

Te Reo Ākonga i Tēnei Wā

Work-based Learner Voice Current State

**Pūrongo whakarāpopoto
Summary report June 2022**



Te Pūkenga

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Whakarāpopototanga | Executive summary and insights

This report provides insights from a stocktake conducted with Work Based Learning (WBL) learners and WBL support staff. The stocktake helps Te Pūkenga understand how learner voices are captured and used in the WBL/Transitional Industry Training Organisations (TITO) sector.

The stocktake consisted of online workshops/interviews with WBL learners and WBL/TITO staff who support learner voice, plus an online survey for learners and staff unable to attend workshops.

The key questions asked sought to identify, scope and understand:

- common enablers and barriers to collecting, sharing and responding to learners' voices
- opportunities to better enable learner voice
- types of mechanisms used to collect learner voices, how they are used, feedback mechanisms and response rates

Various mechanisms and taxonomies exist across the WBL Business Divisions and the TITOs involved in the stocktake within the above areas, including reasons for capturing learner voice and the capturing and sharing of those learner voices.



Key insights from the stocktake show:

- **The importance of consistent learner and Training Advisor relationship** — The relationship between learners and their Training Advisors (TA) is an essential element of learner success and feedback. Field-based staff who support learners have a variety of job titles, roles and functions across the WBL and TITO network, including (but not limited to) Training Advisor, Training Assessor, Field Specialist or Customer Service Account Manager. The function of these roles has an extended and varied scope, from gaining learner feedback through one-on-one discussions, assessments and moderation, through to solely pastoral care and support roles which include gaining feedback through one-on-one discussions. Learners expressed a desire to have regular visits from their TA or equivalent, with some expressing concern when unable to do so.
- **There exists an opportunity for learner connection and leadership** — Each work-based learner is a cohort of one spread out across the motu. While there is no current formal process for learner leadership within the WBL network that was engaged with, 75% of WBL learners surveyed expressed interest in receiving further information regarding the Learner Leadership Group and other opportunities.
- **The need for a clear view of how learner voice is actioned** — Mechanisms, data requirements, process for analysing, sharing and actioning data from learner surveys is varied across the WBL business divisions. Despite mechanisms often being in place to report back on survey results and actions to learners, some of the surveyed learners reported that they do not feel well informed about how their voice is being actioned.
- **The need for accessible technology and language** — Not all learners have access to technology, the internet or mobile phones. They may have limited data, or limited technology capability. This must be considered in creating future learner voice feedback mechanisms. There are also reports of terminology being a barrier to learning as learners find some of the language used is difficult to understand.
- **That learners consider themselves as employees first** — Employers play a large part in the success of learners. Learners predominately view themselves as employees first and learners second, with their training agreements being tripartite. As such, the workplace is a strong component in that partnership as the provider for the learning.

Pūtake o tēnei pūrongo | Purpose of this report

This report summarises the engagement that was undertaken, to better understand how the WBL learner voice is currently captured and used in order to improve learner outcomes and experience within work-based learning delivery, and to demonstrate how the feedback loop is closed with those learners.

The insights from this research will be used to help inform recommendations and next steps to improve the collection, use and influence of learner voices across the network. It will also identify enablers, barriers and opportunities around national representation of work-based staff and learners within the Learner Leadership Group (LLG) and the Learner Voice Staff Network Forum.



Huarahi i whāia | Approach

Two different approaches were used to maximise responses:

