

# Student engagement at New Zealand Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics

*Key results from the 2010 pilot*

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## Executive Summary

### The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE)

The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) provides data which tertiary institutions throughout New Zealand and Australia can use to attract, engage and retain their students. The data collected offer rich insights into how students perceive their educational experience during tertiary study and how they interact with the opportunities provided. Collecting data on how students are learning and the outcomes they are achieving allows tertiary education institutions to understand what really counts in terms of quality. As a record of the tertiary student voice, it is evidence that cannot be ignored.

The AUSSE has been run in New Zealand and Australia annually since 2007, and responses have been collected from around 120,000 students so far. It is, by far, the most comprehensive and highly validated tool for gathering evidence of student perspectives and reported behaviours available in Australasia and is linked with similar international collections run in the USA, Canada, Mexico, South Africa and China.

The number of students entering into tertiary education in New Zealand has been steadily increasing over the past decade (Ministry of Education, 2010a), and while student enrolments are growing and are high relative to OECD averages, the number of students leaving with a qualification is low compared to other countries (Scott & Gini, 2010). Data from the Ministry of Education show that attrition rates are high and completion rates are relatively low across all sub-sectors of tertiary education, with students studying at ITPs having greater attrition and lower completion rates than their peers studying at the same qualification level at universities in New Zealand.

At a time in which demand for highly-skilled workers is increasing in New Zealand, and the economy requires more people to have better skills, there is increasing emphasis on the quality and relevance of the tertiary education which people experience (Earle, 2010). To improve the quality of tertiary education in New Zealand, it is valuable for educators to have insights into those practices which engage students, stimulate learning and which are intrinsic to their educational success rather than only focusing on attrition and completion rates.

In 2010 a pilot study using the AUSSE survey was conducted by the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) with ten ITPs throughout New Zealand, with support and funding from Ako Aotearoa. Over 2,200 responses were collected from students studying at New Zealand Qualifications Authority levels three through seven. Responses from these students are analysed and presented in the following report and compared with responses in the university sector and with international collections.

The AUSSE provides an immensely rich data source which will be of considerable value for institutional self-assessment and quality enhancement. This report reflects on just some highlights mined from that source. In particular, the AUSSE explores six areas of student engagement that are related to institutional support for students and students' involvement in certain types of educational activities. These engagement scales, derived from co-related questionnaire items, include academic challenge, active learning, supportive learning environments and work integrated learning. The AUSSE also measures seven broad learning outcomes, which include higher order thinking, general development outcomes, career readiness, departure intention and overall satisfaction.

It is important to note that the findings discussed in this report are based on data aggregated over the ten ITPs that participated in the trial of the AUSSE survey in 2010. A variety of ITPs participated in this pilot study and as a result there are diverse findings among the different ITPs (in addition to diverse findings between discipline areas within the same institutions). For ITPs interested in better understanding the way in which their own students are engaging with study and how they can improve their students' experience, it is critical they look at their own AUSSE results and compare these with those reported here to determine the extent to which their own results fit the general trend.

While the dataset allows comparisons between the experiences of students in different types of institutions, these need to be understood with due regard to the demographics of those students. In particular ITP students in the sample tend to be older than their university counterparts, significantly more are the first in their family to undertake a tertiary education and a greater proportion are studying part-time and/or extramurally. It is also important to emphasise that multi-year data that identifies changes over time is often more powerful than the snapshot a single year's data provides.

### General findings from the AUSSE ITP pilot

Overall, most students at the ten ITPs at which data were collected were satisfied with their experience at their institution. Three-quarters (75.5 per cent) rated the overall quality of academic advising at their institution as 'good' or 'excellent'. The majority of students (77.7%) rated their overall educational experience positively and 80.9 per cent said that they would 'probably' or 'definitely' attend the same institution again if they had the chance to start over.

In general, students studying at ITPs demonstrated outcomes that might be expected to be appropriate to the level of qualification being studied. Consequently, reports of higher order thinking increased with the level of qualification students were enrolled in, with bachelor students showing higher general learning outcomes than students at other levels of study. Diploma level ITP students scored significantly higher on the career readiness scale than students studying for other types of qualifications. Interestingly, ITP bachelor students reported higher levels of active learning than either their New Zealand university counterparts or ITP students studying for lower

level qualifications. ITP students were more likely to be involved in work-integrated forms of learning than students at other tertiary institutions, reflecting the vocational focus of many ITP qualifications. Most ITP students also reported some involvement in activities that help them prepare for their future careers, and reported slightly higher levels of career readiness than students at New Zealand universities.

## Supporting students who consider leaving

An area of overall concern for ITPs is the high number of students who report that they have seriously considered discontinuing their current studies and leaving before completing their studies. Nearly 60 per cent of students enrolled in bridging programmes, 45 per cent of certificate students and around 40 per cent of diploma and bachelor level students indicated that they had seriously considered or planned to leave before completing. These rates are much higher among ITP students than among New Zealand university students. In many areas, however, ITPs seem to be doing a good job of supporting uncertain learners. For example, overall satisfaction rates for students on bridging programmes are particularly high.

This also provides a focus on the results for specific student groups of interest to the sector, including Māori and Pasifika students. As there are relatively high numbers of students studying extramurally at ITPs, extramural students' engagement with study is also investigated in detail.

Māori students reported even higher intentions to leave before completing their studies and were less satisfied with their overall experience at their ITP than other students. This is despite the fact that Māori students were more likely to be involved with active forms of learning, and reported higher levels of interactions with staff.

Pasifika students reported somewhat lower levels of departure intentions than other students, along with somewhat higher feelings of institutional support. Pasifika students also reported much greater rates of general development and learning outcomes and felt that their experience at their institution had helped them develop generic skills more than other students. Pasifika students also felt themselves to be more career-ready and indicated that they had spent more time preparing for their future career than other students.

While extramural students reported lower levels of engagement with study across the board, these students also reported lower levels of departure intention and slightly higher satisfaction with their experience than other students. These data suggest that, overall, ITPs are meeting extramural students' expectations well.

Despite high numbers of students considering departure before completing their studies, most respondents do intend to complete or continue with their studies in the following year. A link between the level of support provided by their institution and students' departure intentions was also revealed, suggesting that providing greater levels of academic and non-academic support to students may help more students continue their studies and complete their qualification. This is a clearly an area that each institution needs to unpack carefully and look at what it is doing well in terms of supporting its students to succeed and what disincentives to completion, such as quality concerns or boredom, are within its control.

## Values-based education: Understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi and sustainability

At the request of the sector, two unique questions were included on the ITP AUSSE survey instrument. These asked students about the extent to which their experience at their institution contributed to 'developing a greater understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi' and 'contributing to living in a sustainable way'. These questions were included because many polytechnics felt that they reflected some of the values their institutions hold. Given this context, results were somewhat disappointing. Over half of all ITP students (54.3%) stated that their experience at their institution had helped them 'very little' to develop a greater understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi. Similarly, 40 per cent of students reported that their experience had been of 'very little' help in contributing to living sustainably.

## Degree level study at ITPs compared to universities

The AUSSE provides the opportunity to begin to compare the reported behaviours and perceptions of students studying at degree level at both ITPs and universities. There are many more similarities than differences between the two groups of students. Bachelor degree students studying at ITPs were found to be similarly engaged with academically challenging activities, active forms of learning such as making presentations and contributing to class discussions as degree students in universities in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. These scale scores were all significantly lower than for US university students, however.

ITP students reported somewhat higher levels of staff student interactions than those in universities and similar overall levels of support (although first year students in ITPs identified a more supportive learning environment than their counterparts in universities). As might be expected, because of the nature of the programmes offered at ITPs, bachelor level students at ITPs are significantly more involved in work integrated learning activities than university students in New Zealand. Overall satisfaction rates for the two groups of students were relatively high, but significantly higher among university students.

## Introduction

### Overview

The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) provides data that tertiary institutions throughout New Zealand and Australia can use to attract, engage and retain their students. Through measuring the time and effort students devote to educationally purposeful activities and other aspects of their experience at their institution the AUSSE provides a greater understanding of students' engagement with study and their learning. Instead of focusing on student satisfaction, retention and completion rates, looking at the way in which students learn and the outcomes they achieve allows institutions to gain a better understanding of the quality of education students are getting. Collecting data on how students are learning and the outcomes they are achieving allows higher education institutions to understand what really counts in terms of quality.

The AUSSE is an annual survey managed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) in cooperation with participating tertiary education providers. The AUSSE builds upon a decade of development that has been undertaken by the North American National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) which has been run for over a decade in the USA and Canada. The NSSE has been administered at more than 1,300 institutions throughout North America and methodologies and research foundations developed in the NSSE have laid the foundations for the AUSSE.

The AUSSE was first run in 2007 with 25 institutions and participation has grown each year. In 2008, 29 institutions participated, in 2009, 35 institutions in Australasia participated in the AUSSE and in 2010, 55 institutions – including universities, TAFEs, private higher education providers and Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics participated in the AUSSE survey. By providing information that is generalisable and sensitive to institutional diversity, and with multiple points of reference, the AUSSE generates information that institutions can use to monitor and enhance the quality of education.

This particular report focuses on the results from a pilot of the AUSSE survey undertaken in 2010 with Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs). ACER with support and funding from Ako Aotearoa conducted a pilot of the AUSSE survey with ten New Zealand ITPs. Previously, the AUSSE survey had focused solely on higher education students, specifically on-shore students in their first- or later-year of bachelor degree study; however the ITP pilot expanded the reach of the survey to on-shore students undertaking qualifications from New Zealand Qualifications Authority levels three through seven – certificate level to bachelor level study.

ITPs are unique within New Zealand in terms of what they aim to offer to students. ITPs offer a wide range of qualifications to equip people with better skills for the workplace and teach qualifications ranging from basic bridging programmes and foundation studies up to bachelor degree level and postgraduate qualifications. While most degree-level and higher qualifications are taught at universities, ITPs also offer degree level programmes in more vocationally-focused areas.

Over the past decade, the number of students enrolling in tertiary education courses in New Zealand has been increasing steadily (Ministry of Education, 2010a); with nearly 50,000 additional enrolments in tertiary qualifications in 2009 than in 2002. This same pattern has been reflected in the number of students enrolling in tertiary education courses at ITPs. While only a small proportion of students undertaking bachelor level study do so at an ITP (17%), a much greater proportion of students studying at diploma level (46%), certificate four (58%) and certificate one to three (62%) are studying at an ITP.

Although the numbers of students enrolling in tertiary qualifications has been increasing, there are still quite high attrition rates for many qualifications and many students who enrol in a qualification do not complete their studies. First-year attrition rates, eight-year qualification completion rates and eight-year progression rates to a higher qualification are shown in Table 1 by qualification level and institution-type. These results highlight that although greater numbers of students are enrolling in ITPs significant proportions of students are not completing their qualification or one at the same or higher level. Many dropping-out study during the first-year. Attrition rates for students undertaking study at certificate level and bachelor level are also much higher among ITP students than university students. This is to be expected at certificate level where the small numbers of programmes offered by universities are generally purposive bridging programmes for degree study, but is a concern at bachelor level. ITP students have lower completion rates across all qualifications than university students and are less likely to progress to higher levels of study.

To address the high proportion of students who are dropping out of study at ITPs, and to enhance students' experience in tertiary study, it is important to understand how students are engaged in their study and the role of institutions and students' educational success. Having information about the student experience, and in particular students' engagement with their institution and with learning enhances our knowledge about learning processes and outcomes, and provides a diagnostic measure that can be used to enhance students' experience and success.

**Table 1** First-year attrition, eight-year qualification completion and eight-year progression rates by qualification and institution type

Institution type	Certificate 1-3			Certificate 4		
	FY attrition	8 year completion	8 year progression	FY attrition	8 year completion	8 year progression
ITP	41%	39%	45%	35%	40%	35%
University	N/A	N/A	N/A	23%	67%	63%
Wānanga	15%	55%	43%	29%	60%	34%
PTE	22%	44%	32%	26%	54%	31%

Institution type	Diploma 5-7			Bachelors		
	FY attrition	8 year completion	8 year progression	FY attrition	8 year completion	8 year progression
ITP	33%	42%	28%	26%	47%	18%
University	38%	45%	37%	14%	64%	27%
Wānanga	25%	49%	31%	33%	38%	18%
PTE	17%	50%	22%	18%	43%	21%

(Ministry of Education, 2010b; Ministry of Education, 2010c; Ministry of Education, 2010d)

Notes:

- ▶ The first-year attrition rate indicates the proportion of students who started a qualification in 2008 who had not completed, or who were not enrolled in a qualification at the same or higher level in 2009.
- ▶ The eight-year qualification completion rate indicates the proportion of students who began a qualification during 2002 who had successfully completed a qualification at the same or higher level by 2009.
- ▶ The eight-year progression rate indicates the proportion of students who began a qualification in 2002 who subsequently enrolled in higher-level study between 2002 and 2009.
- ▶ University provision at Level 4 is relatively small and largely degree bridging programmes. There is also very limited university provision at Diploma level.

## Measuring student engagement

'Student engagement' which can be defined as students' involvement with activities and conditions that are likely to generate high-quality learning, is increasingly seen as important for positive learning outcomes. The concept of student engagement provides a practical lens for assessing and responding to the significant dynamics, constraints and opportunities facing tertiary education institutions. Measuring student engagement provides key insights into what students are doing, which helps provide information that can be used to enhance students' experience and for continuous improvement.

While student engagement is now seen as vital to quality tertiary education, information on student engagement has not been readily available to Australasian tertiary education providers until very recently. Prior to 2007 when the AUSSE was first run in New Zealand and Australia, existing data collections and surveys tended to focus on student satisfaction and broader aspects of students' experience at their institution. Now that there is an enhanced focus on student engagement, institutions have the opportunity to have information on what matters for their students' experience.

Student engagement is an idea which specifically focuses on students and their interactions with their institution. While the concept has previously been considered behaviourally in terms of 'time on task', contemporary perspectives now touch on aspects of teaching, the broader student experience, learners' lives beyond the classroom, and institutional support. Students lie at the heart of conversations about student engagement – conversations that focus squarely on enhancing individual learning and development.

In short, measures of student engagement provide information about individuals' intrinsic involvement with their learning, and the extent to which they are making use of available educational opportunities. Such information enhances knowledge about learning processes, can be a reliable proxy for understanding students' learning outcomes and provides excellent diagnostic measures for learning enhancement activities.

The AUSSE explores six areas of student engagement. These include things that are related to students' institutional support as well as their involvement in certain types of educational activities. Table 2 details these six scales.

**Table 2** AUSSE engagement scales

Engagement scale	Description
Academic Challenge	Extent to which expectations and assessments challenge students to learn
Active Learning	Students' efforts to actively construct their knowledge
Student and Staff Interactions	Level and nature of students' contact with teaching staff
Enriching Educational Experiences	Participation in broadening educational activities
Supportive Learning Environment	Feelings of legitimization within an institution's learning community
Work Integrated Learning	Integration of employment-focused work experiences into study

In addition to measuring student engagement, the AUSSE also measures several general and learning outcomes. The seven outcome measures in the AUSSE focus on broader forms of learning and development. These outcome measures are described in Table 3.

