

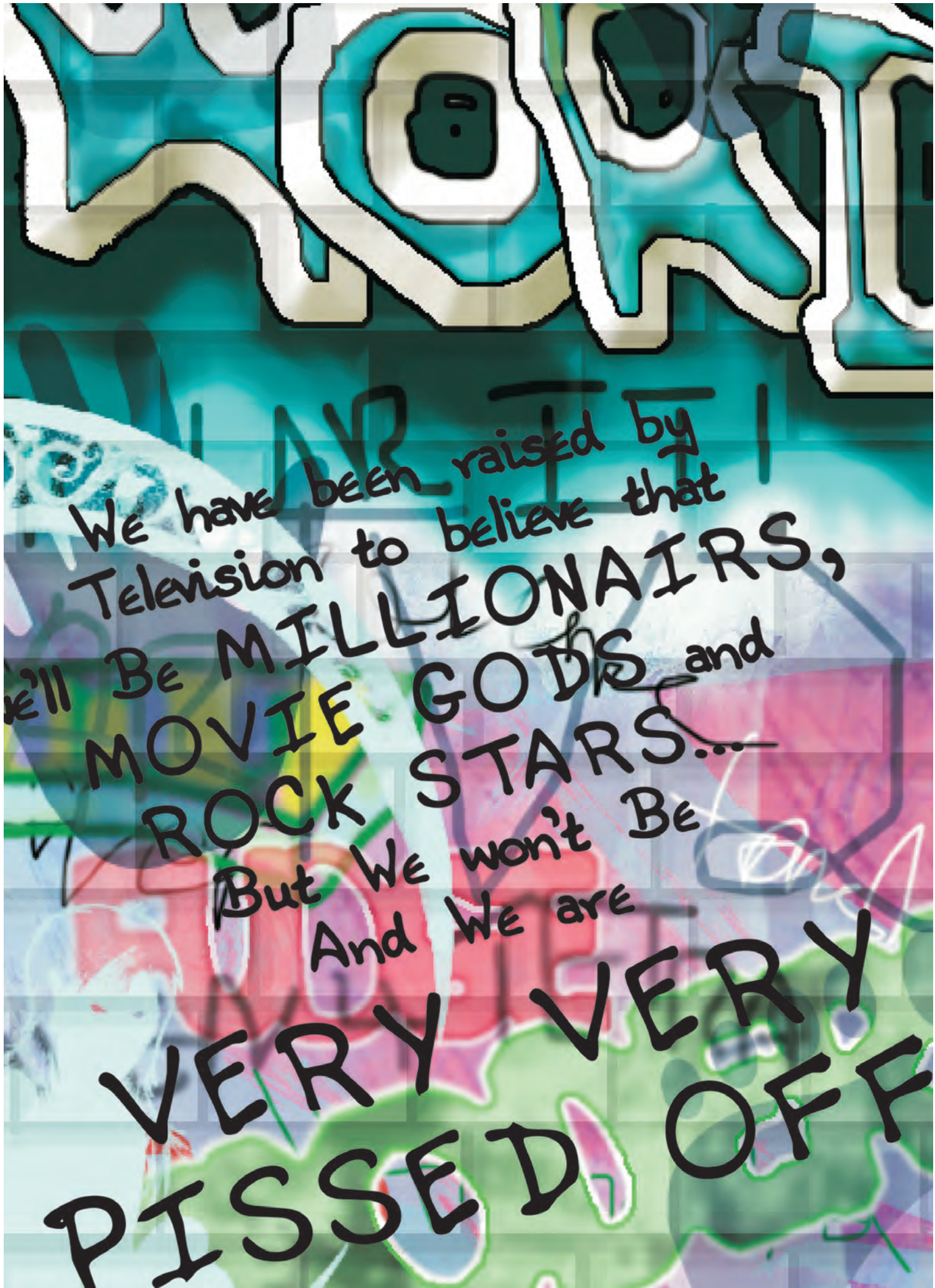
THE DESIGN SCHOOL



Tertiary Education
Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

Investment Plan 2022
for investment in 2023

Palmerston North School of Design Ltd - 9429



1. Strategic Intent and Learner Success sections of Investment Plan

Palmerston North School of Design Ltd - 9429 Trading as The Design School

Palmerston North School of Design Ltd

Lead contact for Plan discussions: Mike Saywell

Trading as The Design School

Work phone 06 3580188

New Zealand Business Number (NZBN) 9429036200184

Mobile 021 764545

EDUMIS number 9429

Email mike@designschool.ac.nz

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2. Mission and role

Capturing creative talent and helping learners develop sustainable careers regardless of their prior experiences with education.

Palmerston North School of Design, trading as The Design School (TDS), is a highly successful specialist provider of foundation and bridging design education in Palmerston North, Whangārei and Manawatū & Arohata Prisons.

The school was established in 1993 to provide an opportunity for creative learners to re-engage with education due to unemployment and or underachievement at secondary school and gain the skills and qualifications needed to enter design courses at diploma and degree level and then progress onto sustainable employment.

The co-ordination of provision between The Design School, Secondary Schools and TEI's, provides clear pathways for learners and allows all organisations to focus on their specialist strengths. There is a clear pathway from Secondary School (including STP programmes) or not engaged in education, through the Level 2 programmes, onto level 3 or 4 programmes at TDS and onto diploma and degree providers locally or around New Zealand.

The courses are niche and compliment the provision of design training at ITP's, Universities and other PTE's. The design school is the only provider of level two to four graphic or fashion design programs in Manawatū, Northland and department of Corrections. The programmes complement the general art and design studies at level three and four offered by UCOL in Manawatū which provides a focused pathway for learners with identified career goals in design. There are no providers of graphic or fashion design courses in Northland or within the Department of Corrections, at any levels.

Entry into top-performing Design Schools at diploma and degree level, is extremely competitive and successful applicants are required to show evidence of their foundation and design skills at a level exceeding usual outputs from secondary schools. The skills of TDS graduates are valued at higher level providers and students are accepted into advanced programmes with ease. TDS has a reputation for adding value to target learners' skills and competencies, as evidenced by attaining the highest quality rating from NZQA of Category One, in all External Evaluation and Review's since EER was implemented in 2009.

With many hundreds of graduates and nearly 30 years of experience, TDS draws on a wealth of experience to capture creative talent and help learners develop sustainable careers regardless of their prior experiences with education. Many graduates have attained prestigious degrees and fulfilling careers; of particular note, one graduate has gone onto complete a PHD in Māori Visual Arts and was a winner in the Chorus "Taking Toi Māori to Times Square" competition which is featured in the Chorus Fibre Network television commercials.

Opportunities in the Creative Industries have grown faster than any other field of employment and there are now more than 130,000 designers in New Zealand. This represents more than \$10b to New Zealand's annual GDP and makes it larger than all of agriculture combined. Toi Mai (WDC) identifies the workforces they cover, including creative, as "integral to the New Zealand Economy." (Operational Plan Toi Mai, July 2022.) The loss of creative talent where learners do not recognise the value of their skills will be to the long term detriment of New Zealand. (*Employment and economic data from Price Waterhouse Cooper report "The Value of Design to New Zealand", 2017*)



The largest synchronised display of content in Time Square history
Johnson Witehira, Design School graduate



Successful foundation and bridging design courses require considerably more student contact time and a different staff skill base from higher level training as identified in the “Lifting Our Game’ report, 2012.

In direct response to learners’ interests and needs as well as with regard to design industry requirements, TDS has developed, adapted and thoroughly tested innovative programmes. The School’s emphasis on continual improvement has kept programmes fresh and up to date. Briefly, for learners undertaking level two to four design courses offered by TDS it is our view they need engagement with activities that not only increase their cognitive capabilities alongside requisite technical skills, but this has to occur within an environment with a high number of contact hours as well as a staff-student ratio guaranteeing one-to-one contact whenever needed. These ideals are translated into practises where there is high regard for pastoral needs as well as careful monitoring of progress and completion of milestone activities. The School prides itself in having dedicated, enthusiastic and committed staff who work as a team in a user-friendly setting replete with contemporary facilities and technology. ‘Lifting Our Game’ also identified these features as crucial elements underpinning successful foundation learning programmes.

Staff take leadership roles in education and the design industry whenever possible. The Managing Director is the Ministry of Education Sector Lead for the NCEA Creative Industries Vocational Pathway award and the Pathways Advisory Group. He has also been on the Governance Groups for both the development and reviews of the Creative Arts Qualifications at levels 2 to 6.

As the leading institution for pathways and advice for design careers, a publication was developed to clearly articulate the options and pathways for creative learners. The publication combined information from a range of sources including Careers NZ, Vocational Pathways, the Institute of Professional Engineers, FutureInTech, the Review of Creative Arts Qualifications, TEI material and the long-term data collected by The Design School. The careers guide is now embedded in TDS marketing material and distributed to all local Secondary Schools, MSD offices, prospective learners and community organisations in Manawatū and Northland. Additionally, TDS provides support to MSD staff, Careers Advisors, Youth Services, meets with individual secondary school students and provides general support to Secondary Schools including use of The Design School facilities after normal school hours. This engagement provides excellent access to priority learner groups and is reflected in the high proportion of Māori and Pacifica learners enrolled and their achievement, retention and progression to higher levels of study or employment.