1. Online Zoom Workshops

- All workshops were conducted online and were no less than 60 minutes long.
- Interviews followed a similar format and approach, and all interviewees were asked the same questions.
- Learner and staff interviews were conducted separately.
- The times of the online workshops for WBL learners were arranged to support the learners' work commitments, including engagement sessions out of work hours from 6pm to 7pm and from 12 noon to 1pm to allow for lunch-time engagement, and a 2pm to 3pm slot to allow for shift-worker engagement.
- Ten WBL learner interviews were conducted using online workshops across two of the four current WBL business divisions.
- Learner participants included apprentice and trainee WBL learners, including WBL learners who were training advisors or tutors at other Tertiary Training Organisations (TEOs) supplementary to their WBL or TITO of study.
- Staff participants varied across interviews with roles ranging from senior leadership through to learner survey coordinators, learner support and training advisors or similar.
- Field-based staff who support learners have a variety of job titles, roles and functions across the WBL and TITO network, including (but not limited to) Training Advisor, Training Assessor, Field Specialist or Customer Service Account Manager. For the purpose of this report and supporting documents, these kaimahi (staff) will be referred to as 'Training Advisors' or TA's.
- Individual workshops were held for each WBL business division and TITO.
- The staff of each respective WBL business division or TITO attended these online workshops.
- More than 70 staff from three WBL business divisions and one TITO attended the online workshops.
- One WBL business division requested a second online workshop for an additional 60 minutes.
- Interviews were recorded, to provide accuracy as to the insights of the summary report only.

2. Online Survey

- An online survey was made available for both WBL learners and WBL learner support staff
- The questions from the learner and staff surveys were used as the base questions for the online workshops.
- 110 learners completed the 'Work-Based Learner Voice Survey', with a typical time spent to complete this of five minutes.
- 60 learner support staff completed the 'Work-Based Learner Support Staff Survey', with a typical time spent to complete this of 10 minutes.
- The survey invitation was communicated to staff and learners via the WBL business division or TITOs Learning Management System (LMS) or internal communications.
- Of the learners surveyed online, 10% were unsure if they were studying as an apprentice or as a trainee.
- Of all learners surveyed online, 10% were unsure of their level of study.

Ngā here | Limitations

- Questioning focused on a general overview to better understand current state and learner voice mechanisms, rather than a focus on underserved learner representation or learner voice mechanisms to elicit voice from underserved learner groups.
- With access limited to the participants noted in the 'Approach' segment of this summary, this stocktake is not representative of all trainee and apprentice learners. This stocktake included three WBL Business Divisions and one TITO.
- The voice of the Managed Apprentice (MA), a work-based learner who is to complete their study via an ITP rather than WBL or TITO, has not been captured in either the ITP or WBL stocktake.
- The voice of the employer has not been captured within this WBL learner voice stocktake. • Despite this stocktake including engagement from a limited number of work-based learners, the kōrero was rich, meaningful and provided valuable insights.

Sector comment:

We have 15,000 learners and to us, this equates to 15,000 cohorts of one.



Ngā mea hāpai, ngā taupā me ngā huarahi i tohua | Key enablers, barriers and opportunities identified

Enablers to collecting, sharing, and responding to learner voice

Common enablers to collecting, sharing and responding to learner voice were raised through the workshop interviews and surveys. These include:

- **A strong relationship between learners and their Training Advisor (TA), Field Specialist (FS) or Customer Service Account Manager (CSAM)** which includes feedback through one-on-one discussions.
- **Discussions with other WBL or TITO staff** though specific roles and/or positions were not identified.
- **Feedback mechanisms** through Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Canvas, Totara, Moodle etc.
- **Completion of surveys**, whether end-of-programme or course, learner satisfaction survey, withdrawal, or year-end survey.
- **Peer-to-peer**, often created through meetings during block weeks of learning and with contact maintained after the course has ended.
- **Complaint processes** which vary across each WBL or TITO, from conversations with a Training Advisor, Field Specialist or Customer Service Account Manager, 0800 phone number or formal process.

Example of current practice for complaints

- Customer Service Account Managers (CSAMs) are field staff who offer support and guidance to trainees and apprentices – they do not assess. If there is an issue that requires escalation, this process will be via the following hierarchy:
 - Area Managers
 - National Field Team Manager
 - National Key Account Manager
 - General Manager Customer Engagement
 - ELT
- In addition to the above eco-system, the WBL Division also has an 0800 number, and while their marketing team may receive some of issued-related communications, the process above would be followed.

