registered work-based assessors to recruit trainees. Most individual trainees were entering training agreements on an ad hoc individual basis.
- developing a new external moderation process and revised Accreditation and Moderation Action Plan criteria
- not promoting some national qualifications due to gaps in the pool of registered work-based assessors, and a need to update assessment resources
- launching a project to embed literacy and numeracy in assessment and other ITO products and information
- developing a new brand and communications strategy
- reviewing its fees structure for work-based assessment
- reviewing its governance structure, including moving to a membership model
- the ITO was funded by the TEC through an Investment Plan with targets set to the end of 2010.

At the start of the study, it was not known how the proposed service may influence or be affected by the rest of the ITO environment.

2.3 Project Purpose and Aims

The Project Purpose was:

To conduct a feasibility study that evaluates how social services sector training programmes can be recognised by the Social Services ITO - Te Kaiāwhina Ahumahi so that participants can achieve National Qualification Framework credits within a Limited Credit Programme (LCP).

The following objectives were identified:

- 1 To confirm the ITO’s capability to carry out quality assurance and engage with stakeholders to improve and recognise their training programmes.
- 2 To confirm a viable level of social services sector support for the recognition and quality improvement process.
- 3 To identify available resources and gaps, and to trial tools and processes.

The study trialed processes designed to achieve outcomes aligned with the ITO’s principles:

Principle	Discussion
Kotahitanga – connecting people	The project will assist in building relationships between the ITO and organisations, and sector networks.
Manaakitanga – honouring others, honouring ourselves	The mana of the ITO and stakeholders (organisations and individuals) will be raised through this project. Specific contributions to the project will be recognised in reports and sector communications.
Kaitiakitanga – upholding our responsibilities	The project’s aims contribute to achieving the ITO’s statutory functions in arranging for the assessment of trainees, arranging the monitoring of quality training and providing information and support to trainees and employers. The integrity of qualifications will be upheld through the use of accepted sector standards.

Participating social services agencies were selected to evaluate three scenarios:

- 1) **An agency meets all the requirements of the aligned unit standards and the training is confirmed as underpinned by good management and systems.**

Outcome

An LCP will be recognised and participants of that training will be awarded an appropriate certificate from the ITO and agency. The credit value will be reported by the ITO to NZQA for the record of achievement.

- 2) **An agency does not meet the requirements but there is confidence that with appropriate support the agency will achieve recognition;**

Outcome

The ITO will work with the agency to develop a support plan to achieve recognition.

- 3) **An agency does not meet the requirements and is not at a point where it will meet the requirements even with ITO support.**

Outcome

The ITO will encourage the agency to achieve its training outcomes through work-based assessment using internal or external registered assessors.

2.4 Project Monitoring

The steering group consisted of the ITO executive director, Quality Systems Manager and the Project Manager. The group met weekly during August and September, then fortnightly in October 2008 before moving to two-monthly meetings. Minutes were kept of these meetings. Two project reports were made to the ITO board. Several progress reports were made to MSD as per the contract schedule.

The TEC sector advisors were kept informed of the project and provided advice on issues such as funding approval processes.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Inviting Expressions of Interest

Ninety-eight social services that obviously or probably offered in-house training to their staff and volunteers, beyond basic induction, were identified through searches of the web and sector directories. In August 2008, these agencies were invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate in the study (Appendix 2) by 1 September 2008:

- 42 national social service organisations or national programmes e.g. MSD's Family Start
- 26 Iwi/Māori social services
- 10 Pacific peoples services
- 20 youth services.

Several services were a combination of the categories above.

About 130 social services for Māori² were surveyed in late August 2008 to determine their interest in the proposed service even if they could not participate in the study. Almost 40 individual organisations and sector umbrella groups or networks asked to be kept informed of the study's findings and outcomes.

3.2 Selecting Participant Organisations

Fourteen organisations submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the recognition of at least one in-house training programme. The 14 agencies presented such ranges of size, structure, workforce and service type that the project steering group agreed that they should all participate. The number of staff or volunteers entering their in-house training programmes range from 20 to hundreds of people a year.