**Table 3** AUSSE outcome measures

Outcome measure	Description
Higher Order Thinking	Participation in higher-order forms of thinking
General Learning Outcomes	Development of general competencies
General Development Outcomes	Development of general forms of individual and social development
Career Readiness	Preparation for participation in the professional workforce
Average Overall Grade	Average overall grade so far in course
Departure Intention	Non-graduating students' intentions on not returning to study in the following year
Overall Satisfaction	Students' overall satisfaction with their educational experience

The items that make up each of the six student engagement scales and seven outcome measures are detailed in Appendix 2.

## AUSSE background and methodology

The AUSSE measures student engagement through administration of the Student Engagement Questionnaire (SEQ) to a representative sample of students at each institution. It makes available to higher education institutions a new means for measuring and monitoring the effectiveness of learning and teaching.

The SEQ is based on the College Student Report, the instrument used at over 1,300 North American institutions which have participated in the NSSE. The SEQ is designed for administration to undergraduate students in under 15 minutes, either online or in paper form. The same SEQ content is provided to all students. To manage and reduce levels of item-level non-response, sampled students were randomly distributed one of three different online versions, each containing different rotated orderings of the items. All students who submit an online form are presented with an overview of student engagement, a summary of key findings, and information about what institutions have done with the results.

ACER further developed and validated the College Student Report before deploying it in Australia and New Zealand. Validation included item design and development, focus groups, cognitive interviews, pilot testing and expert review. A range of psychometric and conceptual analyses were conducted. This work builds on the extensive validation undertaken in the USA. The SEQ will further develop with ongoing development of the AUSSE. Evolution of the instrument depends on evidence of the kinds of engagement that are linked with high-quality learning outcomes.

For the ITP pilot project, the SEQ was adapted slightly for use with students studying at levels other than bachelor degree study. Two additional items were included, and the wording of some of the items in the standard SEQ was tweaked very slightly. These additional items asked students whether the experience at their institution had helped them to develop a greater understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi and whether their experience had helped them contribute to living in a sustainable way.

The minor changes made to the SEQ helped to increase the suitability of the survey for students studying at ITPs, however because they are only very minor changes, the responses from ITP students to the AUSSE can still be compared with responses from students who participated in the AUSSE at universities using the main version of the SEQ. The ITP SEQ was developed through a series of consultations with Ako Aotearoa, tertiary education experts and representatives from each of the participating ITPs. A copy of the ITP SEQ can be found in Appendix 1.

The cross-national comparisons facilitated by the AUSSE are important. While tertiary education is an increasingly internationalised activity, data limitations have to date constrained comparative analyses. Specifically, very little student-level and process- or outcomes-focused data is available. Through its links with the NSSE, the AUSSE represents a trend towards developing more educationally nuanced cross-national collections and interpretations.

When analysing the AUSSE item and scale statistics, various different technical perspectives could be used. Given the relatively large size of the sample and the magnitude of the scale standard deviations, many of the differences are statistically significant. A rule of thumb to use when interpreting differences in scores is that group differences of five scale score points or greater on the reporting metric are likely to be both a statistically significant and a meaningful difference.

## Sample of students studying at Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics

A systematic random sample of around 1,000 students enrolled in New Zealand Qualifications Authority levels three to seven were selected from the total population of students at nine of the ten institutions, while the tenth institution chose to run a census of their students. Sampling was conducted in a way that ensured that a representative number of students in their first and later years of study were included in the sample and that representative numbers of male and female students and internal and extramural students were selected.

Table 4 provides a list of the ten Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics that participated in the trial of the AUSSE in 2010. Table 5 summarises the numbers of students in the target population, sampled students, respondents and response rates.

**Table 4** Participating New Zealand ITPs

Bay of Plenty Polytechnic
Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
Eastern Institute of Technology
Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology
The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand
Otago Polytechnic
Southern Institute of Technology
UNITEC New Zealand
Universal College of Learning
Whitireia Community Polytechnic

As shown in Table 5, 2,272 students responded in total, giving an overall response rate of 16.2 per cent. The sample design for the student collection included a target response rate of 20 per cent. The secured Australasian response rate, not adjusted for undeliverable contacts, was 23.0 per cent, while among New Zealand universities it was higher at 28.9 per cent.

Because of the lower than anticipated response rate among ITP students the data do not provide sufficient granularity to allow individual institutions to conduct in-depth analyses of specific subgroups of students, for example at a department or discipline level. To account for the lower than expected response, future administrations of the AUSSE with ITPs will focus on enhancing the response rate, and will adjust the sampling numbers to help obtain a stronger response.

**Table 5** Population and response statistics

	New Zealand ITPs	New Zealand universities	Australasia
Population	52,547	42,420	268,703
Sampled students	14,043	36,897	161,910
Responses	2,272	10,665	37,247
Response rate	16.2%	28.9%	23.0%

Post-stratification weighting of AUSSE responses is used to ensure that responses represent the target population as closely as possible. As far as possible, given available information, AUSSE data are weighted within institutions for year level, attendance type, and sex.

Table 6 summarises the individual demographic characteristics of students at the participating ITPs and Table 7 provides a summary of ITP students' educational contexts and backgrounds. Although fewer than the target number of students responded at ITPs, the figures in Table 6 and Table 7 show that in most areas responding students had similar demographic and educational characteristics to the overall target population of students studying at ITPs.

**Table 6** Population and sample demographic characteristics

		Population		Secured response		
		N	%	n (unweighted)	n (weighted)	% (weighted)
Sex	Male	22,879	43.5	664	20,321	40.9
	Female	29,667	56.5	1,256	29,359	59.1
Age	Under 25	-	-	1,212	19,634	39.3
	25 or over	-	-	808	30,361	60.7
Residency	Domestic	43,788	83.3	1,775	46,964	94.5
	International	8,759	16.7	148	2,758	5.5
Language background	English	-	-	1,620	45,573	88.7
	Not English	-	-	274	5,575	11.3
Māori	Māori	-	-	304	6,259	13.0
	Non-Māori	-	-	1,565	41,881	87.0
Pasifika	Pasifika	-	-	158	2,160	4.5
	Non-Pasifika	-	-	1,698	45,838	95.5
Disability	Disability	-	-	153	4,951	10.3
	No disability	-	-	1,721	43,142	89.7

A large proportion of students surveyed in the AUSSE were currently undertaking bachelor level study (33.6%), and 37.6 per cent of ITP were enrolled in a diploma level course and 27.2 per cent were studying at certificate level. The remaining 1.6 per cent of students were undertaking a bridging programme.

Because the AUSSE has collected information from bachelor level students studying at both New Zealand universities and New Zealand ITPs, this provides the opportunity to explore demographic differences and differences in students' educational background for students studying at the same qualification level at two different types of institutions. Table 8 compares some of the key demographic and educational contexts for bachelor level students at New Zealand ITPs and universities.

The figures presented in Table 8 suggest that students studying at bachelor level at ITPs are on the one hand quite similar to university students – with similar proportions of female students, Māori and Pasifika students and similar proportions studying online. On the other hand, students studying at bachelor level at ITPs are far more likely to be over 25, studying extramurally or via mixed mode of attendance or studying part time than bachelor students at New Zealand's universities. ITP bachelor degree students are also more likely to be the first in their family to be undertaking undergraduate study with neither parent having completed a bachelor degree or higher qualification. It is also interesting to see that relatively few ITP bachelor students report living in student accommodation on campus compared with university students.

**Table 7** Population and sample educational characteristics

		Population		Secured response		
		N	%	n (unweighted)	n (weighted)	% (weighted)
Qualification	Bridging	-	-	34	717	1.6
	Certificate	-	-	412	12,183	27.2
	Diploma	-	-	503	16,801	37.6
	Bachelor	-	-	640	15,026	33.6
Award Level	Level Three	8,148	15.6	243	5,266	12.4
	Level Four	15,741	30.1	316	7,909	18.6
	Level Five	11,225	21.4	342	11,984	28.3
	Level Six	7,085	13.5	280	7,273	17.1
	Level Seven	9,552	18.2	512	9,987	16.9
Field	Science	-	-	42	618	1.2
	IT	-	-	140	3,814	7.6
	Engineering	-	-	169	4,998	10.0
	Architecture	-	-	152	3,203	6.4
	Agriculture	-	-	60	2,582	5.1
	Health	-	-	501	7,424	14.8
	Education	-	-	76	3,385	6.7
	Business	-	-	354	12,323	24.5
	Humanities	-	-	210	6,047	12.0
Attendance mode	Internal	31,561	-	1,431	27,806	56.0
	Extramural/ mixed mode	20,986	29.9	490	21,817	44.0
Attendance type	Part time	-	-	403	20,412	41.9
	Full time	-	-	1,508	28,291	58.1
Residential status	In residence	-	-	61	882	1.8
	Non-residential	-	-	1,880	49,017	98.2

**Table 8** Degree level students: Demographics and educational contexts

	Female	25 or older	International	Non-English	Māori	Pasifika
ITP	54.2%	50.4%	3.1%	4.9%	9.0%	5.2%
NZ uni	58.8%	22.8%	6.2%	17.4%	11.7%	7.8%

	Disability	First in family	Extramural	Part time	Online study	Live on campus
ITP	12.7%	57.8%	27.2%	31.4%	77.9%	1.1%
NZ uni	5.9%	41.2%	11.5%	15.8%	79.8%	13.9%

Perhaps even more interesting than exploring these students' demographic differences, is looking in more depth at the ways in which they are engaging in their study. The following section explores the differences in the ways in which students enrolled in different qualifications at ITPs are engaged with their study and then investigates the differences between university students and ITP students, focusing in particular on students studying at bachelor degree level at both types of institutions. This report then turns its focus to three student groups which are of particular interest in New Zealand's tertiary education sector – Māori, Pasifika and extramural students.

It is important to note that these findings presented in this report are aggregated over the ten ITPs that participated in the trial of the AUSSE survey in 2010. This particular report is intended to be a preliminary report on student engagement among students studying in New Zealand ITPs. There are a variety of different ITPs who participated in this pilot study, and as a result there are many diverse findings among the different ITPs. For ITPs interested in better understanding the way in which their students are engaging with study, and how they can improve their students' experience, and attract and retain students in study at their institution it is useful to look at their own AUSSE results and compare these with those reported here.

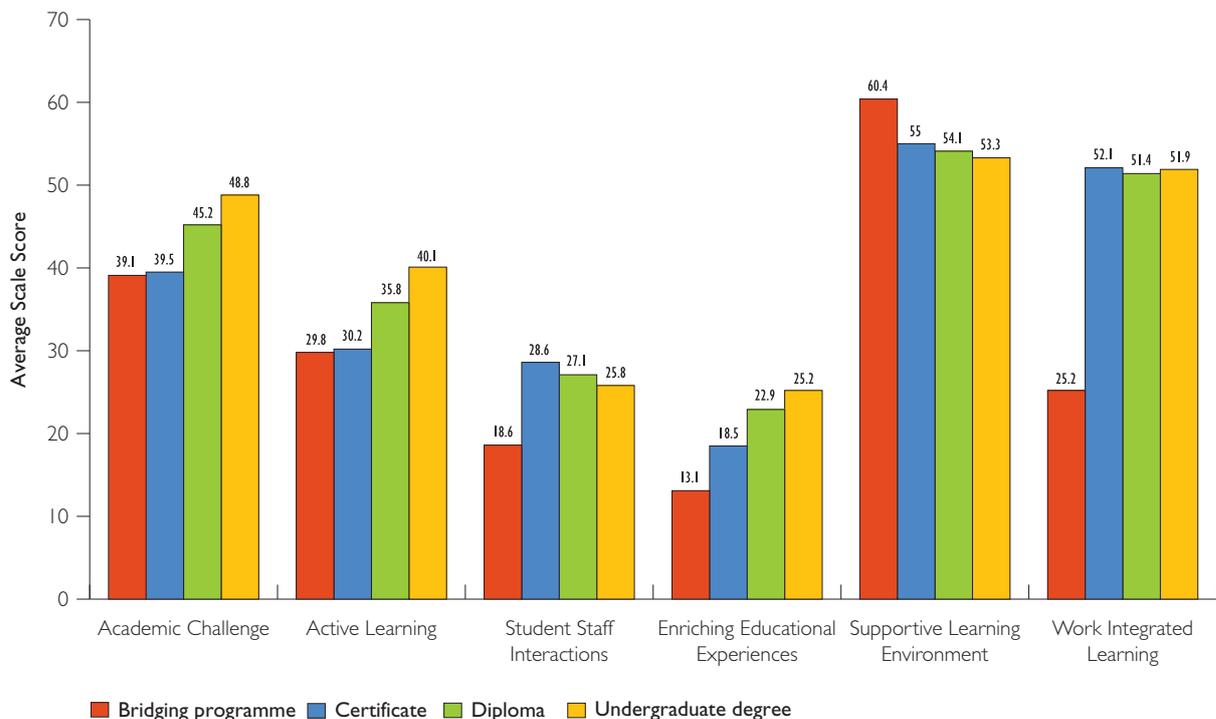
## Student engagement and outcomes at ITPs

### Qualification levels and student engagement

Students studying different qualifications report differing levels of engagement with their study. Generally students studying higher qualifications, such as undergraduate degrees and diploma level, also report higher levels of engagement in most areas. As shown in Figure 1, students undertaking a qualification at undergraduate level are engaging with academically challenging activities, participating in active forms of learning and are involved with enriching educational activities more frequently than other students. Overall it appears that there are quite low levels of engagement with student and staff interactions and enriching educational activities among all students.

There appear to be few differences between certificate, diploma and degree level students in terms of the level and quality of interactions they have with staff, their involvement in work integrated forms of learning or the level of institutional support they received. Interestingly, but perhaps not unexpectedly due to the length and nature of bridging programmes, students studying at this level tend to be far less involved in enriching educational experiences, report far fewer interactions with staff members and are far less likely to be engaged in work integrated forms of learning than other students. On the other hand, students in bridging programmes report significantly higher levels of institutional support than do other students. It is important to note that only a small number of students who completed the survey indicated that they were enrolled in a bridging programme. Because of the small numbers of students who were in bridging programmes, it is necessary to consider findings relating to these students reported here as indicative only.

The most interesting differences between students studying different qualifications can be found for their engagement with academically challenging activities, active types of learning and students' involvement in enriching educational experiences.



**Figure 1** Average student engagement scale scores by qualification type

Students' participation in academically challenging learning activities varied quite substantially for different levels of qualification. The extent to which students spend time preparing for class, the amount of encouragement offered by their institution to focus on their academic work, how hard students work and the types of thinking students do all vary quite dramatically for different qualification levels.

The amount of time students spend preparing for class varied greatly for students enrolled in different qualifications. Students enrolled in a bridging programme spent on average the greatest number of hours per week studying, a total of 13 hours. Only one per cent of students in bridging programmes said that they spent no time preparing for class. Students studying for a degree spent on average 12 hours preparing for class, similar to diploma level students who spent on average 11 hours per week preparing for class. Students enrolled in certificate programmes spent the fewest hours on average preparing for class, only seven hours per week, and 12 per cent of these students reported spending no time studying.