Barriers to collecting, sharing, and responding to learner voice

Common barriers to collecting, sharing, and responding to learner voice raised through the interviews include:

- **Limited access to a Training Advisor, Field Specialist or Customer Service Account Manager.** This leads to poor communication, visibility and accountability in relation to the response to the learner voice within current learner voice structures and systems.
- **The voice of underserved learners within current systems and structures is limited,** including representation in learner leadership roles.
- **Accessibility barriers for learners wanting to provide feedback.** Not all learners have access to technology, the internet or mobile phones. They may have limited data, or limited technology capability.
- **Fear of repercussions** from either employers or WBL / TITO staff.
- **Lack of visibility of action** from feedback given prior, preventing the provision of further feedback.
- **Feeling pressured** to take surveys or give feedback.
- **Negative responses from Training Advisor, Field Specialist or Customer Service Account Manager** towards feedback being given.
- **Lack of formal process** or a lack of clarity as to how to provide feedback.

Key opportunities identified to enable effective work-based learner voice

Key opportunities to better enable effective work-based learner voice through this process included:

- **Create and make visible opportunities for learners to connect and share** through industry-related and demographic-related networks and a variety of channels. This would enable and support peer to peer connection through a diverse range of learner and study groups.
- **Capture work-based learner voices consistently and safely,** and ensure that transparent and robust learner feedback loops are in place at all levels of the organisation.
- **Ensure a sustainable ratio of field-based staff** to learners in order to best enable regular learner engagement and support.
- **Enable the co-creation and provision of induction, training and support** material for WBL front-facing staff to ensure consistency and collaboration across the network, which is aligned to learner aspirations.
- **Create opportunities to connect work-based learner representation with Te Pūkenga Learner Leadership Group** with clear and structured roles, representative of diverse learners and clear processes to escalate learner voice to the appropriate level for WBL business division responses.
- **Train and resource work-based learner leaders appropriately, so that they are enabled and empowered** to represent the work-based learner voice effectively.