Each organisation assigned a staff member to liaise with the ITO during the study. These people held roles with responsibility for in-house training (e.g. Training Manager) or professional development. In some cases, the manager/chief executive was the key liaison person – usually due to very small staff numbers.

The organisations were asked to identify their own goals for participating in the feasibility study, resulting in this collated list:

- *To offer recognised training in-house and to other organisations*
- *To create a professional pathway for staff and volunteers*
- *To strengthen training systems and programmes*
- *To enhance quality control for service delivery*
- *To develop leverage in lobbying for recognition of an appropriate sector qualification*
- *To acknowledge volunteer contribution*
- *To provide a framework for planning training*

² Sourced from listings in the Takoa Directory 2007.

The following organisations were selected

ORGANISATION		SERVICE TYPE
Aotearoa NZ Association of Supervised Contact Services	National Office	Social Service - Abuse, Neglect, Violence
Child, Youth and Family	Government Agency - National Office	Social Work, range of social services, youth work
Family Support Agency	Rangiora	Social Services
GirlGuiding NZ	National Office	Youth Work
National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges	National Office	Social services work - Abuse, Neglect, Violence
New Zealand Federation of Family Budgeting Services	National Office	Social Service/Community Work
OUTline NZ	National Office	Social Services – phone/web referral and counseling.
Plunket Society	National Office	Social Services – Tamariki Ora -WellChild
Scouts NZ	National Office	Youth Work
Taeaomanino Trust	Porirua	Pacific Island Social Services
Te Runanga o Ngati Porou	Tairawhiti	Iwi/Māori Social Services
Te Runanga o Raukawa	Horowhenua	Iwi/Māori Social Services
YMCA	National Office	Youth Work
Young New Zealanders' Challenge – The Duke of Edinburgh Award	National Office	Youth Work

Three of these organisations, GirlGuiding NZ, Plunket Society and YMCA, are registered with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) as private training establishments. Child, Youth and Family is registered as a government training establishment. NZQA registration means they undergo quality audits and have an approved quality management system (QMS). For the purposes of this study, it was not assumed that having an approved QMS meant they automatically met the criteria of the social services Accreditation and Moderation Action Plan (AMAP 222) being used for the recognition trial processes.

A Trial Plan (Appendix 3) was developed with each organisation outlining timeframes and arrangements for key activities within the study.

3.3 Key Trial Activities

The participant organisations were involved in two key activities:

1. **Unit standard mapping**³ – to assess the alignment of the in-house training programmes with social services unit standards.
2. **Training System Review** – an internal review of the organisation’s training systems against criteria in AMAP 222. An external review involving other participant “peer” organisations and ITO representatives.

Both activities were followed by a period for development and re-assessment.

3.3.1 Unit Standard Mapping Exercise

Beginning in mid-October 2008, the unit standard mapping aimed to be completed in time for the documents to be viewed at the Organisational Peer Reviewer Training Workshop held in Wellington on 28 November 2008. The in-house training programmes submitted for recognition all serve as an introduction to the model of services delivered by the different organisations so mostly targeted new staff or volunteers.

Mapping the in-house training programmes means confirming that assessment processes and learning outcomes equate to those required to achieve the aligned unit standards. The alignment with unit standards is not intended to detract from the ‘uniqueness’ or character of an organisation’s in-house training programme.

Five of the ITO’s registered work-based assessors were contracted to work with 11 of the 14 participating organisations. They were assigned on the basis of their scope of assessment, understanding of the social service involved, and proximity to the organisation. The rationale for accessing the registered assessor pool and ITO staff – ITO resources - was related to one of the aims of the study being a test of the ITO’s capacity to offer the service. Te Runanga o Ngati Porou was assigned a contracted assessor with whom te runanga wanted to build a closer working relationship.

Taeaomanino Trust nominated an external person to assist with the mapping. This person, who works in the social services sector, was then contracted by the ITO for the task. Te Runanga o Raukawa was given an extension of time to find a suitable external person to assist with their mapping. A local person was identified but the mapping was not completed by the end of the study. These two organisations nominated their own mappers in lieu of the ITO having suitable assessors or staff available.