Overall, two thirds of ITP students feel that their institution encourages them 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to spend significant amounts of time on academic study. The amount which students feel encouraged to study hard differs quite dramatically for students enrolled in different qualifications. 75.1 per cent of degree students, 69.6 per cent of diploma students and 55.5 per cent of certificate students feel this level of encouragement to spend time on their study. Interestingly, while only 40.6 per cent of bridging programme students feels encouraged to spend significant time on their academic study, two thirds of these students said that they frequently worked harder than they thought they could, a higher proportion than all other students.

In addition to the differences in time spent studying and the amount of encouragement given by their institution to work hard, there is also a clear difference by qualification level for the types of thinking emphasised by students' coursework. The level to which students' coursework emphasises analysing, making judgements about the value of information and synthesising and organising ideas is lowest among students in bridging programs and increases for students in certificate level programmes, again for those in diplomas and is highest among degree level students.

The amount to which students are engaged in active forms of learning, such as working with other students during and outside of class, contributing to discussions in class and asking questions and discussing ideas from classes with others, is quite low for all ITP students. When looking at students from different qualification levels separately, engagement in active forms of learning is generally lowest among students in bridging programmes and increases for students enrolled in higher level qualifications.

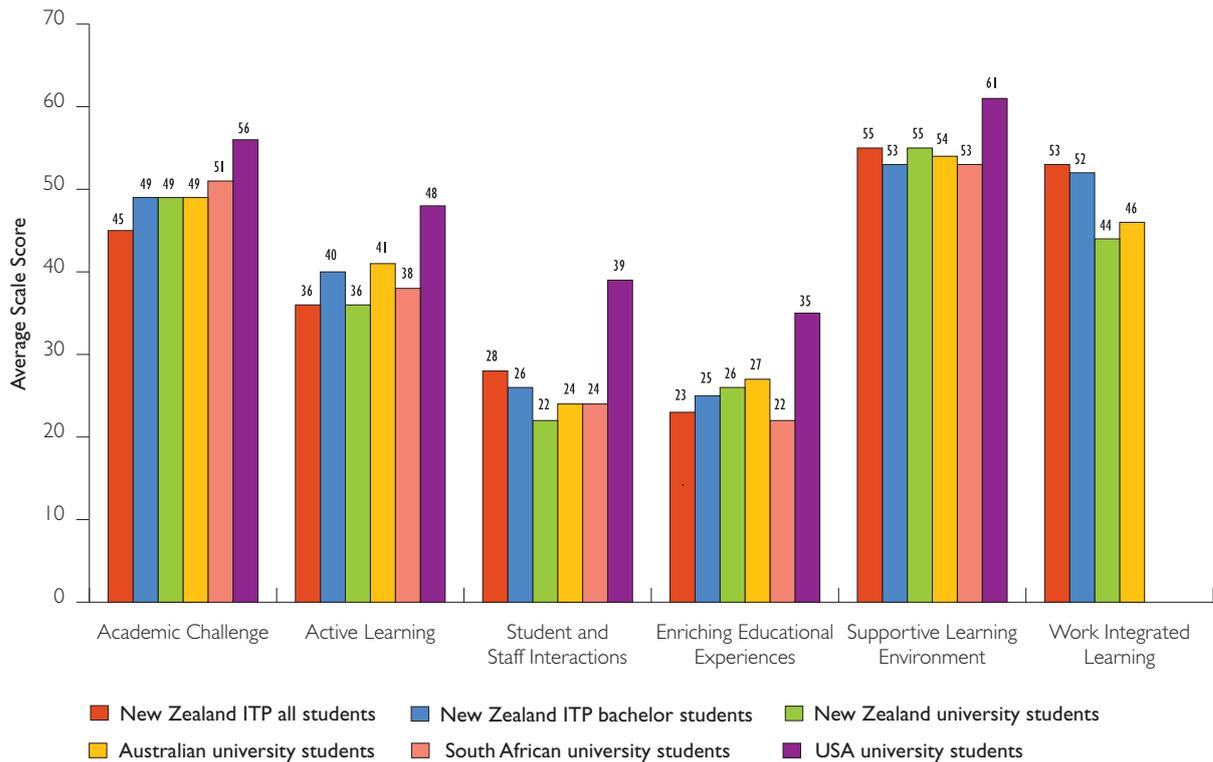
Quite a substantial proportion of ITP students (28.9%) indicated that they never work with students during classes and an even greater proportion (35.7%) say that they never work with students to complete assignments outside of class. Only 11.6 per cent of bridging programmes students, 14.0 per cent of certificate students, 16.7 per cent of diploma students and 20.3 per cent of degree level students say that they work with students during class 'very often'. Although least likely to work with other students frequently during classes, 97.0 per cent of bridging programme students work with students outside of class at least sometimes. This is lower among degree level students (78.5%) and diploma students (62.3%) and lowest still among certificate students (45.6%).

The vast majority of ITP students (88.1%) ask questions or contribute to discussions in class or online at least 'sometimes'. Again, the proportions of students who do this frequently differ with students' qualification levels. Among students in bridging programmes, less than a third (30.3%) contribute to discussions or ask questions frequently. This rises to 45.7 per cent of certificate students, 45.9 per cent of diploma students and 58.3 per cent of degree level students. In addition to the large proportion of students who do not frequently ask questions or contribute to discussions, a very high proportion of ITP students have never given a presentation in class or online. Again, this differs by qualification level. Only 39.8 per cent of bridging programme students has made a presentation in class at least once, rising to 68.4 per cent of degree level students.

In addition to reporting greater engagement in active forms of learning, students enrolled in degree level study were also far more likely to be involved in enriching educational experiences, such as participating in study groups and interacting with students from different ethnic groups or backgrounds. Quite a high proportion of students say that they have 'never' had conversations with students who are very different to them (28.6%) or from a different ethnic group (26.2%). This is highest among students in bridging programmes. 50.7 per cent of students in bridging programmes reported never having had conversations with students who are very different to them and 52.9 per cent with students of a different ethnic group. Degree level students were far more likely to have interacted with students of a different ethnic group or those who are very different to them.

While only small proportions of ITP students have participated in a learning community or study group, again this differs by students' qualification level. Although students enrolled in a bridging programme are more likely to report working with other students outside of class, only 10.4 per cent report participating in a study group or learning community. This rises to 28.4 per cent of degree level students.

## International comparisons



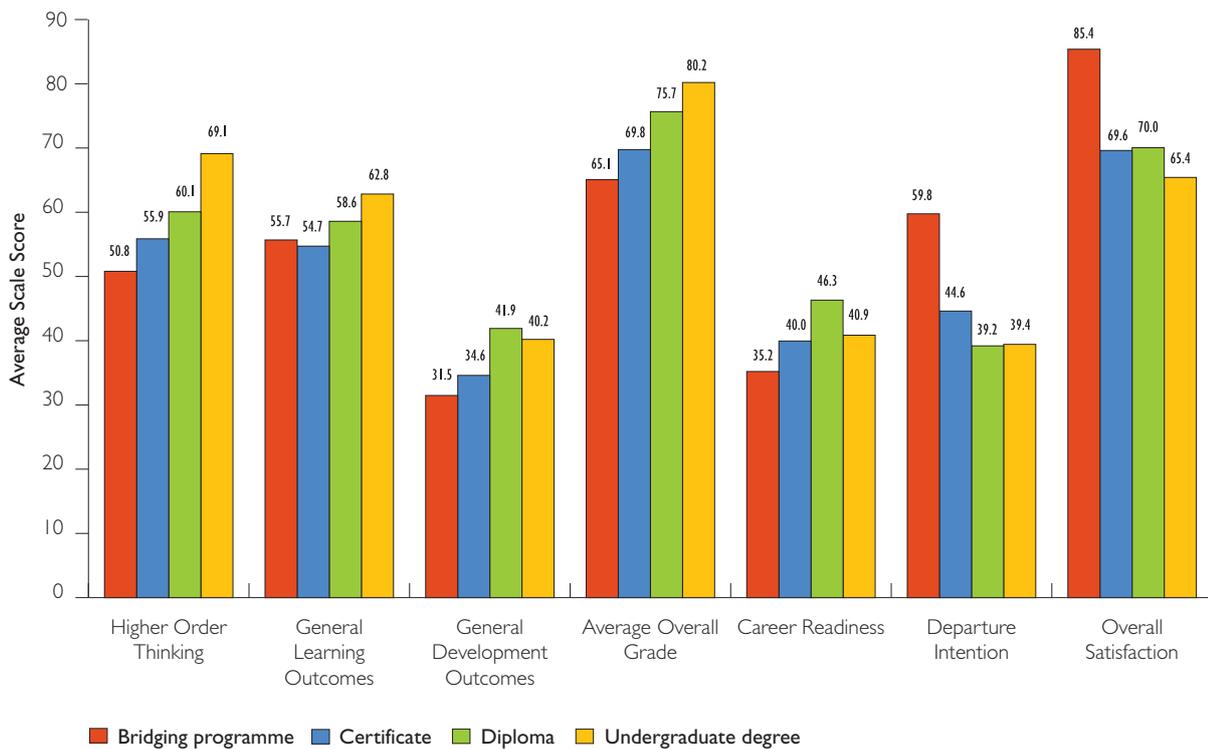
**Figure 2** Average engagement scale scores – ITP, New Zealand university and international comparisons

Comparing ITP students' level of engagement with that of students studying in universities in New Zealand and other countries provides an interesting perspective to these findings. Figure 2 compares all New Zealand ITP students' engagement with ITP students studying at bachelor level and university students from New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and the USA. This shows that ITP students are somewhat less engaged on average with academically challenging activities and enriching educational experiences, however these differences seem to be due in part by the type of qualification students are undertaking. ITP students also report similar levels of engagement with active forms of learning and feelings of support than students studying at university in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and somewhat higher levels of student and staff interactions than their peers in these countries. Overall USA students report substantially greater levels of engagement in all these areas than all other countries.

Figure 2 also shows that students enrolled at ITPs report greater levels of involvement in work-integrated forms of learning than students at Australian and New Zealand universities (equivalent data is not available for South Africa and the US). Because of the vocational focus of many of the programmes offered at ITPs, this higher engagement in work-integrated learning is perhaps not so surprising.

## Qualification levels and student outcomes

As shown in Figure 3, students' outcomes also differ quite dramatically by qualification type. Students' average overall grade, the extent to which their coursework emphasises higher order forms of thinking and their general learning outcomes all increase with level of qualification. There appears to be a slightly more mixed pattern for students' general development. It is interesting to note also that bridging students report both substantially higher departure intentions, and overall satisfaction. This suggests that despite many bridging programme students having encountered setbacks and difficulty with continuing study, they are still finding it a very valuable experience.

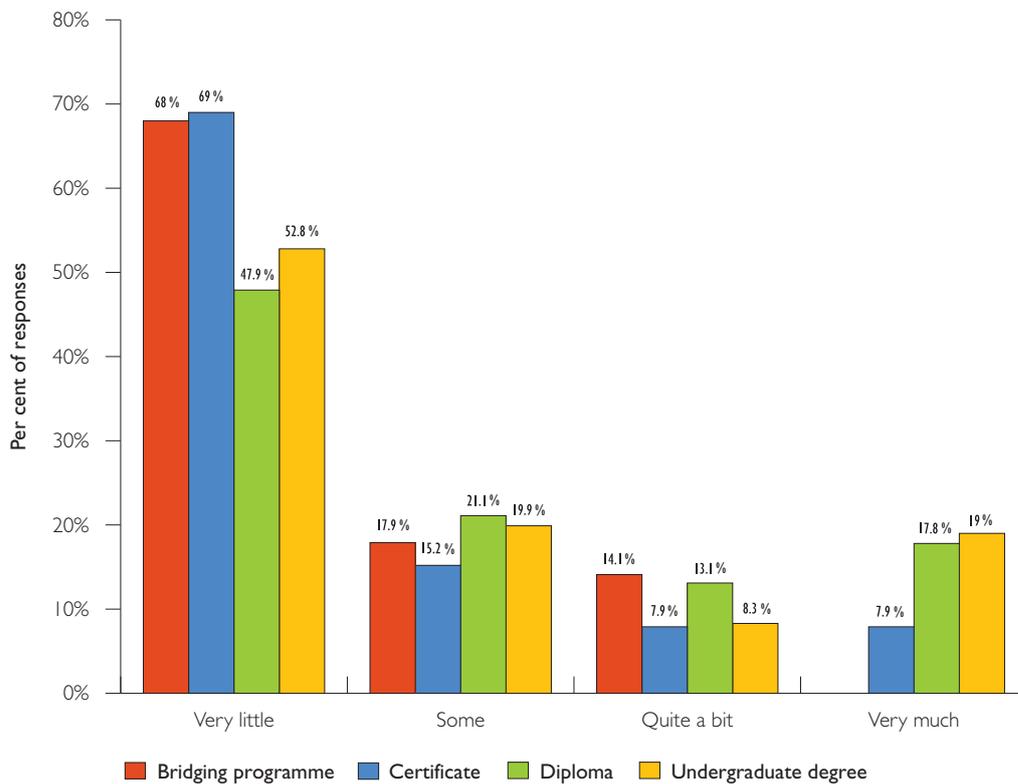


**Figure 3** Average student outcomes scale scores by qualification type

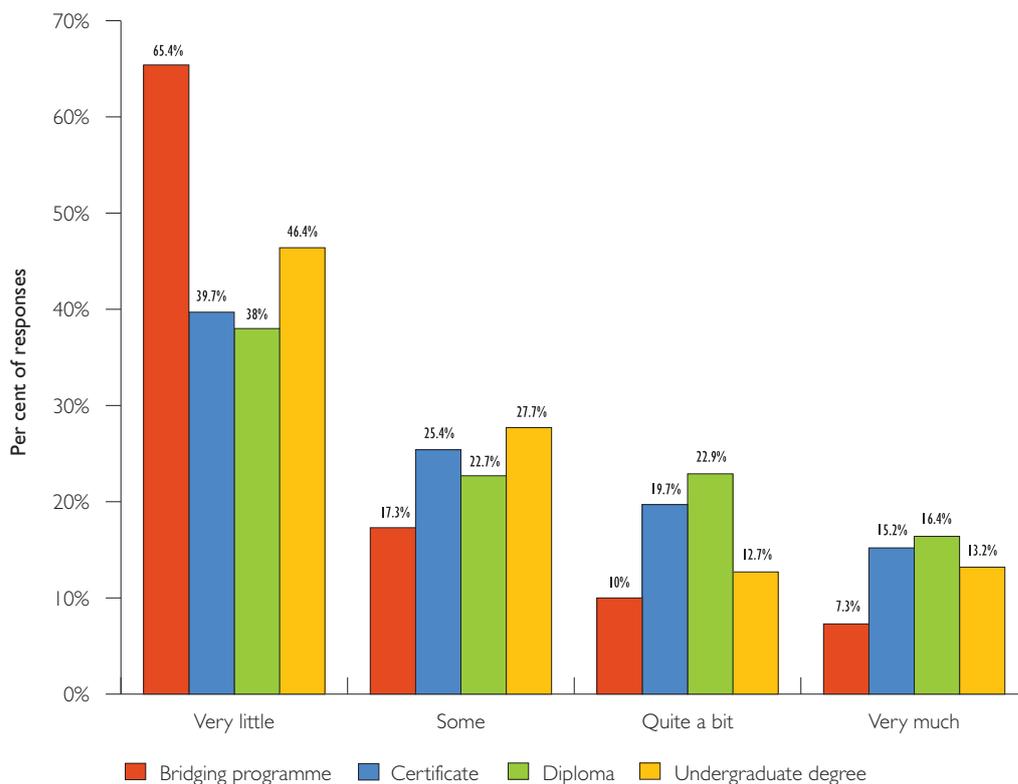
The extent to which students' experience at their institution has contributed to their general development again varies by students' qualification level. Most students, regardless of their qualification level feel that their experience at their institution has helped them to understand themselves. This is highest among bridging students, with two thirds reporting that they feel that their institution has contributed at least 'quite a bit' to their ability to understand themselves. The proportion of students enrolled in other qualifications who feel that their experience has contributed to their ability to understand themselves is slightly less among degree level students (61.1%) and lower again for diploma students (56.9%) and certificate students (48.3%).

