

Lucas Davies

From: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 9 April 2026 11:42 am
To: Lin Ayo
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn
Subject: RE: Tertiary Education Commission Investment Plan Guidance 2027

Kia ora Lin

Hope your week's going well so far, and hope you had a good Easter break too!

Just wanted to reach out to give a heads-up that we've received an OIA request regarding our Plan Guidance wording for social work, so the conversations we have had on this over email will be captured as part of our response to this request.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this at all.

Ngā mihi

Conor

Conor Broderick

Kaitohutohu Matua | **Senior Advisor**
Putanga Ākonga me te Haumi | **Learner & Investment Outcomes**
Aramahi me te Haumi | **Careers and Investment Design**
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua | **Tertiary Education Commission**



**Tertiary Education
Commission**
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

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From: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 31 March 2026 1:33 pm
To: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Tertiary Education Commission Investment Plan Guidance 2027

Kia ora Conor

That is exactly what I was looking for, thanks so much. It was good to see the recommendation and it has definitely caused interest in social work education circles.

Much appreciated 😊

Ngā mihi
Lin

From: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 31 March 2026 1:05 pm
To: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Tertiary Education Commission Investment Plan Guidance 2027

Kia ora Lin

Thank you for your email.

The advice provided in our Plan Guidance document was approved by our Board of Commissioners and was provided to the Minister for Vocational Education and the Minister for Universities for their review prior to release (although it is important to note that Ministerial approval is not required for the release of this guidance).

As discussed in our previous meeting, the new three-year social work degree pathway strongly aligns with our wider investment priorities for health provision, so it was great to be able to hold this up as an example to the sector as to what we're looking for.

I hope this information is helpful, and please let me know if you have any further questions.

Ngā mihi

Conor

Conor Broderick

Kaitohutohu Matua | **Senior Advisor**
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From: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 31 March 2026 11:19 am
To: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>; Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Tertiary Education Commission Investment Plan Guidance 2027

Kia ora Caitlin & Conor

Can you please just give me a quick heads up on which Minister this advice went to, re the social work 3 year degree as priority? We are needing to respond to the sector and it would be helpful to know whether this landed with one Minister or with several.

Thanks in anticipation

Ngā mihi

Lin

Appendix B: Sector-specific higher education

| Sector | Approach to growth |
|---|--|
| Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) | <p>STEM provision remains a Government priority; however, our investment outcomes for learners.</p> <p>The science and technology sector covers a wide range of roles, some a priority where it supports other areas of priority investment, for example Workforce demands span STEM disciplines including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› software engineering (eg, safety-critical software, signal processing)› avionics/electronic engineering (eg, remote sensing systems, control systems)› mining and advanced minerals science, geothermal science and energy› test and evaluation/quality assurance› education relevant to the space sector, eg, rocketry› education in areas of existing educational strengths (eg, biotechnology, specifically growing graduates with skills in the latter)› engineering (relevant providers should talk to their Relationships Manager) |
| Health | <p>We work closely with Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora (Health NZ) and We will continue to work directly with providers delivering the key skills. Although there is a continued need for growth in the health workforce, clinical placements required for additional enrolments for some work placements, talk to us first. We will ask for evidence of engagement with increase health education enrolments. Funding existing provision may apply to all levels of provision, including postgraduate and graduate-level. For nursing specifically and in some other cases, we will need Health NZ approval. We are looking for provision that supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› transition between health professions (including moving to advanced options from non-regulated to registered professions)› part-time learning options and the ability to earn while you learn› flexible and innovative learning delivery which may also include blended learning› learning pathways that build on existing experience› learning in regional areas to deliver skills locally› diversifying the workforce› student retention and course completion (eg, via joint first- and second-year programmes) <p>For social work going forward, we will prioritise funding for delivery of a four-year programme, consistent with our wider priorities for health professions.</p> |
| Teacher Education | <p>We are seeking growth in initial teacher education (ITE) (provision that will lead to registration, see the Teaching Council).</p> |

Lucas Davies

From: Lin Ayo
Sent: Wednesday, 18 February 2026 10:45 am
To: Conor Broderick
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Thanks Cono

This is really helpful, much appreciated 😊

Ngā mihi

Lin

From: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 16 February 2026 8:42 am
To: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Lin

I hope you had a nice weekend and that you're faring okay with the wild weather we've had overnight!