Both the iwi/Māori and the Pasifika organisation wanted the autonomy to choose a person with an understanding of their work and cultural aspects of their staff training.

³ Precedents exist in other industry training sectors for the mapping of in-house training programme against unit standards, e.g. NZ Army Training Plan as at 8 June 2008.

GirlGuiding NZ and Child, Youth and Family elected to conduct their own mapping, which was then reviewed by an ITO assessor. Both organisations were considered by the Project Manager to have people with sufficient experience and understanding of the National Qualifications Framework to undertake the mapping.

An ITO staff member familiar with the new youth work national qualifications worked alongside Scouts New Zealand to map their training for scout leaders.

Thirteen of the 14 organisations submitted at least a first version of their mapping by the due date, i.e. within 12 weeks.

Mapping resources

The organisations and mappers were supplied with:

1. a guideline on unit standard mapping (drafted for the feasibility study – Appendix 4) outlining expectations for the exercise, and the TEC criteria for approving Limited Credit Programmes (LCPs)⁴.
2. samples of unit standard mapping spreadsheets – one adapted from a Limited Credit Programme spreadsheet on the New Zealand Army’s website; and one drafted by GirlGuiding NZ for the feasibility study.

The final version of all the mapping spreadsheets, findings and recommendations were returned to the ITO Project Manager. Both the internal and external mappers had access to the Project Manager and to other ITO staff to discuss issues to do with the mapping exercise.

The time spent by the contracted mappers on the exercise varied between 1.5 hours and 12 hours per organisation. Most charged for 8 hours, sometimes over a couple of sessions. The lesser involvement by the external mapper (1.5 – 5 hours) was due to organisations doing some analysis before the contractor was involved.

The ITO paid the contractors the same hourly rate and expenses paid to registered work-based assessors. A revised version of the current registered assessor contract was used for new contractors, and an addendum was sent to existing contractors.

All mapping work was analysed by the Project Manager against the TEC criteria for Limited Credit Programmes (Appendix 5).

Progress on the mapping exercise was reported to participants at the Organisational Peer Reviewer Training Workshop on 28 November (ITO staff and contractors, participant organisations).

⁴ Limited Credit Programmes are clusters of unit standards within a specific national qualification. For example, Plunket’s in-house training programme aligned to three unit standards within the *National Certificate in Tamariki Ora-WellChild Services, Level 4*. TEC approval under section 10 (2) (a) of the Industry training Act 1992 means that the ITO receives funding for each person enrolled in a training agreement for an LCP, at a proportion of a Standard Training Measure (STM).

Most Significant Learning

The organisations' liaison people identified their most significant learning from the unit standard mapping process as:

- *Documenting everything as you go – saves re-working later.*
- *Finding what works for us and to the bigger picture.*
- *Good to be part of the project because the organisation will grow BUT heaps of work to do to maximise benefit.*
- *Lots of repetition in the social service qualifications.*
- *Closeness of unit standards to what we currently train.*
- *We currently can't verify knowledge gained.*
- *Awareness of how much we have to do in future.*
- *Map to elements but use PCs to inform you what the elements mean.*
- *Don't be afraid to start from scratch.*
- *Getting my head around the NZQA/ITO/TEC systems, language etc.*
- *Look at training content rather than focus on the learning objectives.*
- *Ease of gaining a qualification simply by recognising work that's already being done.*
- *That we are already delivering relevant/quality training.*

The ITO Project Manager sent copies of the ITO assessment guides to some of the organisations to assist them with meeting minor gaps in alignment. Organisations were advised only to consider the unit standards where there were minor or no gaps in alignment. Following development to more closely fit with unit standards, nine organisations had in-house training programmes that were aligned to Limited Credit Programmes subsequently approved for TEC funding.