Far fewer students feel that their experience at their institution has contributed to their understanding of people of different ethnic groups. Only 17.2 per cent of students in bridging programmes feel that their experience has helped them relate to people from different ethnic groups 'quite a bit' or 'very much', and around a third of students in other qualifications feel the same way.

Two questions that were included on the ITP SEQ asked students about the extent to which their experience at their institution contributed to 'developing a greater understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi' and 'contributing to living in a sustainable way'. Figure 4 and Figure 5 summarise the responses to these particular questions for students studying at different qualification levels. Over half of all ITP students (54.3%) stated that their experience at their institution had helped them 'very little' to develop a greater understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi. As Figure 4 shows, over two-thirds of students enrolled in bridging programmes or at certificate level said that their understanding of the Treaty had developed 'very little'. A similar pattern is revealed when looking at the extent to which students' experience has helped them contribute to living in a sustainable way, with 40.6 per cent of ITP students saying that their experience has helped them 'very little' to live sustainably.



**Figure 4** Extent to which experience at institution has helped you understand the Treaty of Waitangi



**Figure 5** Extent to which experience at institution has helped you contribute to living sustainably

A small but still considerable number of students (21.3%) feel that their experience at their institution has contributed 'very little' to their ability to solve complex, real-world problems. This is much higher among bridging students, with just over half indicating that their experience at their institution has contributed 'very little' to their problem solving skills. Certificate students (74.5%), degree level students (76.9%) and diploma students (84.4%) are much more likely to say that their experience has contributed at least 'somewhat' to their problem solving skills.

**Table 9** Top reasons given for considering leaving institution by qualification

Bridging Program		Certificate		Diploma		Undergraduate degree	
Considered or plan to leave	59.8%	Considered or plan to leave	44.6%	Considered or plan to leave	39.2%	Considered or plan to leave	39.4%
Top five reasons given							
Boredom	50.6%	Quality concerns	16.1%	Personal reasons	33.0%	Boredom	31.9%
Personal reasons	44.3%	Personal reasons	7.9%	Family responsibilities	29.5%	Quality concerns	29.7%
Commuting	40.5%	Boredom	7.4%	Needing paid work	28.0%	Needing a break	22.0%
Financial difficulties	29.9%	Family responsibilities	6.7%	Workload	26.6%	Personal reasons	19.8%
Workload	23.6%	Change of direction	5.4%	Boredom	22.8%	Health or stress	19.1%

Somewhat worrying is the large proportion of students at ITPs who have seriously considered leaving or who plan to leave their current institution. Overall, four in ten ITP students have seriously considered leaving their current institution or plan to leave. Table 9 shows the proportion of students in each qualification level that have seriously considered or plan to leave before completion, along with the top five reasons given by students who have departure intentions. This table shows that while only 39.2 per cent of diploma students and 39.4 per cent of degree level students express departure intentions, this rises to 44.6 per cent of certificate students and 59.8 per cent of bridging students. These departure intentions are not all that surprising, given the first-year attrition and completion rates among tertiary students in New Zealand.

Students who have seriously considered leaving their current institution were most likely to cite boredom or a lack of interest, personal reasons, family responsibilities, needing to do paid work and quality concerns. Table 9 provides the top five reasons given by students in each qualification level for seriously considering leaving their current institution and the proportions of students who have seriously considered leaving who gave each of these reasons.

Although quite large proportions of students have seriously considered leaving or plan to leave prior to completing their qualification, the majority of students plan to continue with their current study next year, complete their qualification or change qualifications. The vast majority of students plan to continue with their current study (59.8%) or leave their institution after completing their qualification (22.0%). In addition to this, 3.4 per cent of ITP students plan to shift institutions, 7.5 per cent plan to move to university study, 8.8 per cent plan to change qualifications and 5.0 per cent plan to leave before finishing their qualification. Table 10 shows students' plans for next year by qualification. It is helpful to note that students were able to select more than one option to this particular question.

**Table 10** Plans for next year by qualification

	Bridging Program	Certificate	Diploma	Undergraduate degree
Continue with current study	29.4%	44.0%	62.4%	71.9%
Leave after completing study	12.6%	42.6%	27.8%	22.0%
Shift to a different institution	6.2%	5.7%	1.4%	3.6%
Move to university study	0.9%	3.4%	8.0%	10.6%
Change qualification	69.4%	13.0%	6.3%	5.0%
Leave before completing	0.0%	4.8%	2.2%	8.9%

There appears to be quite a strong relationship between the level of support provided to a student by their institution and their departure intentions. In other words, students who feel well supported by their ITP are less likely to have seriously considered or to plan to leave before completing their qualification. Over half of all students who have departure intentions say that very little support is provided by their institution to help them cope with non-academic responsibilities, 44 per cent say that they receive very little support to socialise, and eight per cent report very little academic support.

The amount of support students receive to help them succeed with their studies appears to be a major determinate of whether they will consider leaving. While only 22.5 per cent of students who feel 'very much' supported to succeed in their studies have seriously considered leaving or plan to leave their institution, this rises to 37.3 per cent of students who feel 'quite a bit' of support, 56.4 per cent who feel 'some' support rising to 80.7 per cent of students who feel that their institution provides them with 'very little' support. This same pattern emerges across all qualification levels, with students enrolled at each qualification level who feel highly supported reporting substantially lower departure intentions than students who do not feel that their institution provides them with academic support.

The relationship between supportive learning environment, in particular the level of academic support and students' departure intentions suggests that ITPs need to reconsider how they can provide all students with a high level of academic support. Providing more support, and making this more accessible to students will almost certainly reduce the number of students leaving their studies before completing, and will also boost completion rates and student success.

Although quite a substantial number of ITP students have seriously considered leaving their current institution, overall most students were satisfied with their experience at their institution. 75.5 per cent of ITP students rated the overall quality of academic advising at their institution as 'good' or 'excellent'. Degree and certificate level students were slightly less likely than other students to rate the quality of academic advising as highly. The vast majority of students (77.7%) rated their overall educational experience positively. Again, students in bridging programmes and studying at diploma level rated their overall educational experience more positively than certificate and degree level students.

Overall, 80.9 per cent of ITP students said that they would 'probably' or 'definitely' attend the same institution again if they had the chance to start over. Worryingly, over a quarter of degree students said that they would 'probably' or 'definitely' not attend the same institution given the chance to start over again. Far fewer students undertaking diploma level study (16.6%), certificate level study (13.8%) or bridging programmes (7.4%) said this. Degree students' satisfaction is much lower among degree level students studying at ITPs than among their peers at universities. Exploring the similarities and differences between degree level students at ITPs and universities, we will be able to better understand why degree level students at universities are more satisfied overall.

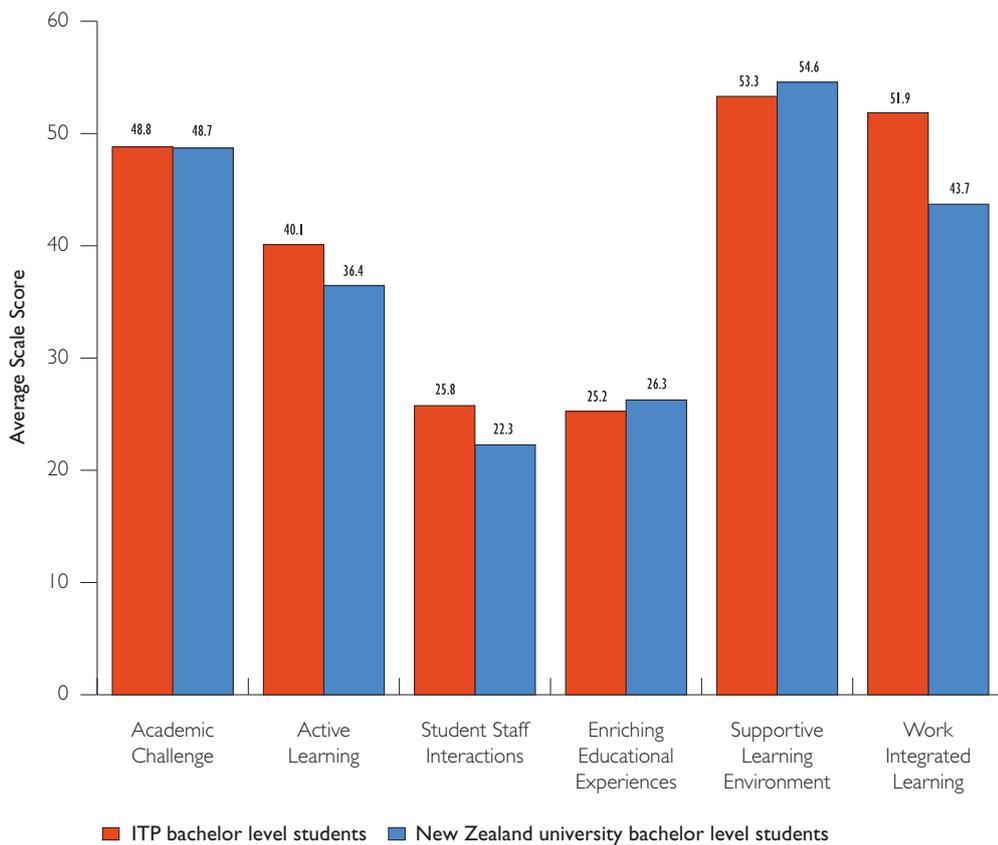
### Degree level students – comparing ITPs and universities

Comparing the way in which students from universities and ITPs engage with learning and their perceived outcomes from study helps provide a new perspective on the higher education sector in New Zealand and gives an opportunity for universities and ITPs alike to learn from each other and work together to enhance student engagement and positive student outcomes. This section of the report will focus only on New Zealand undergraduate university students and degree level ITP students. Because of the more vocational focus ITPs tend to have, and the smaller number of degree level programmes and degree students enrolled at these institutions, one would expect that students studying a bachelor level qualification at an ITP are engaged more in active forms of learning, have greater level of interactions with staff members, report higher levels of support from their institution and greater involvement in work-integrated learning. One might also expect that due to their vocational focus, ITP degree students are better prepared to enter employment and would be more career-ready.

Figure 6 compares university and ITP students' engagement and highlights only a few differences between these students. Meeting expectations, degree level students studying at ITPs are slightly more likely to be engaged with active forms of learning and report slightly more frequent interactions with teaching staff. The greatest difference between ITP and university students is the level to which these students are engaged in work-integrated forms of learning.

Students studying at New Zealand universities report a mean score of 43.7 for Work Integrated Learning, significantly lower than ITP students (51.9). ITP students are more likely than New Zealand university students to frequently participate in work integrated forms of learning such as work experience improve knowledge and skills relevant to their employability, apply learning to the workforce and blend academic learning and workplace experience. These students are also more likely to feel that their experience at their institution has contributed to their development of work-related knowledge and skills.

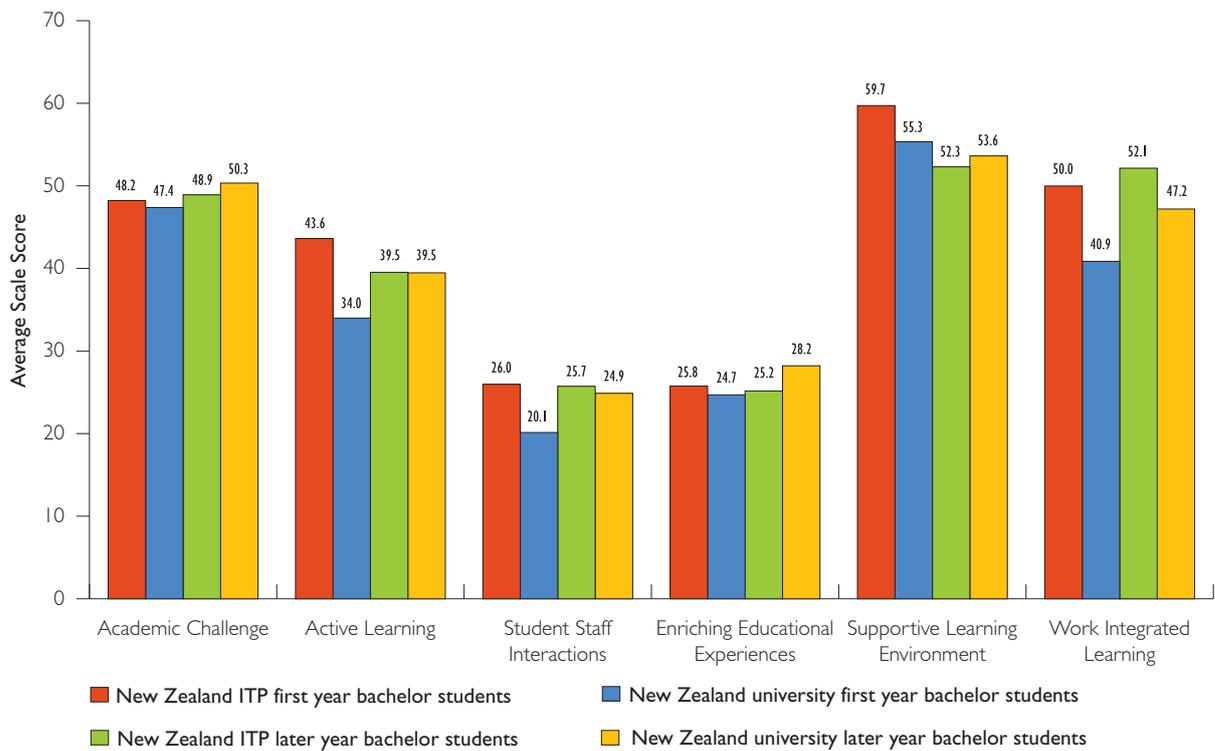
Nearly a third of ITP students have participated in an industry placement or work experience (28.9%), while only 17.7 per cent of New Zealand university students have done so. Students from ITPs are also more likely than those from universities to say that they have frequently explored ways to apply their learning to the workforce (55.2% compared with 43.6%). They are also more likely to say that they have 'often' or 'very often' improved their knowledge and skills related to their employability (66.8% compared to 58.4%) and are more likely to report frequently blending academic learning with workplace experience (42.2% compared to 31.8%). 78.2 per cent of ITP students undertaking degree level study feel that their experience at their institution has contributed 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to their development of job-related or work-related knowledge and skills, while 66.3 per cent of New Zealand university students agree.



