

Hairdressing Employer Letter

Email to VocationalEducation.Reform@education.govt.nz.

Re: Feedback on Reform of Vocational Education

I am a hairdressing employer and have run a successful hairdressing business for many years. I was an apprentice myself and have had numerous apprentices over the years.

To date we have not had very good results from the polytechnics. The graduates they put out are not ready for the fast-paced real-world work environment. This means we have to retrain them to meet our specific salon needs.

The ITO system that we currently have allows trainees to complete their whole training in the workplace – which means better outcomes for me as an employer.

I agree that the overall system needs changes as the ITPs and polytechnics are failing and need government bail outs. The ITOs do not have the same issues and we don't want you to rush to change the one element that is currently working in the system.

I have concerns that the merger of 16 institutions into one and getting them up to speed with how to train in the workplace is a nice notion but unlikely to work in practice. None of the polytechnics are used to looking after on-job learners for hairdressing and will need time to understand and support this model.

Our ITO also works on raising the profile of our industries and encouraging people to become qualified. As an unregulated industry, it is important that we do not lose this. This proposal sounds like the opportunities for our next generation of apprentices will be missing. Our ITO now champions our industries and opportunities for apprentices – such as participation in competitions and industry events NZFW, BarberCraft, Apprentice of the Year, etc. The new role of ISBs appears to have a very academic and misses this role. The new polytechnic is likely to be too big to support our industry over all the others they represent.

In the current system the standard setting function of the ITO is subsidised by the training income. Employers should not be asked to pay to fill the gap that would be created by the system change.

My suggestion

Keep the ITOs going in the current form until you have the polytechnics sorted and they have proven their ability to provide people that are ready for the workplace.

Our industries are special, have a long history of apprentices. Don't change our system just to solve issues you have in other parts of the system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.