- **YMCA and Young New Zealand Challenge** – LCP towards the *National Certificate in Youth Work (Youth Leadership), Level 3*
- **Plunket** – LCP towards the *National Certificate in Tamariki Ora-WellChild Services, Level 4*
- **NZ Federation of Family Budgeting Services** – LCP towards the *National Certificate in Social Services, Level 4*
- **Aotearoa NZ Association of Supervised Contact Services** – Two LCPs towards the *National Certificate in Social Service Work with Abuse, Neglect and Violence, Level 4*, and the *National Certificate in Social Services, Level 4*
- **Child Youth and Family** – Six LCPs towards a range of national certificates in social services
- **Taeaomanino Trust** – LCP towards the *National Certificate in Pacific Island Social Services, Level 4*
- **OUTLineNZ and Family Support Agency – Rangiora** - LCPs towards the *National Certificate in Social Services, Level 4*

In several cases, the mapping showed alignment to one or two additional social services unit standards that did not fit within the national qualification relevant to the Limited Credit Programmes. These unit standards could still be reported to NZQA by the ITO on completion of the in-house training programme although they would not be subject to TEC funding.

In approving the LCPs, TEC stated that it would be monitoring the progression of trainees from Limited Credit Programme enrolments to National Certificate enrolments and completions⁵. This condition has implications for the ITO in terms of meeting statistical targets. TEC has also signaled that it is reviewing its operational policies related to LCPs.

The training offered by two organisations aligned to entire national certificates, for which the ITO already has TEC approval under Section 10(2)(a) of the Industry Training Act 1992.

- **National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges** - *National Certificate in Social Services Work with Abuse, Neglect and Violence, Level 4*
- **Te Runanga o Ngati Porou** – *National Certificate in Iwi/Māori Social Services, Level 4*

Scouts NZ and GirlGuiding NZ undertook the mapping exercise but both organisations then decided to revise their training programmes which meant they did not complete the final mapping within the study's timeframe.

Te Runanga o Raukawa did not complete the mapping in the timeframes as te runanga wanted more time to consider the training needs across the organisation, rather than just in one service delivery area.

See Appendix 6 for a proposed matrix format drafted to show alignment of training programmes with NQF unit standards and/or qualifications.

3.3.2 Training Systems Review

- **Internal Systems Reviews**

The internal review phase was concurrent with the period for unit standard mapping. It also aimed to be completed in time for the Organisational Peer Reviewer Training Workshop on 28 November 2008.

The participant organisations were emailed a copy of the Internal Review tool drafted for the feasibility study. The tool was based on the format of the Social Workers Registration Board programme approval document. The standards for the review used criteria within the NZQA's Action and Moderation Plan for social services unit standard accreditation (AMAP 222). The AMAP criteria provided a benchmark for quality assurance similar to that expected of training providers accredited to assess social services unit standards.

Two organisations were assisted in completing their internal review tool through an onsite visit by the ITO Project Manager. This assistance was to test the usefulness of an ITO staff member helping with the tool where the participants had no readily available 'sounding board' or were unfamiliar with the NQF.

⁵ TEC letter to the ITO re: *Approval of programmes for funding purposes*, 12 May 2009.

The other organisations completed the tool themselves – some had several staff contribute; others just had the project liaison person work on it. The Project Manager explained the tool at the initial visits with the liaison people.

Thirteen of the 14 organisations returned a completed internal review tool in time for the organisational peer reviewer workshop, i.e. within 12 weeks.

Most Significant Learning

The liaison people identified their most significant learning from the internal review process as:

- *A good snapshot of what needs doing – reflective practice needed*
- *We're very process oriented – I was happy to find gaps to develop!*
- *Fine, no worries – felt like applying for accreditation extension. Been through many times.*
- *We aren't too bad after all! Looked a daunting task to begin with.*
- *Need to formalise assessment for future limited credit programmes.*
- *In some respects really got it together – yahoo! But in others, not so much. Huge amounts of work.*
- *We have few written policies and procedures regarding training.*
- *Awareness of gaps in training to meet needs of work requirements. Helpful to make the process clear.*
- *Useful to assess where we were prior to rewriting training. Will need to provide evidence.*
- *Surprised me how much we had in terms of policy/procedure.*

Internal Review Tool

The comprehensiveness of completing the internal review tool varied greatly in terms of the citing of evidence and identifying areas for development. The time taken to complete the tool ranged from three to 40 hours. The greater time spent on the tool was mostly due to involving and counting the input of colleagues.

Feedback from participants on the tool itself was used to further develop it in terms of ease-of-use and clarity (Appendix 7). This tool was subsequently sent as a resource to two non-participant groups that attended the seminar on models of training.