The courses focus on Graphic or Fashion Design but promote the exploration of multiple creative disciplines for entry to a wide range of fields. Learners can progress onto further study in graphic design, fashion design, digital media, web development, photography, interior, furniture and industrial design fields as well as fine arts. With additional support in physics, learners can also progress onto architecture pathways.

The Managing Director of The Design School has liaised between the Creative Arts TRoQ and Ngā toi TRoQ Governance Groups to align the New Zealand Qualifications across both sectors. Discussions about cross overs between the two sectors as evidenced by TDS graduate Johnson Witehira's work, are creating an exciting new paradigm where Māori art and culture is combined with western styles and media. This is raising the profile of Ngā toi as design and creating a signature New Zealand style that is reaching a much wider international audience, while maintaining tikanga Māori and developing mātauranga Māori. All learners are encouraged to explore their own cultural traditions and draw on their heritage for their creative works. This is of particular significance for Māori, both as individual learners and the wellbeing of Māori as a people.

The Design School gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by:

- involving Iwi and including Iwi views in curriculum development, School policies and activities.
- inclusion of cultural appropriation ethics in all courses.
- flexibility of project outcomes which allow learners to explore cultural expression through design.
- embedding of mātauranga Māori in all areas of the school.
- making assessment available in te reo Māori wherever possible.
- embedding programs within Māori schools.
- achieving equitable outcomes for Māori students.

All programmes at The Design School engage the governments priority groups of Māori, Pasifika, At Risk Young People and learners with disabilities. Māori and Pacific Island cultures have a strong visual base and design has therefore proven to be a good vehicle for them to re-engage in education especially after any negative experiences they might have had at secondary school.

The holistic approach to delivery and assessment fits with the principles te ao Māori and additionally of Pacific peoples. The Design School delivers a design and arts programme embedded within a Māori Boys' Boarding school which has engaged Māori well and allowed them to integrate and express their individual cultural values through design and achieve credits towards NCEA.

In 2021 and 2022 (to date), Māori and Pasifika engagement across all programmes is approximately double the regional

populations where The Design School operates. Māori enrolments made up 31% and 26% respectively while Pasifika made up 33% and 7% respectively.

Enrolments for under 25 year olds is very high at 93% and 91% for 2020 and 2021 respectively and this increases when Secondary Tertiary Partnership programmes are included. STP programmes are delivered in collaboration with UCOL Trades Academy in Palmerston North, Te Kura The Correspondence School in Palmerston North and Whangārei and through MOU's with secondary schools across the wider Manawatū, Whanganui, Horowhenua, Tararua and Northland regions.

Learners from refugee and migrant communities have also responded well to The Design School model of delivery. Recent success includes a young learner in Palmerston North who joined the level 2 part-time programme alongside her secondary school studies. She had recently arrived in New Zealand after growing up in a refugee camp in Myanmar. She grew quickly in the supported environment and enrolled full-time at level 3 in 2020 and completed the level 4 Certificate in Fashion Design in 2021. She then gained entry to a degree in fashion design at UCOL.

The Design School has a detailed Pastoral Care plan which covers all areas that affect the retention of learners. Pastoral Care is the commitment of our staff to the wellbeing of each learner including their social, emotional, physical and moral wellbeing. Supporting learners can in part be achieved by developing partnerships with other organisations and services within the community. We also acknowledge and respect cultural differences and support The Treaty of Waitangi with particular reference to Article 2. Our aim is to identify any adverse issues that may impact a learner's ability to engage in learning or achieve the required outcomes and implement strategies to address these issues. These are areas apart from the academic, although in some instances it may include them e.g. specialised help with literacy and numeracy. We believe that to be able to fully engage in learning, other influencing factors need to be addressed. These can include mental and physical health, access to food, adequate housing, and support networks. We are reassessing our role in regard to pastoral care constantly and developing additional partnerships with community agencies. We also acknowledge that some of these barriers to learning are not within our control, but we endeavour to provide a safe learning environment where matters can be identified, discussed and connections made to appropriate support. Our policy is to take a proactive, preventative approach to pastoral care, as opposed to reactive.

The structure of the courses, the environment and pedagogical practices at TDS are similar to the 'good practice' exemplars featured throughout various AKO Aotearoa research reports especially "Lifting Our Game" 2012. Consequently, TDS results show good success rates for Māori when compared to Secondary Schools and most Tertiary Providers.

The physical environments at the design school have consistently been praised for the openness and opportunities for equal engagement by all learners. All levels and disciplines are delivered within an open plan studio where learners are exposed to creative and technical processes at and beyond their current levels.

The environment enhances learners' ability to engage with each other as well as staff, to build knowledge and skills as efficiently as possible.

Excellent relationships with industry and the local community provide learners with a continual source of 'real world' commercial projects, better preparing them for progression and long-term success. This extends to learners within Prison sites who have had opportunities to design and produce in-house newsletters and signage for prison developments. These real-world projects provide a sense of achievement and career motivation beyond that of the curriculum and help learners achieve the high level of success evident in the School's EPI data.



3. Implementing the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES) and other government priorities

The Design School has a range of key stakeholders that are consulted for support in all areas of the School's operations. Stakeholder groups include representation for;

- Māori
- Pacific Island
- Education
- Government
- Learners
- Whānau
- WDC's (especially Toi Mai, Workforce Development Council representing the creative, cultural, technology and recreation sectors)
- Quality Assurance
- Business

Additionally, staff take leadership roles in working groups and peak bodies to strengthen alignment to long-term strategies and priorities and are active in CreaTer, the Creative Tertiary Educators Alliance. This group helps The Design School understand its place in the tertiary landscape nationwide and also keep abreast of developments in the sector across all providers.

The Design School is giving effect to the majority of the Tertiary Education Strategy and working towards implementing improvements as necessary. Many of the Actions for TEO's identified in the TES have been components of NZQA and other external reviews over many years and the ongoing Category One rating for The Design School is testament to the long term alignment with these Objectives.

Objective 1: Learners at the Centre.

TDS operates a student-centric model. Consequently, all policies, structures and resources are centred on learner needs. By drawing upon nearly three decades of experience, we are confident curricula, policies, resources and working conditions have become developed and understood by all participants, and this culture makes a significant contribution to the school's ongoing successes. Quite apart from accumulated historical contributions, it is clear staff maintain a keen interest in improvements with learner feedback during and after the programme used to evaluate and develop all aspects of the School. As a result, many improvements to projects and resources have been made, most significantly the recent introduction of more structure to the creative process to guide learners rather than the more self-guided process that had proved successful previously.

Curriculum, delivery and achievement is reviewed throughout the year and annually. Multiple sources of information are used for self-evaluation and improvement including staff and student reviews, EPI data, LNAT data, graduate and stakeholder feedback, internal and external moderation results, all of which continues to drive the culture of continual improvement and excellence at TDS.

Here is a quotation from the 2014 EER report:

"1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?"

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is Excellent.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is Excellent.

PNSD has ensured that its programmes continue to meet the needs of stakeholders, especially the students, in a valuable way. There is a good understanding of student, industry and academic needs, and the programmes are tailored towards these needs. The commitment to the local community is an indication of how PNSD integrates the learning with its desire to maintain good relations with the public, and to show the usefulness of the skills and knowledge that it teaches."

From the 2018 Report:

"The programmes are of high relevance to students, the community and stakeholders. Stakeholders interviewed attested to the reciprocal value of The Design School programmes for students and the community.

The suite of programmes provide a pathway for students from the level 2 foundation skills certificate to a level 4 certificate which includes an introduction to the latest design tools and technology. Stakeholders representing schools also noted that The Design School foundation programme filled a void in local college art programmes. Evidence was provided of graduates enrolling at polytechnics and universities and succeeding. Graduates return to access ongoing mentoring which they appreciate and in turn share experiences with current students.

Students are prepared for both employment as a graphic or fashion designer and as lifelong learners. The Design School uses commercial-style projects, including critiques and professional etiquette (including work-readiness skills) to prepare students for progression from the course to either advanced qualifications or the workplace."

Objective 2: Barrier Free Access

The Design School and staff individually are involved in a range of community and Iwi programmes including Youth Networks and Careers events in all regions and various community design projects. These increase the exposure of design as a viable career and reach out to our target groups to help them re-engage in education. Collaborations with Youth Services and education providers to offer taster events for learners directly targets NEET's or those at risk of disengaging from education. A growing source of learners is from the Correspondence School and Health Schools where learners require and thrive in the one-to-one learning environments offered at The Design School to overcome a range of challenges caused by disabilities or health.

The key areas for a foundation learner's development are: improving cognitive capabilities, literacy and numeracy levels, and technical-vocational skills. Advancing these skills through projects assists with contextualising information, it becomes real, tangible and tailored to individual learners. We freely admit to being theoretically informed though this is not passed to learners directly, instead they are encouraged to learn by doing. Projects are assessed against unit and achievement standards at levels one to four on the NQF to support transferable skills for lifelong learning.

Level 1-4 learners generally do not travel far from their home and support network to engage in education and it is therefore essential to provide Foundation Level Creative Programme throughout the regions. Where progression to higher education is not available locally, focussed and coherent achievement at levels 1-4 provides the learner with the confidence to progress onto study outside their home region. Delivering the design programmes near the learners existing support networks is a key contributor to their retention and ongoing success.