I've provided some answers to your questions below in red. Please let me know if you have any follow-up questions, or if there is any particular points you would be keen to discuss further 😊

- If preferential funding goes to 3 year degrees, does that mean to ALL 3 year degrees or just to some? **We would ideally fund all providers that seek to deliver this given we consider social work to be an investment priority, so long as we have assurance there is availability within the network of provision.**
- And if 3 year programmes are to receive preferential funding, is that likely to mean that 4 year programmes (aa at the universities) may not be funded at all, or in a reduced manner? As early as 2027, or would it take effect later for some? **We wish to signal that we want to see increased flexibility of delivery that is more effective in ensuring favourable outcomes for students and less strain on the workplace environments where students are placed. We would hope that those still seeking to deliver the 4-year degree in 2027 will consider our preference to invest in more flexible and streamlined pathways, and we are happy to liaise further with any TEOs who have concerns about our decision to prioritise the three-year programme as needed.**
- I understand that 'priority programmes' are those like social work which are highly desirable in the community and where we are very short of workers, correct? – **It is correct that where there is high community need would help in designating something as a priority. For health professions, our priorities are broadly aligned with the priorities listed in the Health Workforce Plan published by Health New Zealand.**
- Finally, did I get this right re process: TEC provides guidance to the Minister, once it's gone to your Board – the new approach will be published in March, implemented in July and notification given to TEOs via your advisers? – **OIA s 9(2)(f)(iv)**

Ngā mihi

Conor

From: Lin Ayo
Sent: Friday, 13 February 2026 12:26 pm
To: 'Conor Broderick' <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Thanks Conor – just some prior thinking on this, some of which may already be noted in your piece but in the meantime, this FYI including some updates you may not yet be aware of...

Bethlehem Tertiary Institute will begin offering a three-year degree this year Feb 2026, as approved by NZQA and SWRB in 2025.

Most of the Polytechnics (8 of 9) and the two Wānanga who provide social work programmes are applying for a change in Bachelor degree course length from four years to three years, with prescription events happening through 2026 and the likelihood that most if not all will be offering a three year degree from 2027 if they meet the Education Standards as well as NZQA requirements.

We anticipate that the change in course length will support attraction into the programme, improve retention within the programme and thereby completion. This makes a strong case for a better ROI in future years.

At the same time a three-year course reduces overall student hardship as experienced in a four-year course and the new flexibilities in the SWRB Education Standards allow programmes to explore better options for placements within existing places of work or in different time frames, alongside better options for RPL.

This may assist TEC with ensuring social work programmes have equitable funding with other professionally based programmes, given that the national shortfall in student numbers and graduated social workers remains.

See you at 1pm!

Ngā mihi
Lin

From: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 February 2026 10:32 am
To: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Lin

Thanks for your swift reply!

Sounds good, I'll book us in between 1-1:30pm, we shouldn't need longer than half an hour 😊

Thanks again, and see you in the meeting!

Conor

Conor Broderick

Kaitohutohu Matua | **Senior Advisor**
Putanga Ākonga me te Haumi | **Learner & Investment Outcomes**
Aramahi me te Haumi | **Careers and Investment Design**
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From: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 February 2026 10:29 am
To: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Conor

Lucky Friday! I can do 1-2pm this afternoon if you'd like to send an invite.

Ngā mihi
Lin

From: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 February 2026 10:05 am
To: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Lin

Hope you've had a good week so far!

Just reaching out as we received a request internally to add some wording about the new 3-year social work degrees into our upcoming guidance for TEOs' investment plans, and we're keen to run this past you to make sure the SWRB is comfortable with the language we intend to use.

Caitlin and I are free between 1-2pm and 3-4pm today if these times would work for you for a quick catch-up on this, or 3-4pm Monday if today doesn't suit.

Please let us know what time works best for you when you can.

Ngā mihi

Conor

Conor Broderick

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From: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 26 January 2026 1:23 pm
To: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>; Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Cc: Liz Jones <liz.jones@swrb.govt.nz>; Scott McLew <Scott.McLew@swrb.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Caitlin and Conor

Thanks for that wide-ranging discussion this morning, most informative and helpful. As well, I was pleased to be able to assure TEC that Bethlehem Tertiary Institute provided an exemplary application for their new 3-year degree and the SWRB had no hesitation in prescribing the degree nor any concerns with either the programme or the institution itself.

As discussed, the change from a four-year to a three-year degree necessitates close monitoring at the end of the first year of delivery to ensure that the TEO is managing across the programme, including in accessing sufficient field education placements. As do TEC, we recognise the difficulties TEOs are having in finding sufficient placements, particularly for a potentially increasing number of students who may enrol.

We will also encourage TEOs to notify both NZQA and TEC of their intent to introduce a new degree, and we will keep you notified as well when we approve their new qualifications.