- **External Systems Reviews**

Organisational Peer Reviewer Training Workshop

A workshop was held in Wellington on 28 November 2008 to introduce the concept of organisational peer reviewing. It was also the first time the various participant organisations had met as a group. As well as workshop activities, participants were provided with information on hosting a review team and preparing to be a peer reviewer. A list of Examples of Good Practice/Evidence extracted from NZQA audit reports of social services registered as training providers was provided. (See Appendices 8 and 9)

Twelve of the 14 liaison people came to the workshop. Two liaison people were absent due to personal circumstances. Some ITO staff and three of the five ITO assessors who were involved in the mapping activities attended as part of building the ITO's human resources for leading review teams.

The workshop's value was evaluated after the participants had an opportunity to be a review team member or to host an external review, and it was mostly viewed as useful.

The External Review phase

The purpose of the external review was to identify how the organisations met the AMAP criteria and any areas for development or examples of good practice in training systems. A "peer" model was used to provide the participant organisations with an opportunity to learn from each other, and to build closer networks.

The liaison people from each of the participating groups identified a maximum of three organisations they wanted to visit as an organisational peer reviewer. They were allocated to at least one of those options. Due to sudden unavailability, some liaison people were unable to join review teams and were not replaced. Only one external review did not have a peer reviewer involved, and this was because of the unavailability at short notice.

Liaison people based in Wellington were assigned to two to three reviews of other Wellington-based organisations as a means of building local networks. This allocation to extra local reviews had insignificant budget implications for the study. As well as the peer reviewers from other participant organisations, the review teams also included ITO staff and some of the registered work-based assessors who had been involved in the unit standard mapping exercises. The ITO Project Manager led the review teams, which consisted of two to five team members.

About two weeks before each review; the ITO Project Manager emailed both the review team and host organisation a draft timetable for the day (Appendix 10), confirmed travel arrangements; a copy of the host's completed internal review tool and any additional documentation provided by the host organisation.

The experiences and perspectives of the review team members and the host organisations were summarised from individual evaluations sent to the ITO after each review.

The peer reviewers' identified their most significant learning as:

- What to expect and how to prepare for own review
- Understanding the review process and tools
- Learning about the organisation visited
- Future opportunities for networking
- Other training approaches.

The peer reviewers also identified that their own organisations had benefited through:

- More awareness about preparation for own review and review process
- Sharing ideas
- Greater confidence in understanding systems
- Awareness of wider sector
- Connection with the ITO.

The organisations hosting the initial reviews identified their most significant learning as:

- Positive reinforcement
- Ideas from other organisations
- Discussions with other organisations
- Education focus.

An adapted version of the internal review tool was used to provide feedback in a report format with recommendations (Action Points) (Appendix 11). The organisation then developed an action plan, some using a template provided (Appendix 12), with timeframes to resolve issues. The organisations were asked to resolve issues where possible within three months of the initial visit (by 31 May in the feasibility study period).

The ITO encouraged the organisations to share policies, resources and ideas with each other, and this is known to have taken place between some organisations. Examples of good practice from the first reviews were distributed among the participant groups (Appendix 13).

For the NZQA-registered organisations, it was apparent that the approved quality management systems assisted them in meeting the AMAP criteria immediately or with some policy adaptation.

The organisations identified significant change resulting from the internal review and external review as:

- Having led to policy review
- (Raising) possibility of recognition for training
- Confirmation and encouragement of direction
- Helped focus on developing training.

Evidence of work to resolve issues identified in the external reviews was confirmed through follow-up visits, progress reports on action plans, and submission of documentation.

It was originally envisaged that a second review team visit would be held to confirm action taken on recommendations. However, no requisite system improvements were considered significant enough to warrant the cost of a visit involving peer reviewers.

Feedback from the review teams and reviewed organisations was taken into account in further developing resources and systems.

- **Models of In-House Training Seminar**

There was high interest from other social services in a Models of In-house Training seminar held at the ITO on 28 April 2009. Officials from TEC and MSD also attended the seminar. The seminar was organised to showcase examples of good practice found during the external reviews.