The collective work of TDS staff and the presence of the School in the community increases the engagement of all priority groups in formal education. The percentage of enrolled students identifying as Māori or Pasifika is nearly double the regional populations and the percentage of people with low or no qualifications reflects the targeting of NEETs and those with limited or no engagement in education.

All Level 3 and 4 programmes are eligible for Fees Free and StudyLink support.

To reduce barriers to achievement, all equipment, materials, printing etc are provided at no extra cost to learners.

Objective 3: Quality Teaching and Leadership

The Design School staff are respected leaders in the sector. From the EER Report 2018;

“Most teaching staff are highly experienced industry practitioners, ably led and mentored by the management team, which ensures that strong processes underpin delivery and assessment.

The Design School has strong leadership. The managing director's community and sector membership and leadership ensures strong knowledge of sector needs

and corresponding organisational responsiveness. The organisation has a clear direction and its strategy is clearly defined and communicated to staff.”

Māori staff members provide excellent guidance for embedding tikanga Māori throughout The Design School and work is underway to embed te reo Māori in the delivery of programmes. Additionally, Pacific Island staff provide further diversity, including role models for Pasifika students and their aiga (whānau).

Objective 4: Future of Learning and Work

The Design School is committed to working with workforce development councils, tertiary providers, secondary schools and other stakeholders to further build a responsive and sustainable pathway for learners to obtain successful and sustainable careers in the creative industries.

The Design School has proven itself capable of responding quickly and efficiently to stakeholder needs as they arise through resourcing, staffing and curriculum development.

Work has commenced with Toi Mai (WDC), and employers in Northland to develop micro credentials and alternative delivery models for Northland learners in the creative industries.

Design is a zero weight export and as with other knowledge intensive industries, will assist New Zealand with the transition to a carbon neutral economy.



Fashion Design by Level 2 student Jade Malins. Winner, Student Wearable Arts Section. Bernina Northland Fashion Awards, Photo by Sarah Marshall Photography

4. Learner Success Plan

Section 1: What is Learner Success

Learner success in the creative industries means engaging in paid work and ongoing learning as part of a dynamic industry. Our contribution to this includes accessibility to relevant programs of study, limiting barriers to success and providing flexible curriculum aligned to industry needs and learner aspirations. Our challenges include maintaining course completion parity of achievement for Māori and Pasifika students while raising course & qualification completions, and graduate destination results.

Our vision and the training and support we offer our students is appreciated and affirmed by our stakeholders across the learner community and design industry.

As identified in NZQA EER reports, success for students at the design school is significant especially considering their often low starting point. For example in 2022, 80% of learners beginning their pathway have low or no prior qualifications. All components of the programs are student focused with the aim to limit any barriers to engagement or success. This includes rolling enrolments allowing students to engage whenever they need during the year, high staff to student ratios to provide significant one to one delivery of the curriculum and curriculum that utilises unit and achievement standards for transferability of skills and clear pathways to higher education or employment.

Our leadership is fully committed to further developing training that meets community and industry needs, and investing in capability building to strengthen the community of learning that makes TDS staff and students successful. Strengthening the programs for learner success will be focused on the introduction of further study options to build creative enterprise skills. 70% of designers in New Zealand are self-employed yet discussions with stakeholders including Toi Mai (WDC), have identified these skills are not included in most programs of study except for limited postgraduate qualifications.

Additionally, smaller modules of learning including micro credentials are needed for upskilling in the fast paced design industry. Toi Mai, Creative Northland and employers in Northland are partnering with The Design School to develop micro credentials and alternative delivery models for Northland learners in the creative industries. A trial in the first half of 2022 of an internship model with commercial clients working with design school learners, managed by the design school staff and Creative Northland, has been successful and ready for scaling up in the second half of 2022 and into 2023.

The level four programs of study have provided excellent pathways for learners onto the premier design degree programs in New Zealand. Formalising the direct pathways to degree qualifications as an alternative to university entrance achievement has been achieved with UCOL in Palmerston north and Whanganui and is being explored with Massey University in 2022 and other providers in 2023 and beyond.

For more than 10 years TDS staff have been pursuing in-house seminar/workshops with Associate Prof John Kirkland formerly of Massey University's Faculty of Education. Passionate discussions during these meetings has helped us to identify those key elements we believe led to the School's recent as well as historical successes. Through this regular professional enquiry process we have continued to fine-tune programmes and pedagogical techniques. These informal seminar/workshops are continuing with a shift in emphasis, more now upon cognitive development requirements for our foundation cohort. TDS staff are in agreement; central to good design is meta-cognitive understanding coupling passion, reflectiveness, language and numeracy. To paraphrase Herbert Read, education occurs through art; it is design in action, education applied. Thus utilising design as a platform for re-engaging learners and deliberately extending their cognitive capabilities provides a real-life medium for fostering ongoing and sustained educational and personal growth. This approach is supported by international commentators such as Sir Ken Robinson who emphasises a vital role for individual creativity. Our aim at TDS is to offer a balanced curriculum, mediated by competent staff at a ratio of one staff member to a maximum of 16 students.

From the 2014 NZQA

EER 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is Excellent;

Some developments have assisted a stronger learning structure, and interactive meetings support at-risk learners. It is creditable that management is working with a university professor in adult education on learning recovery, and bridging the gap between accepting at-risk students and preparing them for higher studies. PNSD is successfully undertaking the challenging task of taking students from the 'at-risk' level to 'university-ready'.

Educational performance remain strong year on year as measured against the TEC EPI measures.

Māori and Pacific Island cultures have a strong visual base and design is therefore a good vehicle for them to re-engage in education especially after any negative experiences they might have had at secondary school. The pastoral care components of the School, the creative studio environment and high staff to student ratios, combine to ensure each learner is provided the individual

support needed to be retained and successfully complete their programme of study. Individual needs vary and are tailored to each learners requirements which may include, facilitating access to financial support, focussed literacy, numeracy, digital or life skills education, facilitating access to health or psychological support and support with family and cultural needs.

This work is driven by strong leadership and engagement across the entire team at The Design School.

Section 2 – Current Implementation

Learner success at The Design School is understood organisation wide. Overall, Course and Qualification completions are lower than national benchmarks, however the retention, progression and long term outcomes are strong across programmes, especially considering the low starting point of most learners. Of the seven elements of learner success, our systems approach has meant almost all of the elements support student learning at every step. The remaining issues in terms of parity and completion are to do with Guided Pathways, and Holistic Student Support. Although we have sound responsive methods in place to support and direct any students needing extra scaffolding, there is however still a proportion of students who withdraw despite our best efforts. And the proportion of students leaving remains fairly constant even though we know the reasons for withdrawal or non-completion in almost every individual case, and have tried a range of interventions, with full support of the senior management team.

The existing delivery at levels 2, 3 and 4 will remain largely unchanged due to their success and alignment with stakeholder needs including parity of course achievement for Māori and Pacifica which will flow on to parity of qualification results in subsequent years. Existing quality assurance processes will continue to provide progressive overall improvements to student results with targets to increase Course and Qualification Completion results by 5% per year while maintaining parity of achievement for all learner groups.

There is an identified barrier for TDS graduates accessing degree level courses due to not achieving University Entrance. This will be resolved with pathway agreements with multiple universities.

To promote stronger long term success, it has been identified that creative enterprise skills are needed to align with the industry requirements of being self employed.

Understanding of youth expectations in the enterprise space has been developed through a partnership with Prince's Trust. Prince's Trust provide entrepreneurial

programmes to youth around the world and our partnership aims to develop in learners, the understanding of entrepreneurial practice and the depth of knowledge needed to be successful in a self-employment environment. This will allow learners to make better decisions based on their own circumstances. The partnership began in Northland in 2019 and after navigating the COVID-19 pandemic has been extended to Palmerston north in 2022.

The work to embed creative enterprise skills is owned within the design school by the senior management team alongside the tutorial staff.

Recent research into the economic returns of the Design Industries has identified the sector produces more GDP than the agricultural industry . When combined with other creative disciplines including film, music etc, the Creative Industries is the largest producer of GDP. Disseminating this knowledge is critical to raising the profile of the value of the Creative Industries. This data and exposure such as in "<https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/04-10-2017/bigger-than-agriculture-how-design-became-a-multi-billion-dollar-industry>" will drive increased interest in Design as a viable career after many years of limited acknowledgment.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted The Design School's reliance on direct engagement with NEETs and other priority groups to disseminate career guidance. During the pandemic, traditional engagement activities such as face-to-face meetings at career expo's, community agencies and schools were limited and reduced engagement with priority groups. This resulted in reduced engagement in education at The Design School. Additional resources for non face to face engagement with priority groups is needed to support traditional methods as the pandemic progresses.

The work to develop additional careers resources is owned within the design school by the senior management team alongside the tutorial staff.

Section 3 – Roadmap to Learner Success

The following roadmap has been developed by management and staff at The Design School with learners at the centre and in collaboration with Toi Mai (WDC), Tertiary Providers and employers. These are all provided for in our operational budget as standard business development and professional development, and progress will be reported to those groups as part of our ongoing discussion with them about our performance.