**Figure 6** Average degree level students' engagement scale scores by institution type

Related to students' participation in work integrated forms of learning is their involvement in paid work. As well as engaging in these types of activities more frequently than university students, degree level students at ITPs also are much more likely to be working for pay either on or off campus than New Zealand university students. 73.3 per cent of ITP students undertaking degree level study work for pay, compared with 59.6 per cent of New Zealand university students. The average number of hours spent in paid work during a typical week is also higher among working ITP degree students (19.1 hours) than among working New Zealand university students (15.3 hours). 17.9 per cent of university students who work for pay report working 30 or more hours a week, compared with 25.6 per cent of working students enrolled in degree level study at ITPs. The greater participation in paid work among ITP degree students may be explained at least in part by the much higher proportion of these students studying part time (31.4%) compared with undergraduate university students (15.8%).

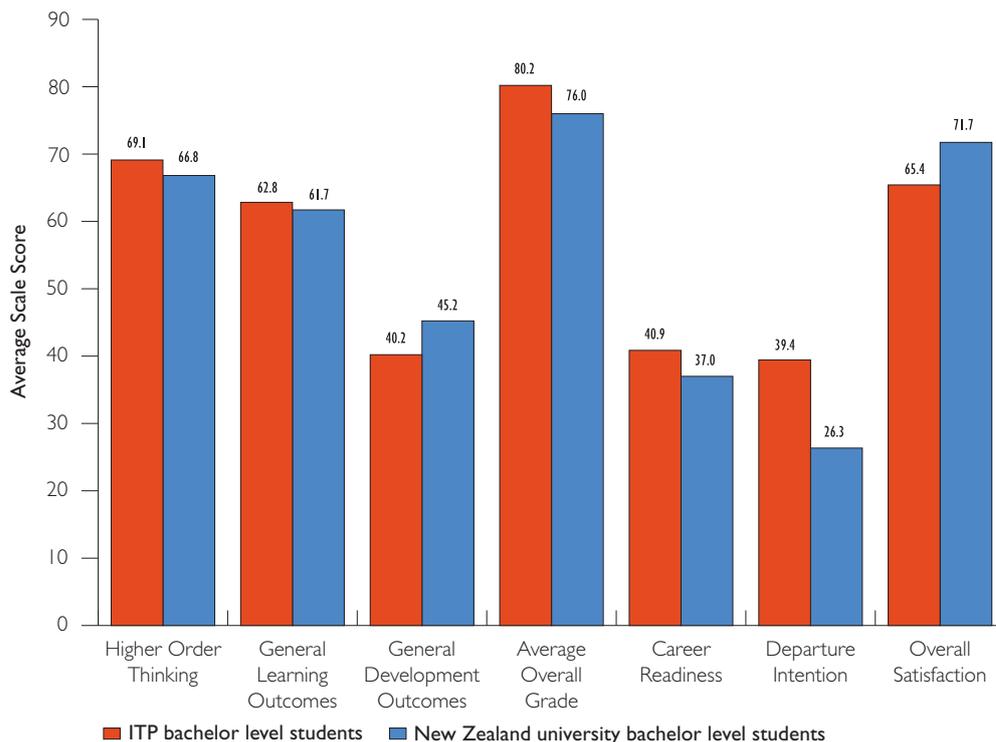
As students experience in their first year of study is quite unique and different from their experience in later years, it is interesting to also look at the differences between first and later-year students' engagement with study, both within ITPs and at New Zealand universities. Some interesting differences between ITP and New Zealand university bachelor degrees emerge from this data. As Figure 7 shows, in general first year ITP students have higher engagement scale scores than their university counterparts. However, students studying a bachelor degree in university tend to increase their engagement from first to later years of study in most areas, in ITPs this same pattern does not emerge.



**Figure 7** Average engagement scale scores among degree level students by institution type and year level

Among New Zealand university students later year students are significantly more engaged in all areas of engagement excepting support from their institution compared to first year students. By later year, New Zealand university students report significantly higher general development outcomes and career readiness. Looking at all ITP students, there are very few differences between first and later year students' engagement or outcomes, although by later year, ITP students report significantly lower levels of engagement in active learning and supportive learning environment.

Differences between New Zealand university students and ITP degree level students become slightly more apparent when looking at these students' outcomes. While students studying at both universities and ITPs report similar levels of higher order thinking and general learning outcomes, there appear to be some small differences in average overall grade, students' career readiness, and some meaningful differences in these students' general development outcomes, departure intentions and overall satisfaction with their experience.



**Figure 8** Average degree level students' outcomes scale scores by institution type

Overall, students undertaking a degree at New Zealand universities reported substantially greater levels of general development than degree students from ITPs. University students (87.0%) were more likely than ITP degree level students (77.4%) to report that their experience had contributed at least 'somewhat' to their ability to understand themselves. University students (48.8%) were also more likely to say that their educational experience had contributed 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to their ability to understand people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds than degree level students at ITPs (36.5%). While the vast majority of New Zealand university students said that their experience at university has contributed at least 'somewhat' to their ability to solve complex real-world problems (89.6%), fewer degree level ITP students agree (76.9%). In addition to this, New Zealand university students were more likely to say that their experience at their institution had helped them be able to contribute to their community.

As shown in Figure 8, a much higher proportion of ITP students undertaking degree level study have seriously considered, or plan to leave their current institution than New Zealand university students. The high proportion of degree level students at ITPs who have considered leaving does not necessarily reflect a dire situation as the vast majority of New Zealand university students (77.6%) and degree level ITP students (71.9%) plan to continue with their current study next year. A further 6.8 per cent of New Zealand university students and 3.6 per cent of degree level ITP students plan to shift to a different university or ITP and 8.5 per cent of university students and 5.0 per cent of ITP degree level students plan to change qualifications. Only very few (1.8%) of university students plan to move into vocational education and training, quite a substantial proportion (10.6%) of degree level ITP students plan to shift to university study next year. Taken together this suggests that most degree level students at ITPs and universities plan to continue with their studies and remain in tertiary education. On the other hand, however, while only 1.4 per cent of New Zealand university students plan to discontinue their studies, 8.9 per cent of students enrolled in degree level student at an ITP plan to discontinue.

The differences between ITP and university students' plans to leave study before completing is also reflected in the differences in attrition rates among bachelor students studying at ITPs and universities. While 14 per cent of first-year bachelor students in 2008 discontinued their study in 2009, 26 per cent of students studying at ITPs also dropped out of their studies (Ministry of Education, 2010b). A lesser proportion of ITP students also complete their bachelor level or a higher qualification within eight years than university students – 47 per cent compared with 64 per cent (Ministry of Education, 2010c) Students studying at bachelor level at ITPs were also less likely to progress to higher study within eight years, with only 18 per cent progressing to an honours degree or higher degree within this timeframe compared with 27 per cent of bachelor students studying at university (Ministry of Education, 2010d).

The top reasons for seriously considering leaving their current institution given by New Zealand university students and students undertaking degree level study at ITPs are summarised in Table 11 along with the proportions of students who have seriously considered leaving who gave each reason. Many of the reasons cited by university and ITP students are the same; however it is interesting to note the differences between these two groups of students. Interestingly, only university students' top ten reasons includes a 'change of direction' and 'academic exchange' which are not in the ITP top ten, and ITP students' top ten reasons includes 'quality concerns' and 'needing paid work' which are not included in university students' top ten reasons.

**Table 11** Top reasons given for considering leaving institution by sub-sector

University students		Degree level ITP students	
Top ten reasons given			
Boredom	25.4%	Boredom	31.9%
Personal reasons	23.1%	Quality concerns	29.7%
Change of direction	18.6%	Needing a break	22.0%
Study-life balance	18.2%	Personal reasons	19.8%
Health or stress	17.7%	Health or stress	19.1%
Workload	17.7%	Study-life balance	19.0%
Needing a break	16.8%	Career prospects	17.6%
Financial difficulties	15.1%	Financial difficulties	17.3%
Academic exchange	14.6%	Needing paid work	17.0%
Career prospects	13.5%	Workload	15.6%

As noted earlier, university students are also significantly more satisfied with their educational experience than degree level students studying at ITPs. Although the vast majority of ITP degree level students (71.5%) rate the quality of academic advice they have received as 'good' or 'excellent', this is slightly higher among New Zealand university students with 77.8 per cent of students rating the academic advising positively. Again, while three quarters of degree level students at ITPs rate their overall educational experience positively, so do 84.9 per cent of New Zealand university students. This pattern is repeated when students were asked whether they would attend the same institution given the chance to start over again. 73.2 per cent of degree level ITP students indicate that they would 'probably' or 'definitely' attend the same institution again if starting over, while 89.5 per cent of university students agree.

### Engaging Māori students at ITPs

Increasing the number of Māori undertaking and successfully completing tertiary education qualifications is a key aim set out in the New Zealand Government's Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015 (Tertiary Education Commission, 2010). Very positive steps have been made towards increasing educational success of Māori. The proportion of the Māori population with a tertiary qualification has increased quite dramatically over the past decade, with 31.0% of the Māori population over 15 years of age holding a non-degree tertiary qualification and a further 7.5% with a bachelor degree in 2009 (Ministry of Education, 2010e). The number of Māori students enrolling in degree and non-degree formal tertiary study is also increasing and in 2009, 17.1 per cent of the Māori population over 15 years of age was enrolled in provider-based tertiary education (Ministry of Education, 2010e).

Despite these obvious steps in the right direction, Māori students are still more likely than European/Pakeha and Asian New Zealand students to drop out of tertiary study and are less likely to have completed or still be completing their qualification five years after commencing (48% compared with 63% among European New Zealanders and 64% among Asian New Zealanders) (Ministry of Education, 2010e).

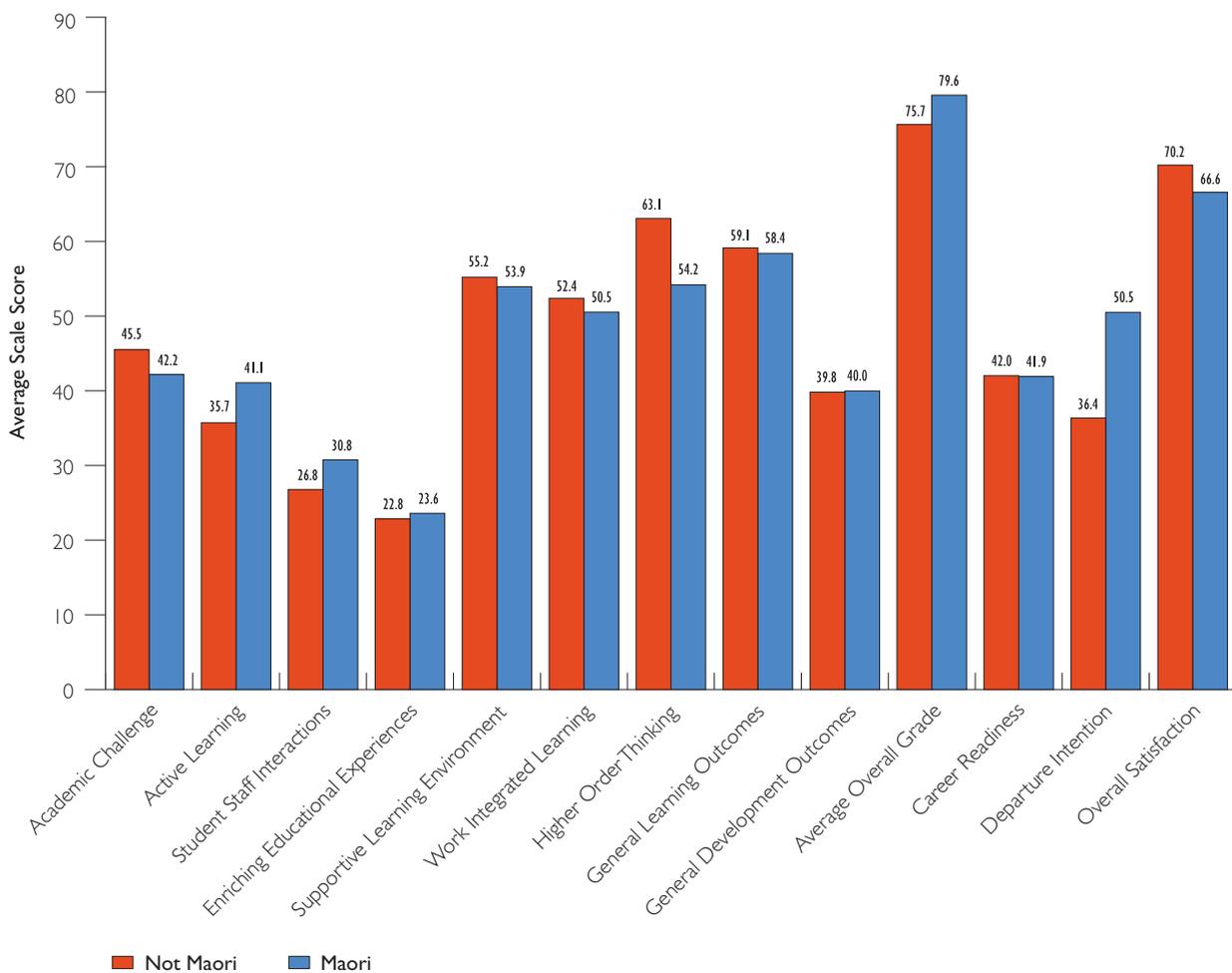
Potentially worrying are the relatively high attrition rates among Māori students studying at all levels of tertiary qualifications. As shown in Table 12, relatively high proportions of Māori students at both universities and ITPs report quite high attrition levels, and attrition rates are consistently higher among Māori students studying at ITPs at every qualification level.

Although students may discontinue their studies for many reasons, many of which may be outside the control of an institution, the low retention and completion rates for Māori students at ITPs is an issue that needs to be addressed and suggests that more needs to be done to support and engage Māori students studying at ITPs.

**Table 12** Eight-year attrition rates among Māori students by institution type

	Certificate 1-3	Certificate 4	Diploma 5-7	Bachelor
Universities	35%	49%	56%	51%
ITPs	45%	56%	63%	54%

(Ministry of Education, 2010f)



**Figure 9** Average engagement and outcome measure scale scores – Māori students

Although Asian students generally report much lower levels of attrition and greater completion rates than European, Māori and Pasifika students in New Zealand, and report greater levels of success than other students, in the AUSSE information is collected only on whether a student is of Māori or Pasifika descent, and so comparisons in the following paragraphs look at the differences between Māori and non-Māori students which include European, Asian and other New Zealanders and international students.

Linking with the low retention and completion rates among Māori students, results from the AUSSE also show that Māori students are far more likely than other students to have seriously considered or plan to leave their institution. As shown in Figure 9, just over half of all Māori students studying at ITPs have departure intentions, compared with 36.4 per cent of other students.