Please let me know if I have missed any key points of our discussion, and I look forward to future communications.

Ngā mihi
Lin

Lin Ayo | Deputy Registrar Education (Acting)

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From: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 26 January 2026 9:34 am
To: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>; Liz Jones <liz.jones@swrb.govt.nz>; Scott McLew <Scott.McLew@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Lin,

Thanks for coming back to me so quickly, apologies I did not respond on Friday, I was only working for a couple of hours in the morning.

We can talk more about it today, but it is useful for us to have some of your context to help make decisions. We can take a nuanced approach if we have some reassurance of your confidence in the provider and the qualification.

Ngā mihi,

Caitlin Kilborn MA (*she/her*)

Kaiwhakahaere Rōpū Putanga Ākonga me te Haumi | **Team Manager, Learner and Investment Outcomes**
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua | **Tertiary Education Commission**
P: 04 462 5247

From: Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 23 January 2026 9:54 am
To: Liz Jones <liz.jones@swrb.govt.nz>; Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>; Scott McLew <Scott.McLew@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Caitlin

Thanks for raising this potential issue. As Liz notes below, it is more of a caveat in checking that the first year has gone well, with a light-touch check at the end of the first year prior to full confirmation.

But if the manner in which we are wording our confirmation is calling their funding approval into question, it may be that we need to address this in wording and approach so this does not happen with future prescription reports, of which there maybe others this year. I would appreciate speaking to you if you are free, as I have 10-11am free this morning and can send an email invite if you wish?

Otherwise I am free Monday as well.

Ngā mihi
Lin

From: Liz Jones <liz.jones@swrb.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 23 January 2026 9:24 am
To: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>; Scott McLew <Scott.McLew@swrb.govt.nz>; Lin Ayo <Lin.Ayo@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification
Importance: High

Good morning, Caitlin, good to hear from you and Happy New Year.

I have cc'd in our Registrar, Scott and our Deputy Registrar Education, Lin who runs the prescription process for our qualifications.

I suspect they put in a caveat as it is a new programme. Also noting that we do not want to jeopardise funding a full programme in any way – so yes, I think a conversation would be best to tease that out.

I am not involved in the detail of this side of our business – so will dip out of further correspondence – unless you feel it would be useful as we know each other????

Many thanks Caitlin and Scott/Lin over to you.

Liz

From: Caitlin Kilborn <Caitlin.Kilborn@tec.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 23 January 2026 8:54 am
To: Liz Jones <liz.jones@swrb.govt.nz>
Cc: Conor Broderick <Conor.Broderick@tec.govt.nz>
Subject: Urgent advice re approval of new social work qualification

Kia ora Liz,

I hope you had a great break and are having a good start to the new year!

I'm reaching out as some of my colleagues have asked for advice/context regarding the approval of a new 3-year social qualification from the Bethlehem Tertiary Institute. Their request to us for funding is unique as the approval information from yourselves notes they are approved for one year, with a review to take place next year. It's unusual for us to fund a 3-year qualification that only has approval from the regulator for one year, so I wanted to reach out and see if you were able to provide more context for this to help us reach a solution on funding.

It might be helpful to meet to talk through the context a bit. I'm only working a couple of hours this morning, so if you had time on Monday that would be really helpful as we need to sort it quite urgently.

I am free on Monday between 11.30-2.30 and 3-4pm if any of those times work for you. And of course if you aren't quite the right person to talk to, I would greatly appreciate it if you could send this on to whoever is!

Thank you.

Ngā mihi,

Caitlin Kilborn MA ([she/her](#))

Kaiwhakahaere Rōpū Putanga Ākonga me te Haumi | Team Manager, Learner and Investment Outcomes

Ngā Aramahi me te Hoahoa Haumi | **Careers and Investment Design**
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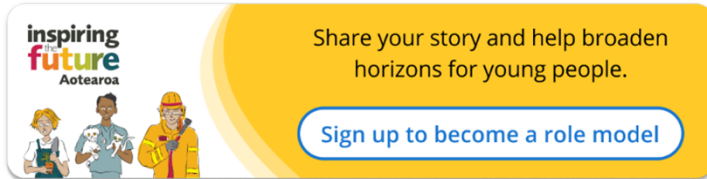
I work a nine-day fortnight and am off every other Friday

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The banner features the logo 'inspiring the future Aotearoa' on the left, with three stylized human figures below it. The background is yellow with a white curved shape on the right. Text on the right reads 'Share your story and help broaden horizons for young people.' Below this is a blue button with white text that says 'Sign up to become a role model'.