2022

- Deliver creative enterprise workshops in collaboration with Prince's trust.
- Develop and trial innovative delivery models for foundation skills in design in collaboration with Toi Mai (WDC) and employers in Northland.
- Formalise pathways from the design school level four programs to degree level programs at Massey university.
- Produce online career resources for design and creative industries.
- Review and continue implementation of existing quality assurance processes.

2023

- Embed creative enterprise workshops in TDS curriculum.
- Develop specific creative enterprise programmes to complement existing design programmes.
- Expand provision of innovative delivery models for foundation skills in design including Micro-Credentials to Manawatū.
- Formalise pathways from The Design School level four programs to degree level programs at Auckland University and AUT.
- Review and continue implementation of existing quality assurance processes.

2024

- Expand creative enterprise programmes with additional TEC funding.
- Develop online delivery models for foundation skills in design including Micro-Credentials.
- Develop provision of internship/apprenticeship style models of delivery with employers and Toi Mai (WDC) in Manawatū and Northland.
- Review and continue implementation of existing quality assurance processes.

Implementing existing quality assurance processes will continue to provide progressive overall improvements to student results with targets to increase Course and Qualification results by 5% per year while maintaining or improving parity of achievement for all learner groups.

These all align with the issues identified to provide stronger achievement and transitions to work or further study.



5. Addressing the needs of your stakeholders

As noted, The Design School has a long history of success with foundation learners. Since the school was established in 1993, the vision has remained to provide an opportunity for creative learners to gain the skills and qualifications needed to enter design courses at diploma and degree level and then move onto sustainable employment.

These programmes combine creative thinking and critical thinking skills alongside technical skills, all aimed at producing high-quality design outputs. Technical skills are generally focused for course assessment on digital media or textiles and sewing, however outcomes are not restricted to specific subject areas and can be tailored to individual learner's requirements to assist them to fulfil their aspirations. This tailoring of technical skills has allowed learners, who originally started at TDS with no or low qualifications, to enter degree and diploma-awarding design schools around the country in a range of specialist fields including graphic design, fashion design, digital media, web development, photography, interior, furniture and industrial design fields as well as fine arts. With additional support in physics, students can also progress onto architecture pathways.

At its core, TDS acts on a primary principle; design is as much a practical as it is a thinking career. The combination of critical and creative thinking skills in the programmes is the ideal vehicle for foundation education. Critical thinking skills in New Zealand measure poorly in the ALL Surveys (Ministry of Education) and are increasing in significance as the economies of New Zealand and the world continue to develop towards a Knowledge and Creative economic base.

With assistance from Associate Prof John Kirkland we have identified how the curriculum at TDS enhances cognitive capabilities of foundation learners. Reshaping the curriculum as a result of this ongoing systematic enquiry has contributed to learners' long-term outcomes. The increase in critical thinking skills is evidenced in not just learners' course work, but improvements in their general life. For instance, anecdotal observations indicate they make better quality career and personal decisions, discontinue invasive long-term habits like smoking and other drug dependencies, and develop long-term goals and aspirations away from the welfare dependencies many have grown up with. In many cases, they also encourage friends and Whānau to follow. The programmes allow learners to connect with people with similar characteristics and aspirations; learners often comment that attending a course at TDS is the first time they have felt part of a group of like minds, and in many cases report it is the first time they have had any friends. Clearly, the cognitive and social are complementary.

As mentioned already, a staff-to-student ratio of between 1:12 and 1:15 is pivotal for ongoing success. It is hard work and dividends take time to mature. The 1:1 delivery model essential for assisting learners in a series of just-in-time scenarios means they can complete projects and develop their own creative and personal identities. It is our view this also contributes to a high retention rate for these learners. All learners are able to be closely monitored without feeling unduly pressured. Data about attendance, progression and assessment is constantly used by staff to identify potential problems and any matters can be dealt with quickly and efficiently by compassionate staff before mushrooming into a crisis and hindering learner progress.

The physical environment of the design studio has been carefully considered with a view to providing a secure place to study and work. We aim at offering calm, safe, creative, welcoming spaces where learners have a sense of belonging, are comfortable and wish to be there with others. Several small changes implemented over the last few years have contributed to increased learner attendance rates, from 80% to over 95%, which is a significant achievement considering many of the learners had poor attendance at school. Many learners will come to the studio outside normal class hours to continue working on projects or use the School's facilities for personal creative enterprises. Making facilities available beyond regular hours encourages learners to extend themselves, either through applying additional hours to projects or by making available a safe setting where they can relax.

The Design School has proven itself capable of responding quickly and efficiently to stakeholder needs as they arise through resourcing, staffing and curriculum development. The organisation at all levels is committed to working with workforce development councils, tertiary providers, secondary schools and other stakeholders to further build a responsive and sustainable pathway for learners to obtain successful and sustainable careers in the creative industries. The qualification and assessments embedded in the programmes respond to the challenges faced by the creative sector identified by Toi Mai including *"that the training opportunities are inconsistently accessible across Aotearoa, are often not transferable or portable and do not recognise achievement and success with national or internationally recognised credentials."* Additionally, they promote *"the barrier-free talent pipeline and career pathways that industries and businesses across the motu, but particularly in regions, need for sustainability and growth."* (Operational Plan Toi Mai, July 2022).

A lack of coherent pathways for creative students was identified by Amanda Bill, Senior Lecturer at Massey University in her research for “Educating Fashion Designers for a Creative Economy”, 2011. This research and additional investigation by TDS staff has confirmed the pathways offered by the School are unique outside the major metropolitan areas. Provision of quality design programmes to a larger group of students beyond Manawatū, especially Māori and Pacific Island learners, has allowed the School to make a greater contribution to New Zealand’s knowledge economy.

Level 1-4 learners generally do not travel far from their home and support network to engage in education and it is therefore essential to provide foundation level creative programmes throughout the regions. Where progression

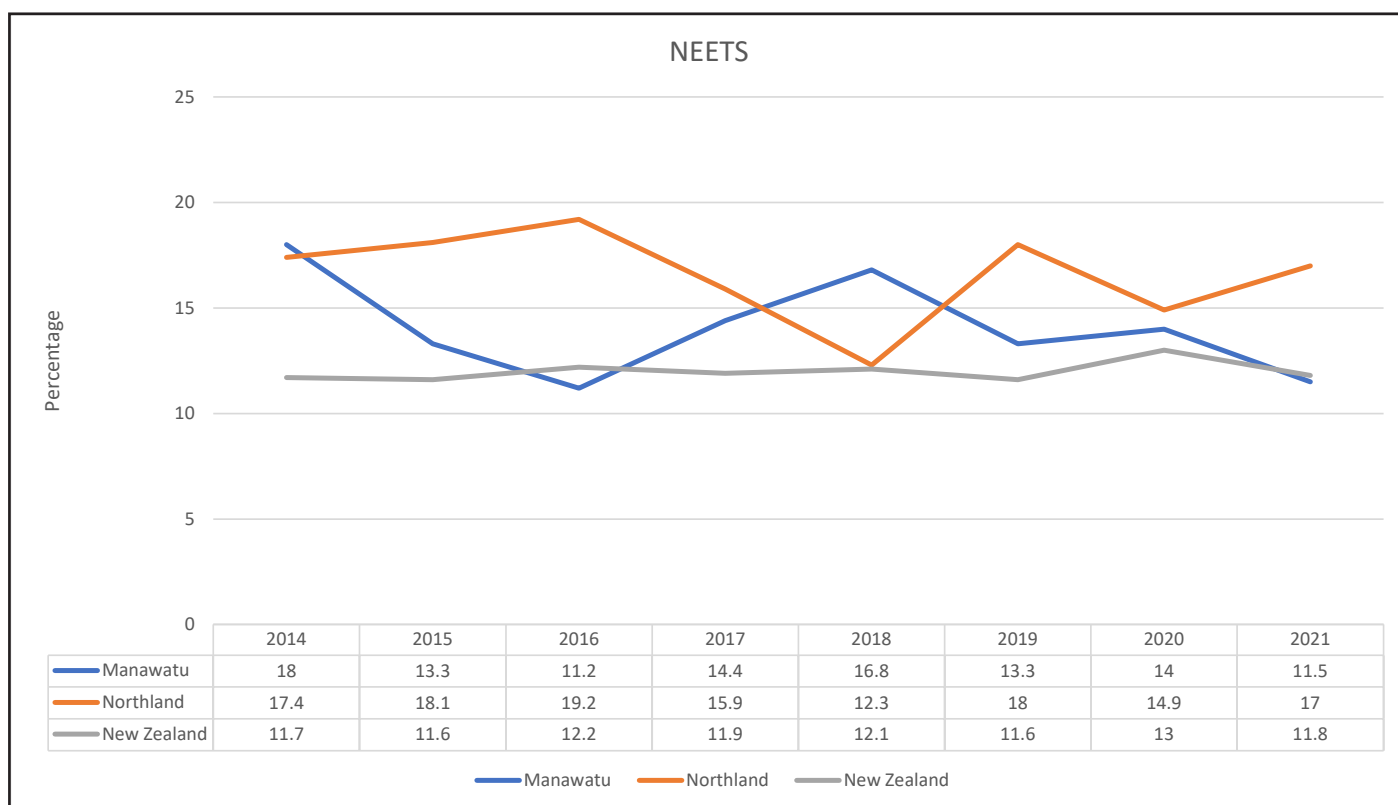
to higher education is not available locally, focussed and coherent achievement at levels 1-4 provides the learner with the confidence to progress onto study outside their home region. Delivering the design programmes near the learners existing support networks is key to their retention and ongoing success.