Figure 9 also shows that as well as having higher departure intentions than other students, Māori students are also somewhat less satisfied with their overall educational experience and are less likely to be engaged in higher order levels of thinking. On the other hand, Māori students are engaged significantly more in active forms of learning than non-Māori students. In other areas of engagement, such as participation in academically challenging activities, level of interactions with academic staff, participation in enriching educational experiences, feelings of institutional support and involvement in work integrated forms of learning, both Māori and non-Māori students are engaged at similar levels. Both Māori and non-Māori students also report fairly similar levels of development of general learning skills and personal development and report similar levels of career preparedness and quite similar average grades.

In terms of Māori students' engagement in active forms of learning, they are much more likely to work with other students during and outside of class, to give a presentation and contribute to discussions or ask questions during classes. Only 15.0 per cent of Māori students have 'never' worked with other students during class compared with 28.9 per cent of non-Māori students. 64.5 per cent of Māori students say that they work with students frequently during class, while only 39.7 per cent of non-Māori students do the same. Māori students also report working with others outside of class more frequently than non-Māori students. 41.1 per cent of Māori students do so frequently, compared with 33.8 per cent of non-Māori students. Māori students are also somewhat more likely to tutor other students. In addition to more frequently working with other students in class, and on coursework and assignments, Māori students also report more frequently making a presentation in class or online. 56.9 per cent of non-Māori and 65.7 per cent of Māori students reported making presentations at least 'sometimes'. Māori students are also more likely to ask questions and contribute to discussions during class, with 60.7 per cent doing so frequently, compared with 50.9 per cent of non-Māori students.

The main area of concern for Māori students studying at ITPs is retaining them in study. As shown in the AUSSE results, quite a large proportion of Māori students have seriously considered leaving their current institution or plan to leave prior to completing their studies at their ITP. The main reasons cited by Māori students for why they have seriously considered leaving are due to quality concerns, financial difficulties, boredom, career prospects and family responsibilities. Among non-Māori students the main reasons are personal reasons, boredom, health or stress, family responsibilities and difficulty with workload.

Although a large number of Māori students had considered leaving or planned to leave their current institution, the vast majority plan to either continue with their current study or leave after completing their qualification (81.8%). A further 8.8 per cent plan to shift to university, 4.3 per cent plan to move to another ITP or Wānanga and 7.3 per cent plan to change qualifications. Only 1.6 per cent of Māori students plan to leave before finishing their qualification, lower than the 3.0 per cent of non Māori students who plan to do so.

### Engaging Pasifika students at ITPs

Another group of students of great importance to New Zealand's tertiary sector are Pasifika students. As for Māori students, increasing the educational success of Pasifika students and increasing the proportion of Pasifika with high level tertiary qualifications is seen by the New Zealand Government as a top priority (Tertiary Education Commission, 2010). Only 5.9 per cent of the Pasifika population hold a bachelor or higher level degree, and a further 22.6 per cent hold a non-degree tertiary qualification and while the proportion of the Pasifika population with a tertiary qualification has been steadily increasing, like Māori students, Pasifika students have relatively high levels of attrition from tertiary study (Ministry of Education, 2010e). As shown in Table 13, depending on the level and institution at which they are studying around four in ten to six in ten Pasifika students discontinue their tertiary qualification before completing. Like with Māori students, Pasifika students studying at ITPs were more likely to drop-out of their qualification than their peers studying the same qualification at a New Zealand university.

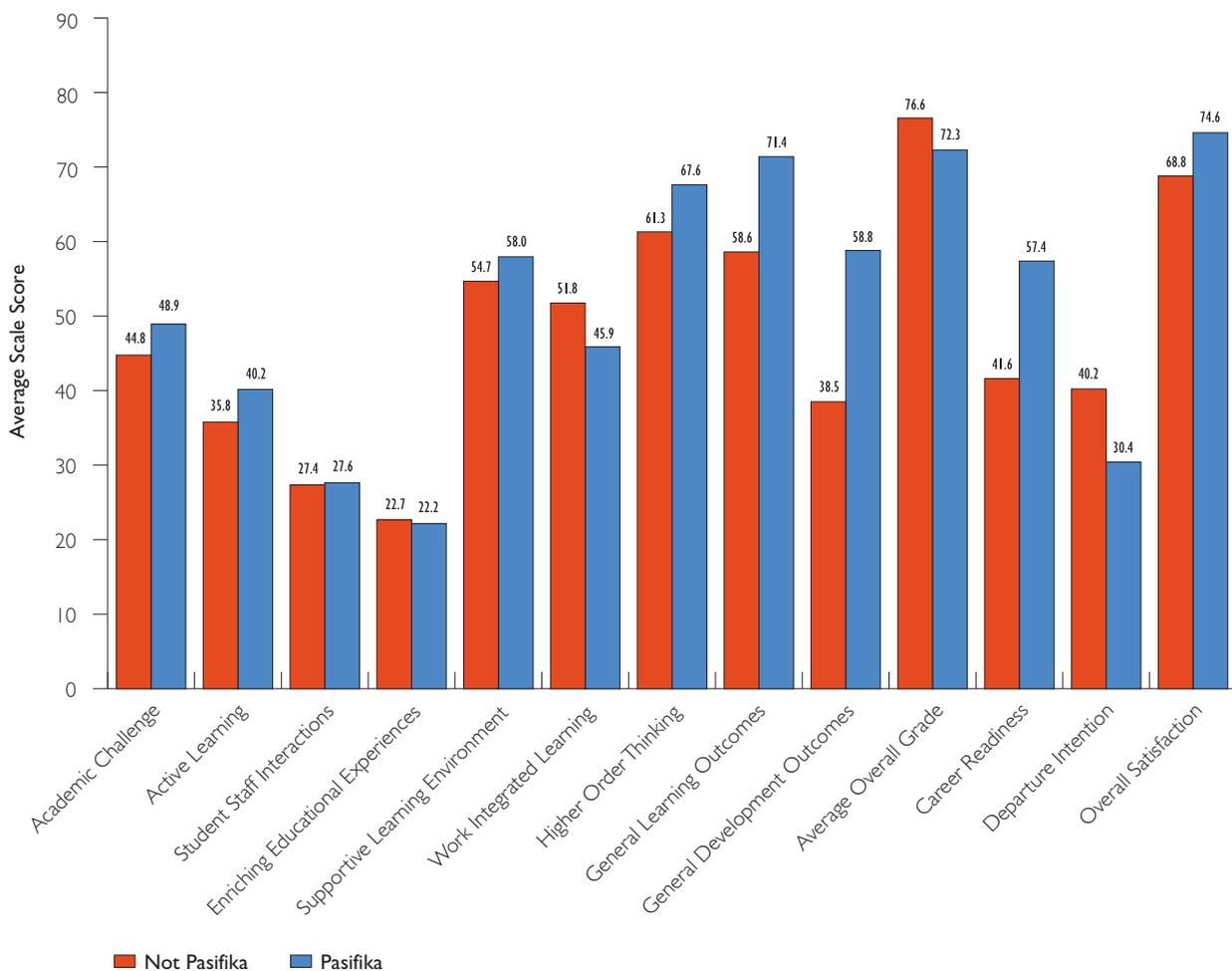
**Table 13** Eight-year attrition rates among Pasifika students by institution type

	Certificate 1-3	Certificate 4	Diploma 5-7	Bachelor
Universities	41%	47%	55%	51%
ITPs	46%	57%	68%	60%

(Ministry of Education, 2010f)

Interestingly, although attrition rates for Pasifika students at ITPs are quite high, Pasifika students were less likely to report seriously considering leaving or planning to leave their current institution (30.4%) than non-Pasifika students on the AUSSE. Other broad differences between Pasifika and non-Pasifika students in terms of their engagement and outcomes are shown in Figure 10.

There are few meaningful differences between Pasifika and non-Pasifika students in terms of engagement with their study at their institution. Pasifika and non-Pasifika students report quite similar levels of interactions with academic staff and involvement in enriching educational activities. Pasifika students seem to be slightly more engaged in academically challenging learning activities and active forms of learning than other students and also report somewhat higher levels of institutional support. Pasifika students are also somewhat less engaged in work integrated forms of learning. More meaningful differences appear when looking at Pasifika students' outcomes. Pasifika students report much greater levels of higher order thinking, development of general learning skills and personal development, career readiness and are altogether more satisfied than non-Pasifika students.



**Figure 10** Average engagement and outcome measure scale scores – Pasifika students

Pasifika students report slightly but significantly lower levels of engagement with work integrated forms of learning. While Pasifika students explore how to apply their learning to the workplace slightly more frequently than non-Pasifika students, far fewer Pasifika students (9.3%) had participated in work experience or an industry placement than non-Pasifika students (25.6%). Pasifika students (21.8%) are also more likely to say that they 'never' improved their employability skills and knowledge, nearly four times the rate of non-Pasifika students (5.7%). Again, 11.9 per cent of Pasifika students and 5.7 per cent of non-Pasifika students feel that their experience at their institution has contributed 'very little' to their development of job-related or work-related knowledge and skills.

Pasifika students are much more positive about the impact that their tertiary study has made on their development of general learning skills than non-Pasifika students. 46.1 per cent of Pasifika students and 20.3 per cent of non-Pasifika students feel that their experience at their institution has 'very much' contributed to giving them a broad, general education. Although there is little difference between Pasifika and non-Pasifika students in terms of their development of work-related knowledge and skills and ability to learn effectively on their own, Pasifika students are much more likely to report that their experience at their institution has contributed at least 'quite a bit' to their development of writing and speaking skills, their ability to think critically and solve problems, their analytical skills and their ability to use computing and information technology and work effectively with others (see Figure 11).

As well as reporting very positive learning outcomes, Pasifika students were also more likely to report much more positive general development outcomes than non-Pasifika students (see Figure 12). Pasifika students are much more likely to say that their experience at their institution has contributed to their ability to solve complex real-world problems, understand people from different ethnic backgrounds, understand themselves, vote informedly, develop a personal code of values and ethics and contribute to the welfare of their community.

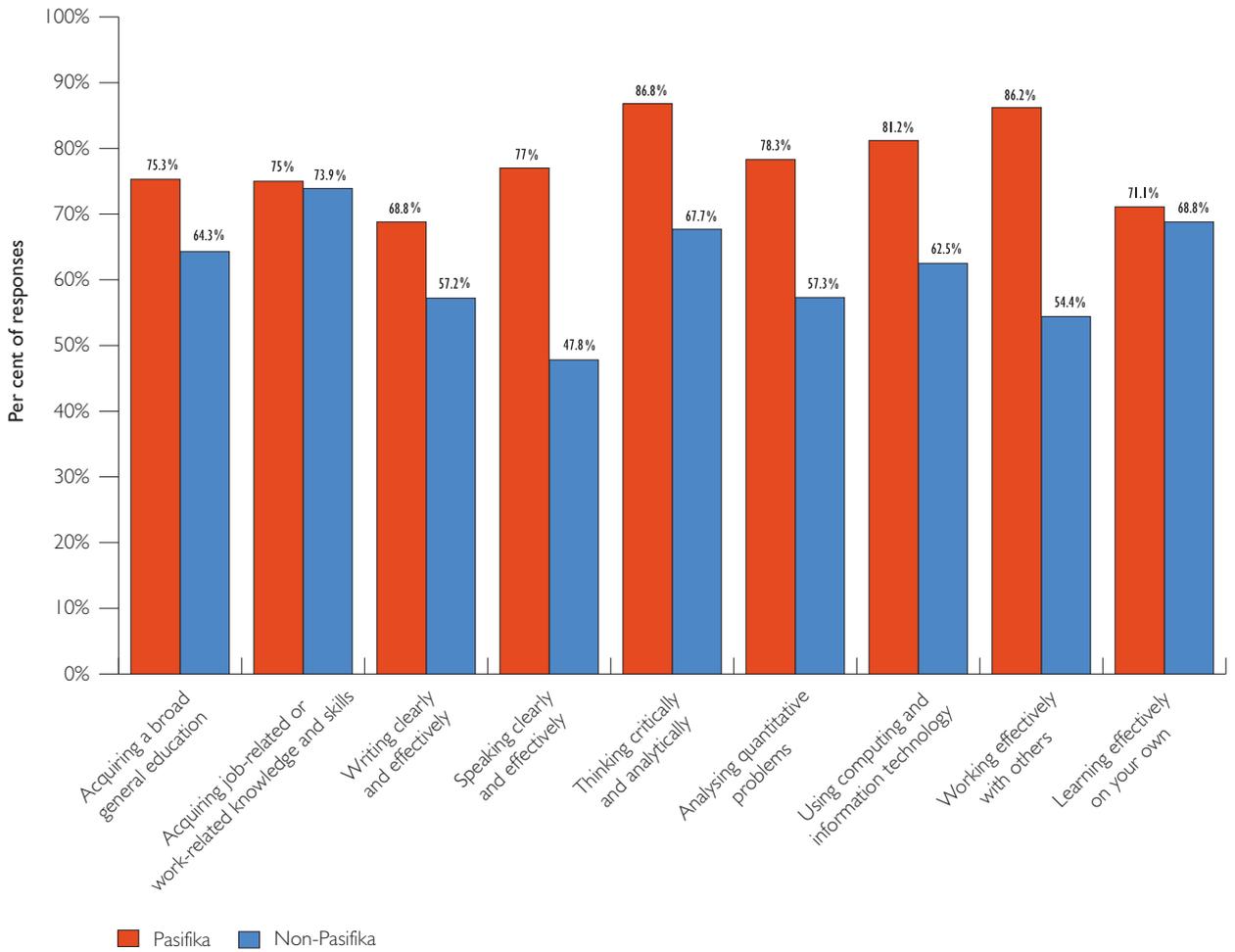


Figure 11 Institution contributed 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to learning skill development

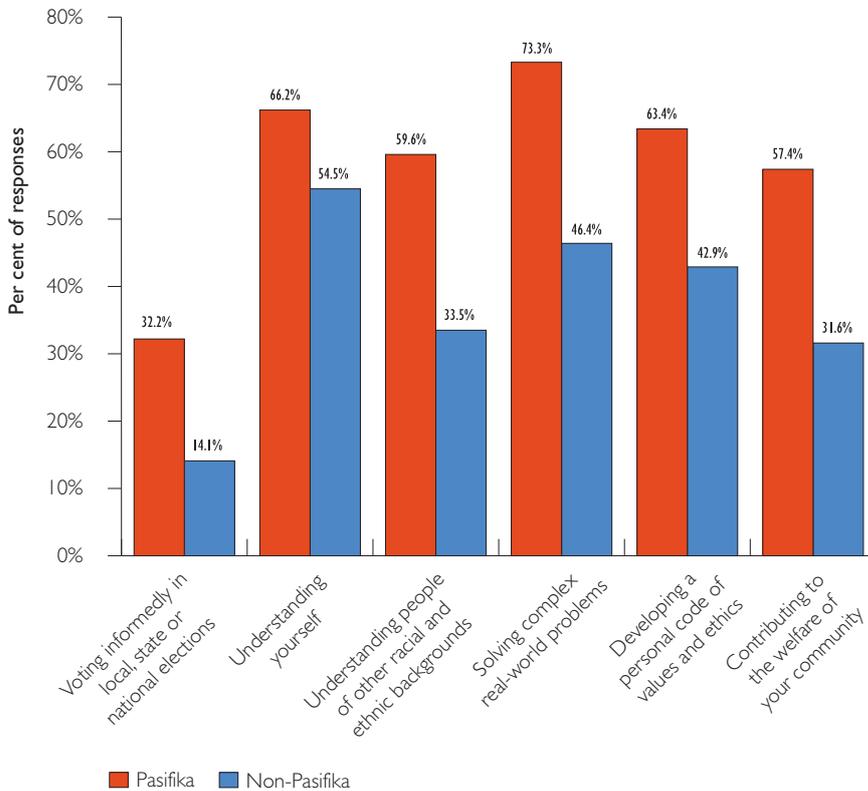


Figure 12 Institution contributed 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to general development