Three organisations (Plunket, Women's Refuge and the Federation of Family Budgeting Services) presented their models of training.

As a result of the notices sent out about the seminar, the Industry Training Federation invited the ITO to present the study at its July 2009 conference.

3.3.3 Recognition Status and Training Agreements

In July 2009, five of the organisations were in a position to enrol a limited number of people in ITO training agreements. This was undertaken to test both their systems and those of the ITO. A recommendation is that the ITO enter into fixed-term agreements with these organisations to confirm that they have training systems that meet the ITO's requirements, and also align to social services unit standards towards a national qualification. The agreements would 'recognise' the in-house training programmes and provide for the ITO to have training agreements with staff and volunteers from those organisations.

The participants were interested in how existing staff and volunteers could achieve credits who have already completed in-house training programmes. This was outside the scope of the study but could be considered if the service is established.

Participant organisations supported the idea of having an internal ITO registered assessor responsible for overseeing the in-house training, e.g. signing off final completions and monitoring consistency of assessments. This role was viewed as providing an extra level of quality assurance. It also provides a mechanism for the organisations to receive an ITO contribution towards the cost of internal assessment. In the absence of an internal assessor, an ITO assessor could be appointed to sign-off completions.

Aspects of the proposed service that still need to be fully tested relate to streamlining the enrolment process, where the organisations send the ITO batches of training agreements signed by those staff and volunteers starting the in-house training programmes. The ITO enters these training agreements into the database for statistics reporting to TEC. The organisation then sends the ITO a spreadsheet of the names of the people who complete the in-house training programme. These completions will be reported in statistics to TEC, and as credits for the individual trainees to NZQA. The ITO will contact trainees about continuing with work-based assessment to complete the national qualification.

For ongoing recognition status, the ITO conducts external reviews of the training systems, and involve the organisations in other ITO quality assurance processes such as external moderation. The above processes and recommendations are built into the recommended rollout plan.

4 FINANCIAL VIABILITY

ITO Fees and Funding

The training agreements generated through the service will attract TEC funding through Standard Training Measures (limited to the TEC Investment Plan targets), and through any trainee fees. The recommended three-year rollout plan is based on the service being financially viable in terms of revenue from TEC funding and any trainee fees, and outgoings related to operational overheads and ITO registered assessor fees. Some funding options are recommended to the ITO to consider.

The three-year rollout plan (Appendix 14) provides for 25 organisations having recognised programmes by the end of 2012, i.e. five new organisations join the service annually in addition to the study's participant organisations that receive recognition.

For the purposes of further testing systems, the ITO is meeting the cost of administration and per credit fees for the first batch of trainees that organisations sign into training agreements through the study.

5 FINDINGS

5.1 Contribution to Social Services' Capacity

Strengths

The study participants identified highlights as:

- networking with other groups about staff and volunteer training
- sharing resources, policies and ideas
- an opportunity to gain an insight into another organisation's training processes.

At the end of the study, feedback mostly affirmed their aspirations that the proposed service would contribute to:

- Creating a professional pathway for staff and volunteers
- Strengthening their training systems and programmes
- Enhancing quality control for service delivery
- Developing appropriate sector qualifications
- Acknowledging volunteer contributions
- Providing a framework for planning training.

The mapping exercise also led to the participants gaining a greater understanding and interest in the social services unit standards and qualifications pertinent to their work.

Weaknesses

Difficulties in communicating with some organisations could be minimised through agencies nominating a second contact or back-up person at the start.

Education sector jargon and unfamiliarity with the NQF was a barrier in some cases to understanding the tools and processes. This could be addressed through providing a plain language glossary and introductory workshops on the NQF.

Most of the participant organisations expressed concern about funding to support and develop their in-house training, and there was an expectation that the ITO may assist them.

Opportunities

In rolling-out the service, the ITO could also consider:

- a process for recognising the prior learning/current competency of staff and volunteers who completed training programmes before recognition.
- including social services agencies seeking recognition in other ITO initiatives such as the embedded literacy and numeracy project.
- providing access to the wider social services sector to tools and resources, such as the Internal Review Tool, examples of good practice and Models of In-house Training Seminars.