The collective work of TDS staff and the presence of the School in the community increases the engagement of all priority groups in formal education. The percentage of enrolled students identifying as Māori or Pasifika is nearly double the regional populations and the high percentage of people with low or no qualifications reflects the targeting of NEETs and those with limited or no engagement in education.

NEETS

The Treasury Working Paper “Economic Outcomes of Youth Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)” March 2015, identified the long term negative impacts of disengagement from education even for a short period. The programmes at The Design School provide a key pathway for youth to maintain engagement in education, experience positive outcomes and progress onto higher education successfully. Equally, they provide the opportunity for mature learners to re-enter education, achieve qualifications and progress to higher education or

entry level employment. Courses are designed for rolling enrolment so learners can engage when they need too rather than waiting for the ‘next intake’. The number of NEETS in the Northland and Manawatū regions has been consistently at or above the national median for several years. Attendance, Retention and Transition initiatives have had some impact in Manawatū but not in Northland. The Design School programmes target and successfully re-engage these learners in education.



6. Disability Action Plan

The Design School is not required to submit a DAP because it is not receiving more than \$5 million in funding. However it is noted that the design school is a successful learning environment for people with disabilities.

The deliberate design of each overall site including the studio environment, the project based delivery models, high staff to student ratios and use of advanced pedagogy, provide an equal opportunity for success for students with disabilities.

Courses are being completed successfully by learners with mobility, sensory, psychiatric and neurological challenges alongside learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The governance and management team at TDS endorse using the Kia Ōrite toolkit to analyse and further improve access and success for learners with disabilities.

7. Programmes and activities

The Design School provides a clear pathway for learners to progress from low or no qualifications to level 4 qualifications with a substantial portfolio of creative work to meet the entry criteria for the premier degree level courses in New Zealand.

At each level, Graphic and Fashion Design options are available.

Level 2 programmes include:

- NCEA Level 2 Creative Industries Vocational Pathway Award
- New Zealand Certificate in Arts and Design Level 2

Level 3 programmes include:

- New Zealand Certificate in Arts and Design Level 3

Level 4 programmes include:

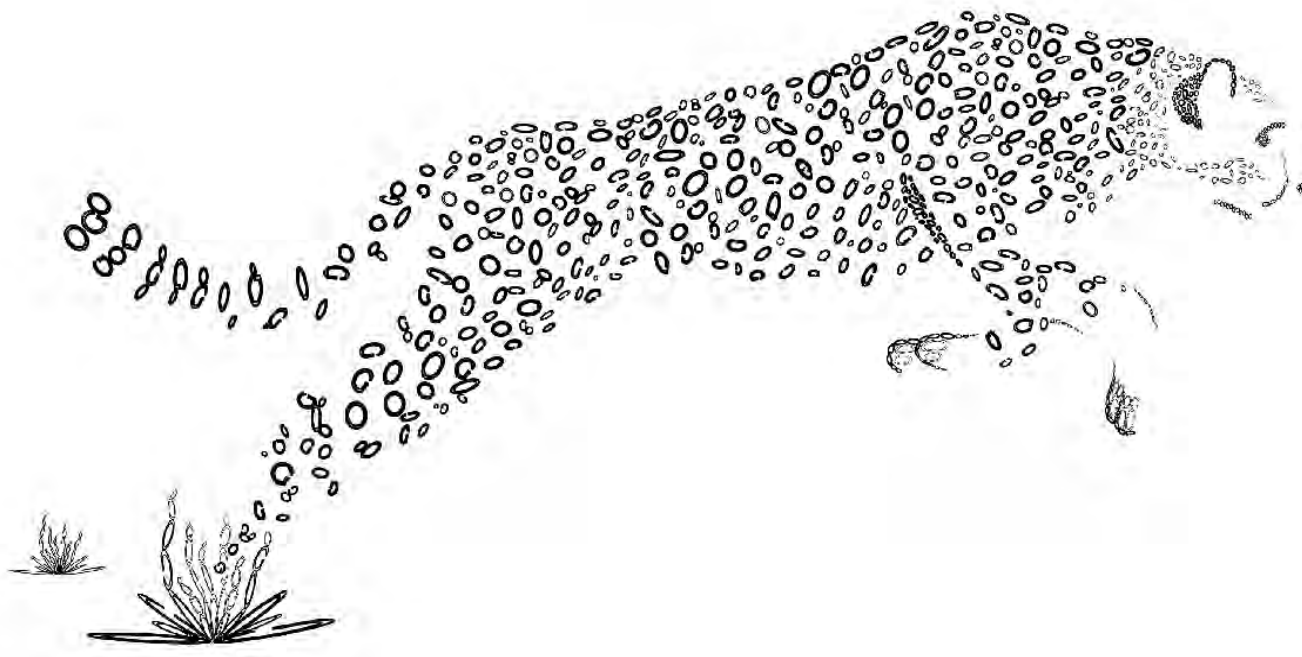
- New Zealand Certificate in Arts and Design Level 4
- New Zealand Certificate in Digital Media and Design Level 4
- New Zealand Certificate in Fashion Design Level 4

Components of Level 2 and 3 programmes are delivered as Secondary Tertiary Partnership Programmes in Palmerston North in collaboration with UCOL USKILLS Trades Academy.

These components are also offered in Palmerston North and Whangārei in collaboration with the Te Kura Huarahi Trades Academy.

In school delivery is provided for a Māori Boys School in Manawatū.

Packages of learning are also developed for individual schools as requested.



8. Outcomes and measures

"I never I really enjoyed mainstream school because there was so much going on and I never liked the limited work that needed to be done. I left school in search of my passion and life. With four level 1 NCEA credits to my name I came to The Design School to pursue my passion for design in a professional environment. The design school is like another family. I love how supportive the tutors are and how helpful they are towards me. In the future I will be doing my degree or diploma to pursue a job in graphic design. The Design School has helped a lot with showing me that I have a gift and I need to follow it to reach where I'm going in my life".

Broughan Ruff, graduate Level 4 2020, now at UCOL Bachelor of Creative Media.

Learner results are followed carefully as measured against TEC EPI data and national medians alongside graduate destinations and long-term employment data. Over the past 4 years some results have remained strong while others have highlighted areas for improvement. EPI data shows the school excels in critical areas such as parity of achievement for priority groups for course completions and engagement of high-risk groups including under 25-year-olds at risk of long-term unemployment. As noted previously engagement of Māori and Pasifika learners is more than double the regional populations however the number of Pasifika learners is low which creates volatility in the data for Pasifika results. Overall TEC data shows our performance reflects national trends however all 2020 and 2021 learner results have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student retention at secondary schools has impacted Youth Guarantee and Level 3 enrolment patterns. In particular, from 2019, enrolments began later in the year resulting in the 2019 cohort of learners' outcomes being captured in 2020. This makes 2019 data difficult to compare to previous years. Additionally, the changes to programmes following TRoQ have changed the data patterns when compared to data prior to 2018. As the enrolment patterns and programme time-frames stabilise, the data is expected to be more consistent.

2020 results were impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns and although results for level three and four programmes have declined slightly in 2019 and 2020, learner progression to higher level qualifications is significantly above the national benchmark. This demonstrates learners are being retained at The Design School and progressing to higher level qualifications, however some are not doing so within the time frames of the programme approval. Additional part enrolments to complete the programmes and Qualifications reduces the course and qualification completions recorded versus the funding utilised for that learner (EFTS). The long-term learner results demonstrate the courses combined with the flexibility of delivery are meeting the need of the learners. Our first Graduate from the New Zealand certificate Level 3 (2018) completed her degree in 2021. Additionally, one of our final graduates from the level 4 local qualification in 2018 also finished his degree in 2021. Both learners made up 20% of the exhibiting learners from the UCOL degree, a fantastic achievement considering both learners entered the design school with no qualifications.



Performance comments

Learner Achievement – Level 3 -4

New programmes at Levels three and four were introduced during 2018, 2019 and 2020. The new programmes departed from our local qualification which was a two year programme of study with embedded qualifications at levels two, three and four.

Course Completions: Consistent with the national average prior to the pandemic. There has been a reduction in course completion rates since 2017 which is a reflection of the changing learner market at the School. More learners are enrolling at level three and four after joining the design school at level 2 with no qualifications. This can be seen in the significant learner progression results for youth guarantee courses.

Qualification Completions: After an initial drop and qualification completion results in 2018 (following programme changes), qualification completions have improved to be close to the national benchmark. This is a significant achievement considering the lower-than-average prior educational achievement learners have when entering the courses.

Learner Progression: Except for 2018, learner progression onto level 5 and above courses has been above the national provider benchmarks. Again, this is a significant achievement considering the lower-than-average prior educational achievement learners have when entering courses.

Learner Achievement – SAC Level 2

Course Completions: The SAC funded programmes at level 2 are the main programmes delivered within corrections facilities. 75% are delivered across prison sites and 25% in Whangārei.