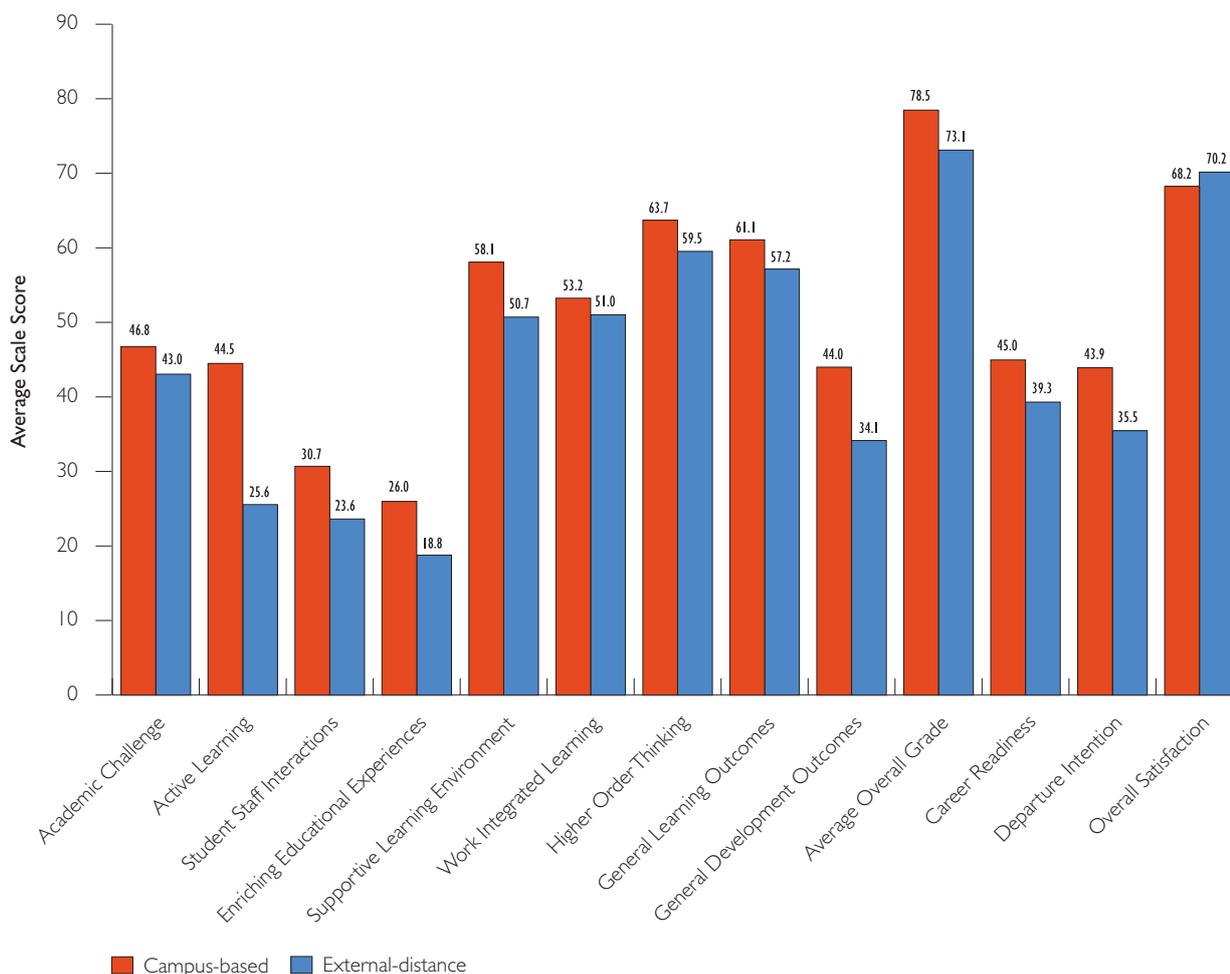
Another area where Pasifika students report strong outcomes is in terms of their career preparedness and readiness. Pasifika students are much more likely to spend time keeping their resume up-to-date at least occasionally (84.9%) than non-Pasifika students (66.5%). They are also more likely to frequently think about the best ways to present themselves to potential employers – 74.1 per cent of Pasifika students and only 41.9 per cent of non-Pasifika students do this frequently. 46.0 per cent of Pasifika students network for job opportunities ‘very often’, compared with only 11.3 per cent of non-Pasifika students, and Pasifika students are also more likely to spend time exploring where to look for jobs and to set themselves career development goals and plans.

As Pasifika students have relatively low completion rates at ITPs, it is interesting to note that Pasifika students were less likely to have seriously considered or plan to leave their current institution (30.4%) than non-Pasifika students (40.2%). Although lower than non-Pasifika students’ departure intentions, it is still concerning that such a high proportion of Pasifika students have seriously considered leaving. The top reasons given by Pasifika students for seriously considering leaving include: quality concerns, financial difficulties, needing a break, study-life balance and family responsibilities. Interestingly, only quality concerns and family responsibilities are also cited by non-Pasifika students among their top five reasons for considering leaving.

The vast majority of Pasifika students plan to continue with their current study (65.4%) or leave after completing their qualification (15.5%). Around 7.5 per cent plan to shift to university study. 4.7 per cent plan to move to a different ITP or Wānanga and 5.1 per cent plan to change their qualification. While most students plan to continue study or complete their qualification, a small, but not insignificant minority of Pasifika students (5.3%) plan to leave before completing their qualification.

### Engaging extramural and mixed mode students

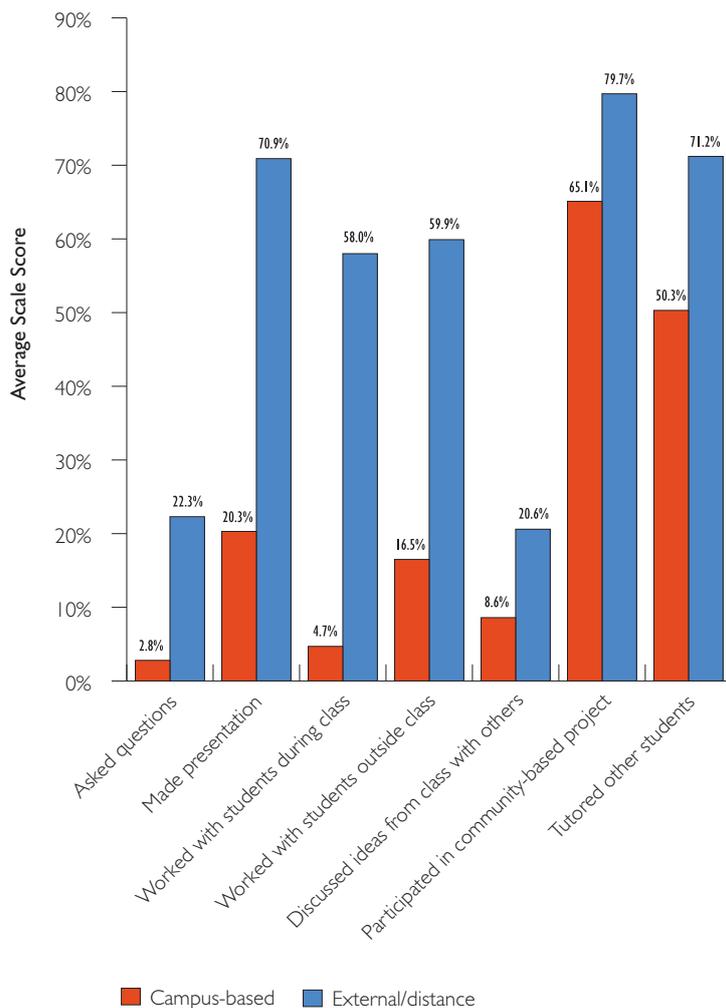
A large proportion of students at ITPs study extramurally or via a mixed mode – 11.6 per cent of ITP students surveyed indicated that they studied via mixed mode and 14.0 per cent studied extramurally or by distance. This is much higher than among New Zealand university students where 15.1 per cent of surveyed students were studying via mixed mode or extramurally. Increasing numbers of students are undertaking tertiary level study at a distance, and that coupled with the relatively large proportion of students studying extramurally at ITPs, and the different experience that extramural and distance students have with their institution and study makes it important to investigate extramural students’ experience and engagement more thoroughly. In this section of the report, the word ‘extramural’ will be used to describe students who are studying wholly by distance or extramurally and students who are studying via mixed mode of attendance. Analyses will look at these students altogether.



**Figure 13** Average engagement and outcome measure scale scores by mode of study

As shown in Figure 13, internal students report high levels of engagement with their studies across the board. Meaningful differences appear between extramural and internal students for the extent to which they are engaged in active forms of learning, participate in enriching educational experiences, interact with teaching staff and feel supported in their studies. Internal students also report significantly higher levels of general development and career readiness. Interestingly, internal students are also slightly less satisfied with their institutional experience and are substantially more likely to have departure intentions than other students.

Students studying extramurally or via mixed mode report much lower levels of engagement with active forms of learning. This is perhaps not all that surprising, as students studying extramurally often have fewer opportunities to interact with other students, get involved in discussions and participate in other active forms of learning. Figure 14 displays the proportions of campus-based and extramural students who never participate in types of active learning activities. While the vast majority of extramural students discuss ideas from their classes with others, and ask questions or contribute to class or online discussions, it is worrying that over 20 per cent of extramural students report never doing this. As clearly shown in Figure 14, most extramural students report never participating in many other types of active learning, such as making presentations and working with other students during and outside of classes.



**Figure 14** Proportion who 'never' participate in active forms of learning

Again, likely due to the location of students' study, extramural and mixed mode students report far fewer interactions with teaching staff. Extramural students are less likely to discuss grades with teaching staff (only 60.3% report doing this 'sometimes') and are also less likely to discuss ideas from class with teaching staff (57.4% 'never' do this). Extramural students are also less likely to have worked with teaching staff on other activities, with only 13.2 per cent reporting doing this at least 'sometimes' nearly a third of the proportion of internal students (32.7%) who have done so. Although extramural students may seem disadvantaged by their lack of interactions with teaching staff; a slightly greater proportion of extramural students (60.1%) report frequently receiving prompt feedback from teaching staff compared with internal students (50.5%). Campus-based and extramural students also report speaking with teachers or career advisors about their career plans to a similar extent.

Extramural students' engagement in enriching educational activities is much lower than internal students. As many enriching educational experiences involve interacting with other students, this is likely due to the lack of opportunities extramural students have to interact with other students. While most extramural (76.5%) and internal students (77.8%) feel that their institution places at least some emphasis on the importance of interacting with people from different backgrounds, just over half of all extramural students 'never' have conversations with students of a different ethnic group or with students who are very different to them. In comparison, only 6.9 per cent of campus-based students report 'never' conversing with students of a different ethnic group and 8.3 per cent with students who are very different.

Campus-based students are also much more likely to have participated in a learning community or study group, with around one quarter of campus-based students and only 13.1 per cent of extramural students having participated in one. Campus-based students are also slightly more likely to have participated in a practicum or internship and to participate in extracurricular activities than extramural students. Interestingly, almost the same proportions of campus-based and extramural students (22.7% and 22.9% respectively) report that they have participated in community service or volunteer work.

Extramural students report overall lower levels of institutional support than campus-based students. Interestingly, the majority of both campus-based and extramural students (71.1% and 71.5% respectively) feel that their institution provides them with 'quite a bit' or 'very much' academic support and both groups of students rate the quality of their relationships with teaching staff and administrative staff quite positively. When it comes to support from fellow students, campus-based students report much more supportive relationships with other students than extramural students. Campus-based students are also much more likely to feel supported by their institution with non-academic responsibilities and supported to socialise than extramural students.

Campus-based students are also more likely to report that their experience at their institution has contributed positively to their general development. Campus-based students are much more likely to feel that their experience at their institution has helped them to understand others from different ethnic backgrounds, contribute to their community, develop a code of ethics and solve complex-real world problems.

As nearly three-quarters of extramural students report working for pay, compared with around two-thirds of campus-based students, one would assume that extramural students are more career ready, however campus-based students report significantly higher rates of career readiness than extramural students. While a slightly higher proportion of extramural students report that they keep their resume up-to-date at least sometimes, extramural students are less likely to have explored where to look for jobs, to network for job opportunities and to set career development goals and plans frequently. This can be explained by the fact that more students studying extramurally are already employed and may be further along their career path and who are more likely to be undertaking study to progress their current careers than students studying internally.

One area of concern for all students is the relatively high proportions who have seriously considered or who plan to leave their current institution. Although reporting higher levels of engagement in many aspects of their study, campus-based students are more likely to have seriously considered leaving their institution than extramural students. Most students' plans for next year are either to continue with their current study or leave having completed their qualification (83.1% of campus-based students and 94.3% of extramural students). 3.2 per cent of internal 6.4 per cent of extramural students plan to leave their ITP before completing their qualification. 11.2 per cent of campus-based and 4.5 per cent of extramural students plan to change qualifications, 4.0 per cent of campus-based and extramural students plan to shift to a different ITP and 9.1 per cent of campus-based and 5.7 per cent of extramural students plan to move into university study.

## Final thoughts

This report has explored what is happening in terms of student engagement and outcomes at New Zealand's ITP and has looked the similarities and differences between different students within ITPs and made comparisons with students studying at New Zealand universities. Overall, the findings suggest many areas where students are engaging strongly – such as with work integrated forms of learning, but also highlight areas where more could be done to improve students' experience and engagement at their institutions.

Of vital importance are the findings relating to students' high departure intentions at ITPs. As shown throughout this report, students studying at ITPs report much higher intentions to leave before completing their qualification and discontinue their studies. This is also reflected in data collected by the Ministry of Education (2010b; 2010f). Action needs to be taken to reduce the numbers of students in New Zealand's tertiary education system who begin studies but leave without completing their qualification. Engaging these students in study and providing them with support throughout their study is vital to retaining students in tertiary education and ensuring that students leave tertiary education with better skills ready to contribute to New Zealand's economy.

The analyses presented in this report show that although students studying at New Zealand universities and ITPs report quite similar levels of engagement with their studies, ITP students are more likely to have considered departing, and therefore may be more at risk of leaving before completing their studies. Although four-in-ten ITP students have seriously considered leaving or plan to leave their studies, over 80 per cent plan to continue with their current study or complete their current study, with a small but substantial proportion of students shifting into university study. While the majority plan to continue with their study, which is a positive finding, five per cent of ITP students plan to leave tertiary education prior to completing their qualification. Many reasons are given by students for wishing to discontinue, and considering leaving, some of which are outside of an institution's domain and relate to personal reasons, however many of the top reasons given by students, such as boredom and quality concerns, suggest that changes could be made by institutions to retain more students in study. A significant relationship exists between ITP students' feelings of support and their departure intentions, suggesting that if more can be done to support students at risk of leaving before completing their qualification, ITPs may be able to retain more students.