5.2 Contribution to ITO Capacity

Strengths

The study showed the service's potential for:

- Strategic relationships at the employer level and a shift from mostly recruiting at an individual trainee level.
- New sources of ITO registered workbased assessors.
- New sources of social services sector expertise for consultation.
- Contributing to the ITO meeting its targets with the TEC through the new training agreements it generates.
- Enhancing the sector's view and understanding of the work of the ITO.
- Updating TEC approvals of several national qualifications.

- Being rolled-out as core processes have been drafted as part of the trial. These are mostly adapted from existing processes.
- Targeting organisations with groups of workers that are under-represented in the achievement of national social services qualifications.
- The service could assist in bringing new members into the ITO within the new membership model being developed.

Weaknesses

- The ITO will need to develop strategies for supporting the progression from Limited Credit Programmes to completion of full national qualifications.
- Some social services unit standards currently sit outside any national qualification. This means that some aligned unit standards of particular relevance to an organisation can only be reported in addition to a Limited Credit Programme. This could be addressed in the review of unit standards.
- The current pool of ITO registered work-based assessors has gaps in terms of scope of assessment and location. This could be addressed, at least in part, by encouraging organisations to have staff register as ITO assessors.
- The STMs generated through this service may only contribute to meeting TEC targets and will not bring in any STM funding if the targets are exceeded. However, economies of scale may mean that the extra administration costs for reporting credits are insignificant where targets are exceeded.

Future Issues

TEC will be monitoring the progression of trainees from Limited Credit Programme enrolments to National Certificate enrolments and completions⁶. TEC is reviewing its operational policies for LCPs.

Study participants were interested in having a ‘managing social services’ national qualification available. There is an apparent gap in the provision of a national certificate or diploma in managing social services. A large number of existing unit standards are considered available for such qualifications including a domain “Manage Social Services” with 27 unit standards between Levels 1 and 7.

⁶ TEC letter to the ITO re: *Approval of programmes for funding purposes*, 12 May 2009.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The ITO has the capacity to introduce a service to recognise and support in-house training programmes. The service could achieve outcomes aligned with the ITO's principles:

- Kotahitanga – connecting people
- Manaakitanga – honouring others, honouring ourselves
- Kaitiakitanga – upholding our responsibilities.

The service should be introduced in a planned way to ensure its viability, support the ITO's priorities, and intersect with other ITO initiatives.

The study has shown that it is possible to align in-house training programmes to unit standards, presenting the opportunity for staff and volunteers to achieve credits towards national qualifications.

The service could contribute to networking and shared learning within the social services sector on models of training for staff and volunteers. A viable level of social services sector support exists for the recognition and quality improvement process.

Some ITO systems development is needed, which could take place during the roll-out period.

The ITO can access TEC funding to support the service through STMs, and has additional options for resourcing it, including charging trainee fees.

A summary of case studies from this feasibility study as at 10 July 2009 is attached as Appendix 15.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

That the ITO implement the recommended three-year rollout plan from August 2010 for the recognition and support service, with a full review in late 2012 to determine its future.

Recommendation 2

That the ITO determines a funding mechanism for the service from the following options:

1. Solely through STMs – the ITO covers all costs of overheads, and/or not including NZQA per credit fees.
2. Though a mix of STMs generated, and administration and trainee fees (including NZQA per credit fees).
3. STMs and “user-pays” for components of the service e.g. external review visits, and/or not administration and trainee fees.

Recommendation 3

That the ITO enters into fixed-term agreements to recognise in-house training programmes of the feasibility study participant organisations that have:

- met training system requirements
- alignment with social services unit standards meeting the criteria for Limited Credit Programmes or national qualifications
- are in a position to enrol workers into ITO training agreements
- and have an ITO registered work-based assessor assigned to oversee completions of their in-house training programme (internal or assigned by the ITO).

Recommendation 4

That the ITO investigate a process for recognising the prior learning/current competency of social service agency staff and volunteers who have undertaken in-house training programmes prior to ITO recognition.

Recommendation 5

Consider the findings of this study in other ITO processes and developments e.g. the review of unit standards and qualifications.