Course completion results were improving prior to the pandemic and were only slightly below the national benchmark in 2019. They have consistently exceeded TEC Benchmarks.

Māori achievement has been higher than other ethnicities for all years except 2018 and although results for Pasifika are variable due to the low number of enrolments, results were improving quickly before the pandemic.

Course completions during the pandemic were significantly impacted by the inability to access learners within the prison facilities and additionally, their transfers and releases during the lockdown.

Qualification Completions: Consistent for 2017-2021. Qualification completions are impacted by the length of the programme within the prison facilities which makes achievement more challenging. The six-month programme is easily affected by internal transfers of learners to other facilities which could happen without warning.

Learner Progression: Learner progression from the level two programmes within prison facilities is challenging due to the limited number of options available at higher levels. In 2019, our Level 3 programme was introduced into the prison sites to provide the opportunity for progression. This had a positive impact on progression to higher level study.

Progressions at the Whangārei site have been improving since an initial drop in 2018 and equalled or exceeded the benchmarks in 2020 and 2021.

Learner Achievement – Youth Guarantee

Course Completions: From 2017 The Design School actively targeted more disadvantaged learners with lower prior achievement, reducing course completion results compared to the years prior. Since 2018, 72% of learners entering the programme had no prior educational achievement and 21% had a level 1 qualification. Just 7% had a level 2 qualification in a different subject area.

Course completion results remain above the TEC benchmarks and importantly Māori and Pasifika learners are achieving at the same or higher rates except in 2019. As noted earlier, enrolment patterns in 2019 affected data comparisons due to enrolment timing.

TEC considers a full time programme 100 credits compared to 120 previously delivered. Learners at the design school benefit from having the full 120 credits available for success as preparation for pathway onto the higher education courses, which continue to be 120 credits for one EFT. As a result, the number of credits achieved per percentage of achievement is higher for TDS programmes.

From 2017, The Design School actively developed dual pathway programmes with Ministry of Education pilot funding which was later transitioned to the trades Academy programmes. These courses have been delivered in collaboration with UCOL since 2019. The programmes were developed in response to the retention initiatives at secondary schools which increased the need for additional secondary school options. This however also reduced the number of learners leaving before achieving NCEA level 2 impacting the number and types of learners engaging in Youth Guarantee courses. Enrolment data for 2022 indicates a return to previous levels of enrolment for Youth Guarantee.

When assessed as a whole, our level two programmes delivered for under 20 year olds have maintained a very high success rate in comparison to benchmarks, however separately, youth guarantee funded courses have experienced a drop in performance as more learners with low educational achievement have been targeted for enrolment.

Results for the Trades Academy courses are strong. In 2019 there were 16 learners, 63% were Māori with 93% course completions versus 88% overall. In 2020 there were 19 learners, 37% identified as Māori which, although reduced from 2019, is double the population average in Palmerston North. Pacifica also represented 11%, nearly three times the population average and Palmerston North. The overall course completion rate in 2020 was 80%, Māori achieved at 78% and Pacifica at 83%.

Qualification Completions: The pandemic impacts on the Youth Guarantee learners are reflected in the lower than normal results for 2020. Learner enrolments were extended to accommodate the lockdowns and meet the learners needs at that exceptional time and course and

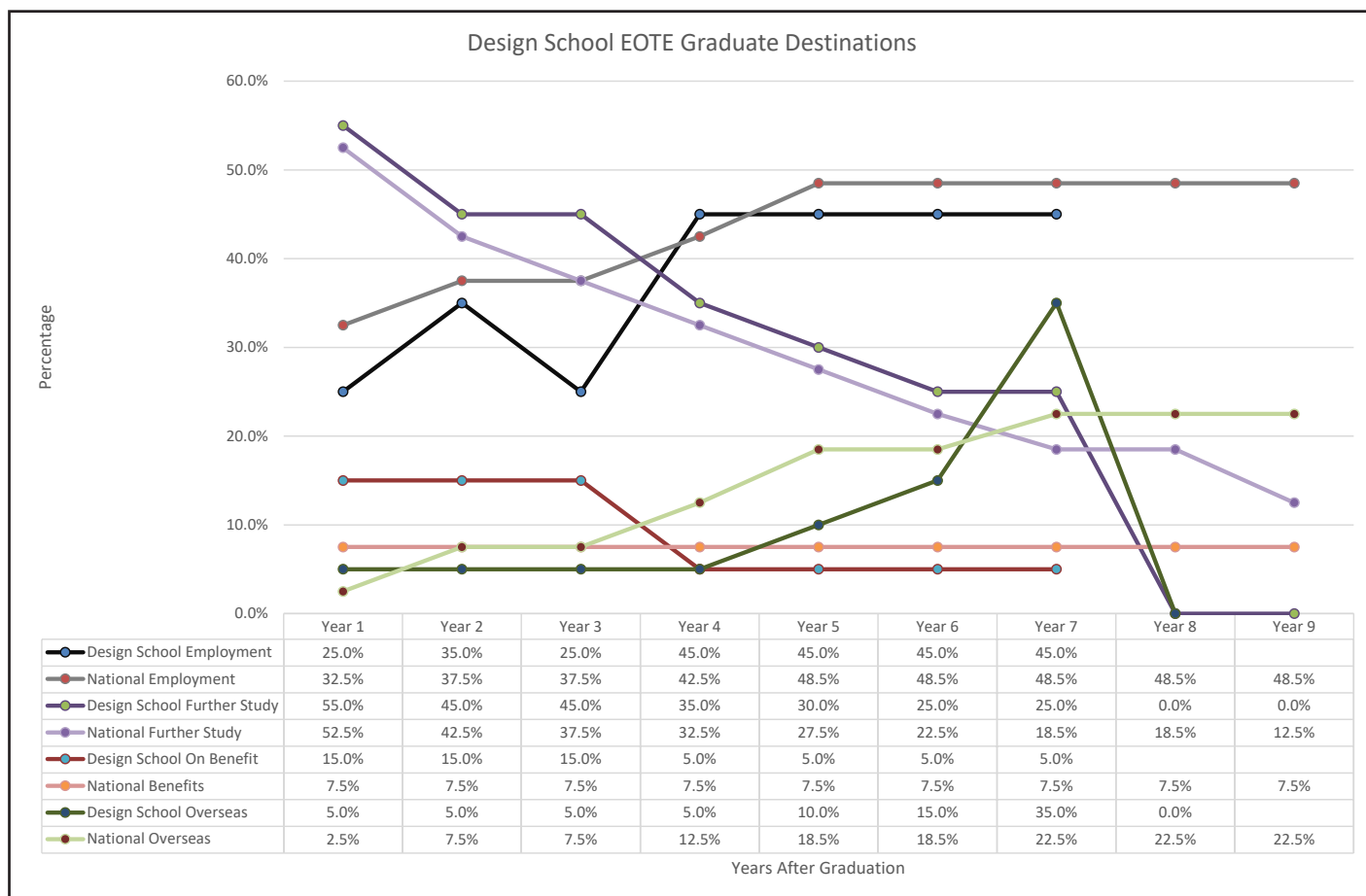
qualification completions were impacted as a result. Prior to the pandemic qualification completions were at or above national benchmarks and Māori and Pacifica learners were achieving at similar rates or higher. Qualification completions are improving to pre-pandemic levels however Maori achievement is improving slower and will be a focus until parity is achieved.

Learner Progression: The robust entry process at The Design School combined with strong pastoral care initiatives maintain learner engagement and have resulted in high learner progression results. These results are especially strong considering the low educational starting point learners have when entering the Youth Guarantee courses.