Looking at students of particular interest to the New Zealand tertiary education sector, namely Māori students, Pasifika students and students studying extramurally revealed some interesting findings. Māori and Pasifika students have worryingly low levels of retention and completion in tertiary education and in particular within ITPs. The AUSSE results showed that in line with the high attrition rates in the sector, Māori students were more likely to have seriously considered leaving their institution before completing their studies. On the other hand, Māori students reported very similar levels of engagement to other students and much higher levels of involvement in active forms of learning. Although Pasifika students also have quite high attrition rates, far fewer Pasifika than other students reported departure intentions in the AUSSE survey, and overall Pasifika students reported much greater learning and general development than other students. The number of students undertaking tertiary study via mixed mode of attendance or by distance is continuing to increase. The AUSSE results show that extramural students are less engaged with their studies, however are also less likely to have departure intentions.

Taken together the findings from the ITP pilot of the AUSSE provide a better understanding of what students studying at ITPs are actually doing and helps institutions identify where improvements could be made. The results reported throughout this report, in particular the level of departure intentions among students at ITPs show that more needs to be done to improve student retention and success at ITPs. By collecting and sharing information on students' engagement and outcomes, we gain a better understanding of what students are doing helping us to make positive change and enhance the quality of tertiary education for all in New Zealand.

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## Appendix 1: ITP Student Engagement Questionnaire

### Your study experience

Australian survey of student engagement

**1** In your experience at your institution during the current year of study, about how often have you done each of the following? Mark your answers in the boxes. Leave blank if the item does not apply.

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class or online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sought advice from teachers/tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made a class or online presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked hard to master difficult content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepared two or more drafts of an assignment/assessment before handing it in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Used library resources on campus or online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked on an assignment/assessment that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Used student learning support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blended course/programme study with workplace experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Included diverse perspectives (e.g. different ethnicities, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or written assignments/assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Came to class having completed readings or assignments/assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kept up to date with your studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked with other students on projects <b>during class</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked with other students <b>outside class</b> to prepare assignments/assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Put together ideas or concepts from different subjects when completing assignments/assessments or during class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participated in a community-based project (e.g. volunteering) as part of your study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Used an online learning system to discuss or complete an assignment/assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Used email or a forum to communicate with teachers/tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discussed your grades or assignments with teachers/tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talked about your career plans with teachers/tutors or advisors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with teachers/tutors outside class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Received prompt written or oral feedback from teachers/tutors on your performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet a teacher's/tutor's standards or expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked with teachers/tutors on activities other than coursework (e.g. committees, orientation, student organisations, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside class (e.g. students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Had conversations with students of a different ethnic group than your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Had conversations with students who are very different to you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions or personal values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**2** During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?

	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
<b>Memorising</b> facts, ideas or methods from your subjects and readings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Analysing</b> the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Organising</b> ideas, information or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Making judgements</b> about the value of information, arguments or methods, such as examining how others gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Applying</b> theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3** In a typical week, how many assessment tasks (e.g. exercises, quizzes, practical tests, problem sets, etc.) do you complete?

	None	1 to 2	3 to 4	5 to 6	More than 6
Number of pieces of work that take <b>one hour or less</b> to complete	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Number of pieces of work that take <b>more than one hour</b> to complete	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**4** During the current year of study, about how much reading, writing and other assignments/assessments have you done?

	None	1 to 4	5 to 10	11 to 20	More than 20
Number of assigned textbooks, books or book-length packs of subject readings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Number of written assignments/assessments of fewer than 1,000 words	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Number of written assignments/assessments of between 1,000 and 5,000 words	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Number of written assignments/assessments of more than 5,000 words	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Number of practical assignments/assessments (e.g. design briefs, finished art work, media-based assignments and other practical projects)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**5** Which box best represents the extent to which your examinations and assignments/assessments during the current year of study have challenged you to do your best work?

Very little Very much

<input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**6** During the current year of study, about how often have you done each of the following?

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Gone to a band, exhibition, play, dance, theatre or other performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to your employability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learned how to communicate in ways relevant to your future career	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explored how to apply your learning in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**7** Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you finish your course or programme?

	Do not know about	Have not decided	Do not plan to do	Plan to do	Done
Practicum, internship, fieldwork or clinical placement	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Industry placement or work experience	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	Do not know about	Have not decided	Do not plan to do	Plan to do	Done
Community service or volunteer work	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Participate in a study group or learning community	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Work on a project with a staff member outside of coursework requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Study a foreign language	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Study abroad or student exchange	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Culminating final-year experience (e.g. honours thesis, capstone project, comprehensive exam, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Independent study or self-designed major	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Consult your institution's careers service for advice	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Hold a leadership position in a group at your institution or in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**8** Which of these boxes best represent the quality of your relationships with people at your institution?

**Relationships with other students**

Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging

**Relationships with teaching staff**

Unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic	<input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Available, helpful, sympathetic

**Relationships with administrative personnel and services**

Unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid	<input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Helpful, considerate, flexible

**Relationships with student support services staff**

Unfriendly, unavailable, unsympathetic	<input type="checkbox"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Friendly, available, sympathetic

**9** About how many hours do you spend in a typical seven-day week doing each of the following? Leave blank if the item does not apply.

Preparing for class (e.g. studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analysing data, rehearsing and other academic activities)

<input type="checkbox"/>								
None	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	Over 30	

Working for pay on campus

<input type="checkbox"/>							
None	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	Over 30

Working for pay off campus

<input type="checkbox"/>							
None	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	Over 30

<p>Participating in extracurricular activities (e.g. organisations, campus publications, student associations, clubs and societies, sports, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None 1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 26 to 30 Over 30</p> <p>Relaxing and socialising (e.g. watching TV, partying, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None 1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 26 to 30 Over 30</p> <p>Providing care for dependents living with you (e.g. parents, children, spouse, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None 1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 26 to 30 Over 30</p> <p>Managing personal business (e.g. housework, shopping, exercise, health needs, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None 1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 26 to 30 Over 30</p> <p>Travelling to campus (e.g. driving, walking, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None 1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 26 to 30 Over 30</p> <p>Being on campus, including time spent in class</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None 1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 26 to 30 Over 30</p> <p>Being on campus, excluding time spent in class</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None 1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 21 to 25 26 to 30 Over 30</p> <p><b>10</b> If you are working for pay, how much is this work related to your field of study?</p> <p>Not at all   Very little   Some   Quite a bit   Very much   Not in paid work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>11</b> To what extent does your institution emphasise each of the following?</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Very little</td> <td>Some</td> <td>Quite a bit</td> <td>Very much</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spending significant amounts of time studying and on class work</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Providing the support you need to help you succeed in your course or programme</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Helping you cope with your non-study related responsibilities (e.g. work, family, etc.)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Providing the support you need to 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Mark all that apply.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Continue with current study</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Leave before completing your course or programme</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shift to university study</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Leave having completed course or programme</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Change to another course/programme</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Leave to do paid work</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Institute of Technology, Polytechnic or Wananga</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Leave to take time off</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> <p><b>15</b> Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advice that you have received at your institution?</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Poor</td> <td>Fair</td> <td>Good</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> <p><b>16</b> How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Poor</td> <td>Fair</td> <td>Good</td> <td>Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> <p><b>17</b> If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Definitely no   Probably no   Probably yes   Definitely yes</p> <p><b>18</b> Are you male or female?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Male   Female</p>		Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much	Writing clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Speaking clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thinking critically and analytically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Analysing quantitative problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Using computing and information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working effectively with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Voting informedly in local or national elections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning effectively on your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Developing a greater understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Solving complex, real-world problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Developing a personal code of values and ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contributing to living in a sustainable way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contributing to the welfare of your community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Securing relevant work after graduation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue with current study	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leave before completing your course or programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shift to university study	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leave having completed course or programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change to another course/programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leave to do paid work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Institute of Technology, Polytechnic or Wananga	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leave to take time off	<input type="checkbox"/>		Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**19** Where has your study been mainly based in the current year of study?

On one or more campuses  
 Mix of external/distance and on-campus  
 External/distance

**20** In what year did you first start your current course or programme?

Before 2006    2006    2007    2008    2009    2010

**21** How many years of your course or programme have you completed?

None, in first year    One year    Two years    Three years    More than three years

**22** Since starting at this institution, have you been enrolled mainly part time or full time?

Part time    Full time

**23** What is your major area of study (e.g. BUSINESS, GRAPHIC DESIGN, TOURISM, HAIRDRESSING, AUTOMOTIVE)? Print neatly in CAPITAL letters.

\_\_\_\_\_

**24** What is your student identification number? Please write in the following box. No individual is identified in any analyses or reports.

\_\_\_\_\_

**25** Do you have a government funded place in your course or programme?

No    Yes

**26** In the current year of study, have you received any direct financial payments from the government?

No    Yes

**27** In the current year of study, have you received any financial assistance from your institution (e.g. scholarships, loans, stipends etc.)?

No    Yes

**28** Which category best represents your average overall grade so far?

No results    Competent    0-49    50-54    55-59    60-64    65-69    70-74    75-79    80-84    85-89    90-94    95-100

**29** Are you a permanent resident or citizen of New Zealand?

No    Yes

**30** What is your country of permanent residence?

\_\_\_\_\_

**31** What is the main language you speak in your home?

English    Language other than English

**32** What is the highest level of education completed by your parents? Mark one box per row.

	No school or primary school	Some or all of secondary school	Vocational certificate or diploma	Under-graduate degree or diploma	Post-graduate degree or diploma	Not sure
Father	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mother	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**33** What is your home postcode and locality/suburb? Write postcode opposite and locality/suburb below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**34** Are you of Māori descent?

No    Yes

**35** Are you of Pasifika (Pacific Island) descent?

No    Yes

**36** How old are you in years?

\_\_\_\_\_

**37** Do you consider yourself to have a disability, impairment or long-term condition?

No    Yes

**38** How much of your study do you do online?

None    About a quarter    About half    All or nearly all

**39** Which of the following describes your current living arrangement? Select the option that best applies to you.

On campus student accommodation    Living with parents or guardians  
 Off campus student accommodation    Living by yourself  
 Living with friends or in a share house    Living with a partner or children  
 Other

**40** What are the BEST ASPECTS of how your institution engages students in learning?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**41** What could be done to IMPROVE how your institution engages students?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for sharing your views.** After completing the questionnaire, please put it in the supplied reply-paid envelope and deposit it in any mailbox. For further information, see: [www.acer.edu.au/ausse](http://www.acer.edu.au/ausse)

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## Appendix 2: AUSSE Engagement and Outcomes Scales

Table 14 AUSSE engagement scale descriptions and items

Engagement scale	SEQ item
<b>Academic Challenge</b> The extent to which expectations and assessments challenge students to learn	Worked harder than you thought you could to meet a teacher's / tutor's standards or expectations
	Analysing the basic elements of an idea
	Synthesising and organising ideas
	Making judgements about value of information
	Applying theories or concepts
	Number of assigned textbooks, books or book-length packs of subject readings
	Number of written assignments of fewer than 1,000 words
	Number of written assignments of between 1,000 and 5,000 words
	Number of written assignments of more than 5,000 words
	Time spent preparing for class
	Encouraged to spend significant amounts of time on studying and on academic work
<b>Active Learning</b> Students' efforts to actively construct knowledge	Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class or online
	Made a class or online presentation
	Worked with other students on projects during class
	Worked with other students outside class to prepare assignments
	Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
	Participated in a community-based project (e.g. volunteering) as part of your study
<b>Student and Staff Interactions</b> The level and nature of students' contact and interactions with teaching staff	Discussed your grades or assignments with teaching staff
	Talked about your career plans with teaching staff or advisors
	Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with teaching staff outside class
	Received prompt written or oral feedback from teachers on performance
	Worked with teaching staff on activities other than coursework
	Work on a project with a staff member outside of coursework requirements
<b>Enriching Educational Experiences</b> Students' participation in broadening educational activities	Used an online learning system to discuss or complete an assignment
	Had conversations with students of a different ethnic group than your own
	Had conversations with students who are very different
	Participated in a practicum, internship, fieldwork or clinical placement
	Participated in community service or volunteer work
	Participated in a study group or learning community
	Studied a foreign language
	Participated in a study abroad or student exchange scheme
	Participated in a culminating final-year experience
	Participated in independent study or self-designed major
	Time spend participating in extracurricular activities
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds	
<b>Supportive Learning Environment</b> Students' feelings of support within the ITP community	Relationships with other students
	Relationships with teaching staff
	Relationships with administrative personnel and services
	Institution provides support to succeed academically
	Institution helps cope with non-academic responsibilities
	Institution provides support to socialise
<b>Work Integrated Learning</b> Integration of employment-focused work experiences into study	Blended academic learning with workplace experience
	Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to employability
	Developed communication skills relevant to your discipline
	Explored how to apply learning in the workforce
	Participated in industry placement or work experience
	Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills

**Table 15** AUSSE outcomes measure descriptions and items

Outcome measure	SEQ item
<b>Higher Order Thinking</b> Participation in higher-order forms of thinking	Analysing the basic elements of an idea
	Synthesising and organising ideas
	Making judgements about value of information
	Applying theories or concepts
<b>General Learning Outcomes</b> Development of general competencies	Acquiring a broad general education
	Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills
	Writing clearly and effectively
	Speaking clearly and effectively
	Thinking critically and analytically
	Analysing quantitative problems
	Using computing and information technology
	Working effectively with others
<b>General Development Outcomes</b> Formation of general forms of individual and social development	Learning effectively on your own
	Voting informedly in local, state or national elections
	Understanding yourself
	Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds
	Solving complex real-world problems
	Developing a personal code of values and ethics
<b>Career Readiness</b> Preparation for participation in the professional workforce	Contributing to the welfare of your community
	Kept resume up-to-date
	Thought about how to present yourself to employers
	Explored where to look for jobs relevant to your interests
	Used networking to source information on job opportunities
<b>Average Overall Grade</b> Average overall grade so far in course	Set career development goals and plans
	Which category best represents your average overall grade so far?
<b>Departure Intention</b> Non-graduating students' intentions of not returning to their institution in the following year	Not considered change (reverse coded)
	Graduating (reverse coded)
	Academic exchange
	Academic support
	Administrative support
	Boredom/lack of interest
	Career prospects
	Change of direction
	Commuting difficulties
	Difficulty paying fees
	Difficulty with workload
	Family responsibilities
	Financial difficulties
	Gap year/deferral
	Government assistance
	Health or stress
	Institution reputation
	Moving residence
	Need a break
	Need to do paid work
	Other opportunities
	Paid work responsibilities
	Personal reasons
	Quality concerns
	Received other offer
	Social reasons
	Standards too high
Study/life balance	
Travel or tourism	
Other: Please specify	
Continue with current study (reverse coded)	
Move to university study	
Leave institution before finishing qualification	
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b> Students' overall satisfaction with their educational experience	Quality of academic advice received at institution
	Satisfaction with entire educational experience
	Attend same institution if starting over