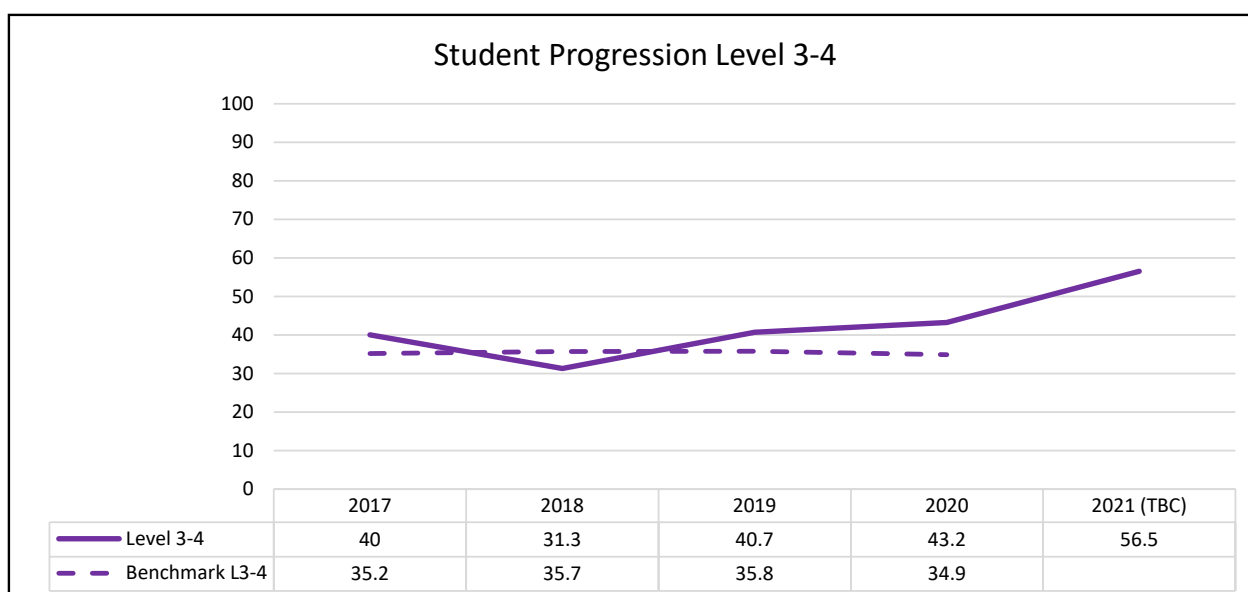
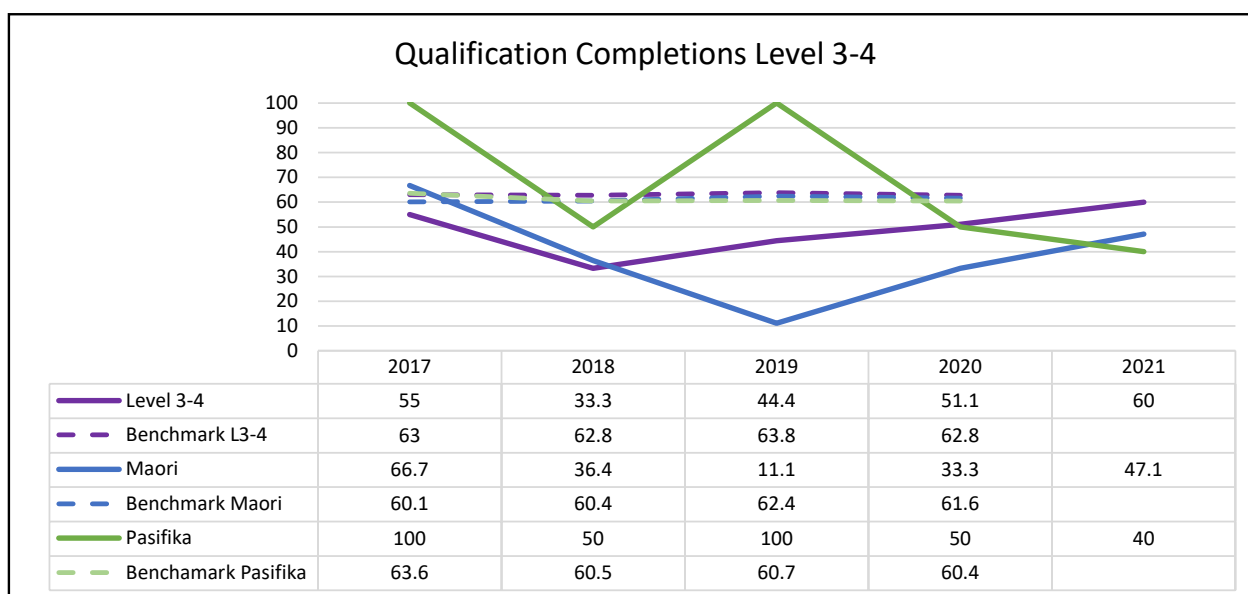
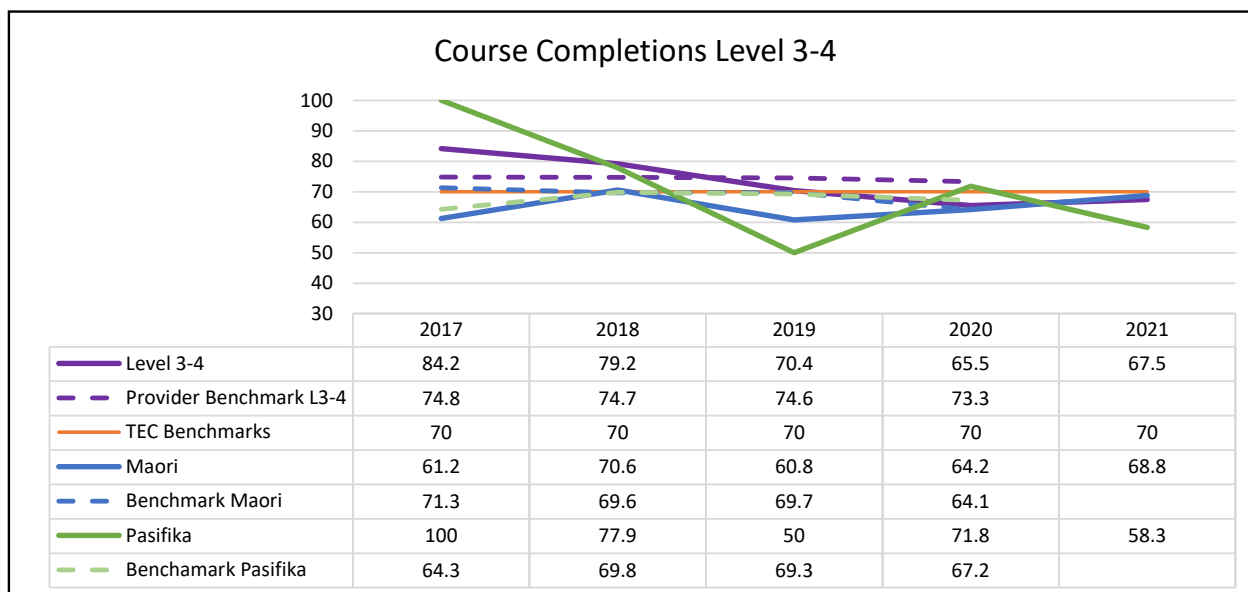
Long Term results of Design School graduates.

The long-term positive impact of The Design School programmes is clear from the Tertiary Education Commission data for Employment Outcomes of Tertiary Education Graduates. The Design School graduates are more likely than average to be engaged in further study for several years following graduation, overseas following

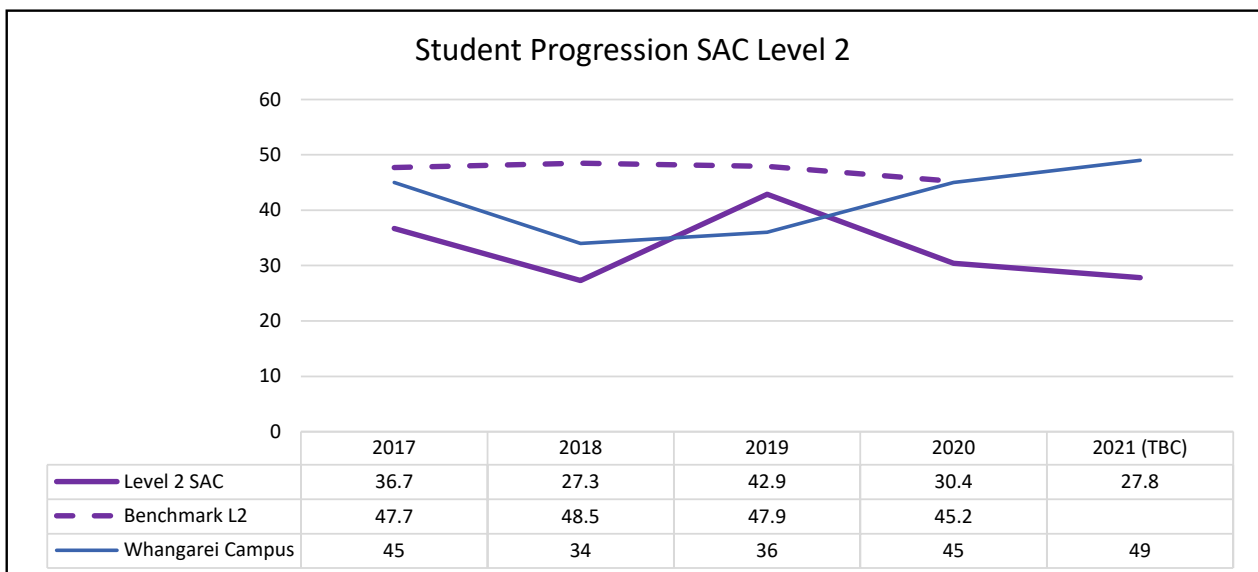
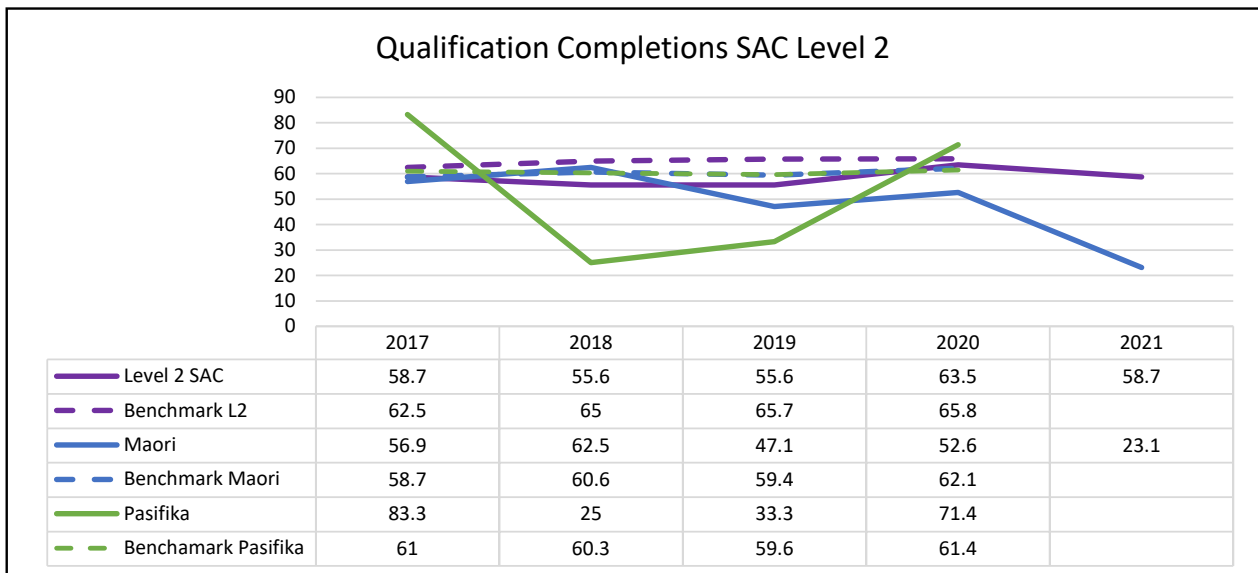
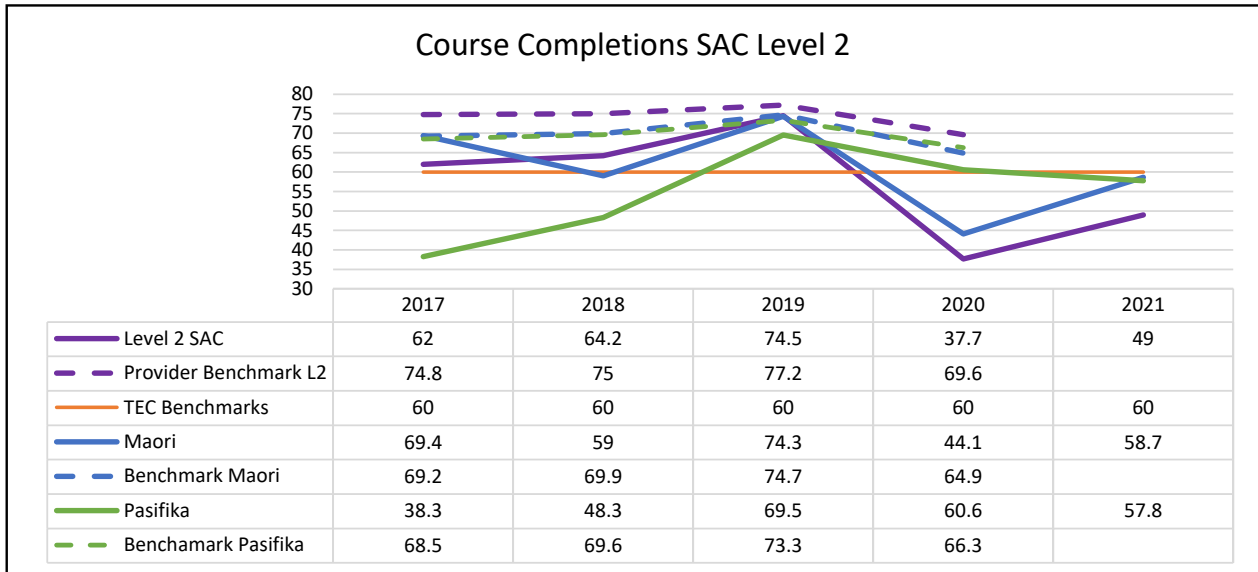
further study or employed at almost the same rate as other graduates. The value of the programmes is also reflected in the lower-than-average reliance on a welfare benefit. This is especially strong data considering the low education starting point of most learners at The Design School.



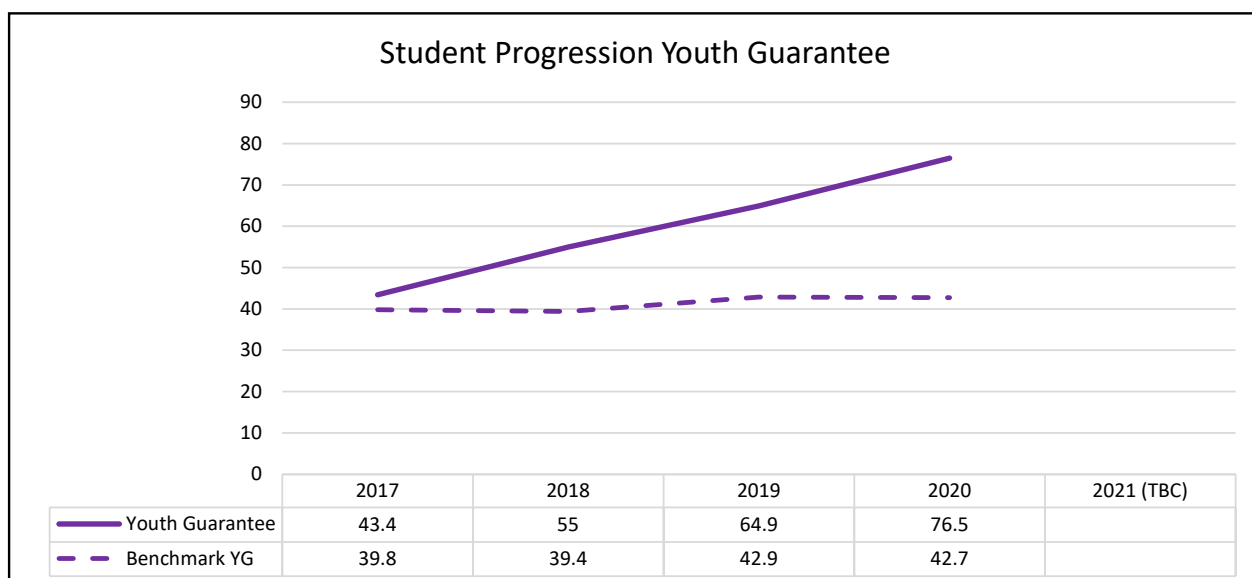
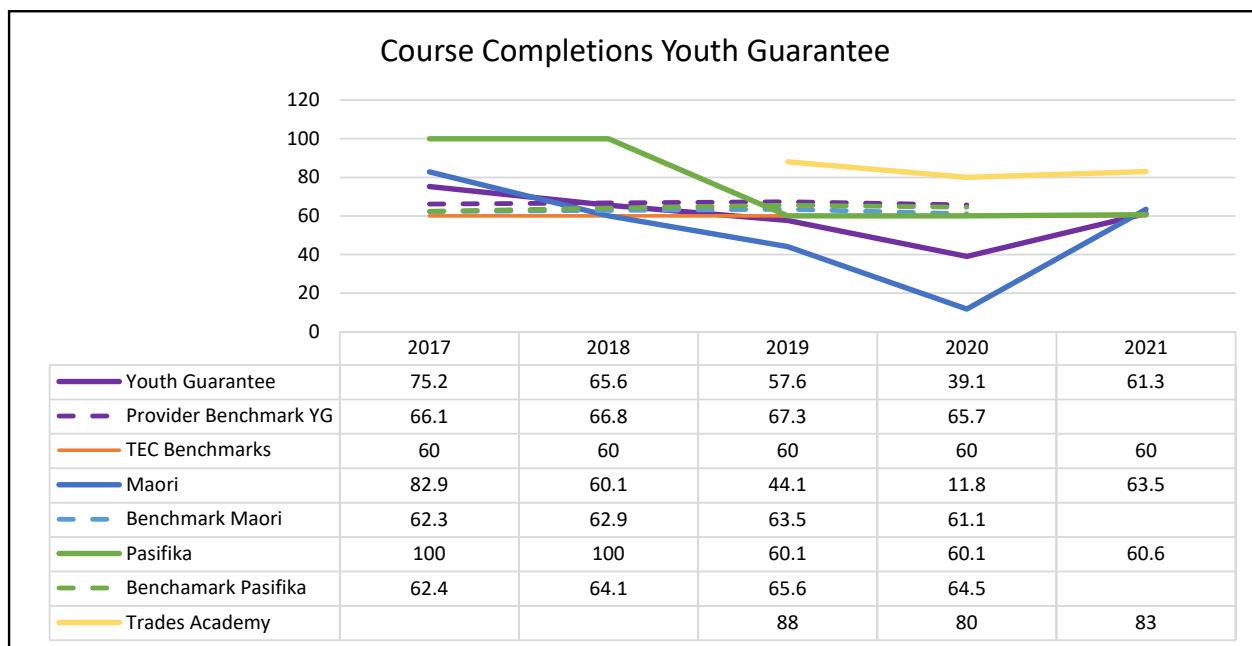
Learner Achievement – Level 3 -4



Learner Achievement – SAC Level 2



Learner Achievement – Youth Guarantee





THE
DESIGN
SCHOOL

email info@designschool.ac.nz
www.designschool.ac.nz

12-16 The Square, Level 1, Palmerston North
60 Robert St, Whangārei