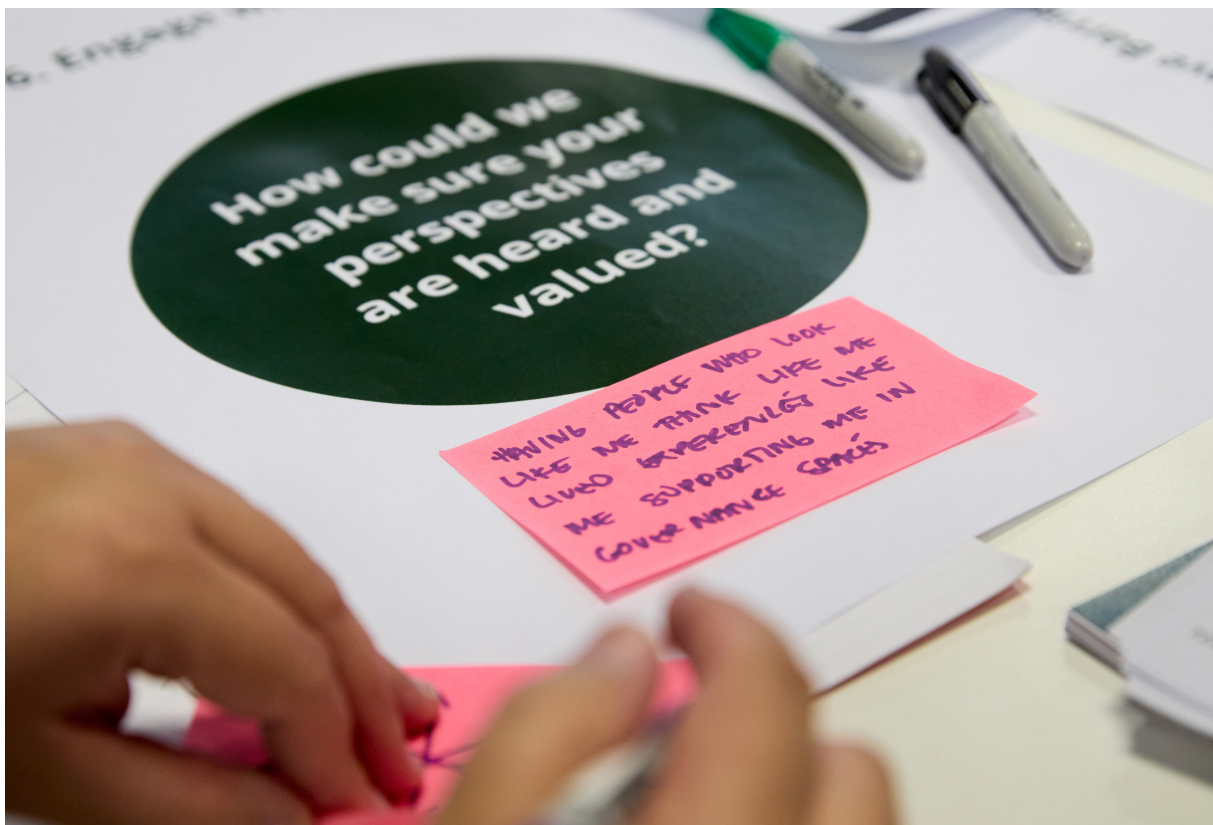
Closing the feedback loop

While some WBLs or TITOs have formal processes to close the feedback loop with learners, some learners expressed the view that it was not clear if processes were always followed.

Learners reported that they felt unsure as to how their respective feedback loops were closed.

A learners view on the importance of closing the feedback loop

“Show me a time where you have listened to an apprentice or learner – why not bring all apprentices on-site together for just 10 mins, 10 mins off work is an incentive in a way. If you can give an example of one time where you have provided tangible evidence that you have followed through on learner feedback – such as providing girls’ toilets on-site - that would be a tangible example of how we’ve been listened to, and we can see it.”



Ngā otinga | Findings

The following sections describe and detail the various mechanisms and initiatives used across the subsidiary network to gather, share and respond to learner voice.

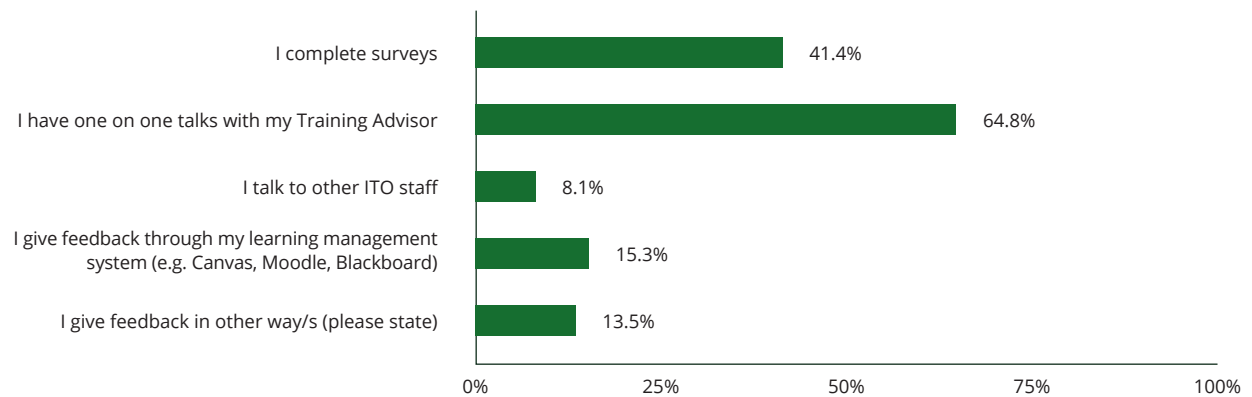
Mechanisms to collect the learner voice

Surveys are a common method used by WBL business divisions to gain feedback from learners about their experiences, both academic and relating to their overall satisfaction.

Chart 1: The charts below show how trainees and apprentices provide feedback to their training provider from both a learner and staff perspective.

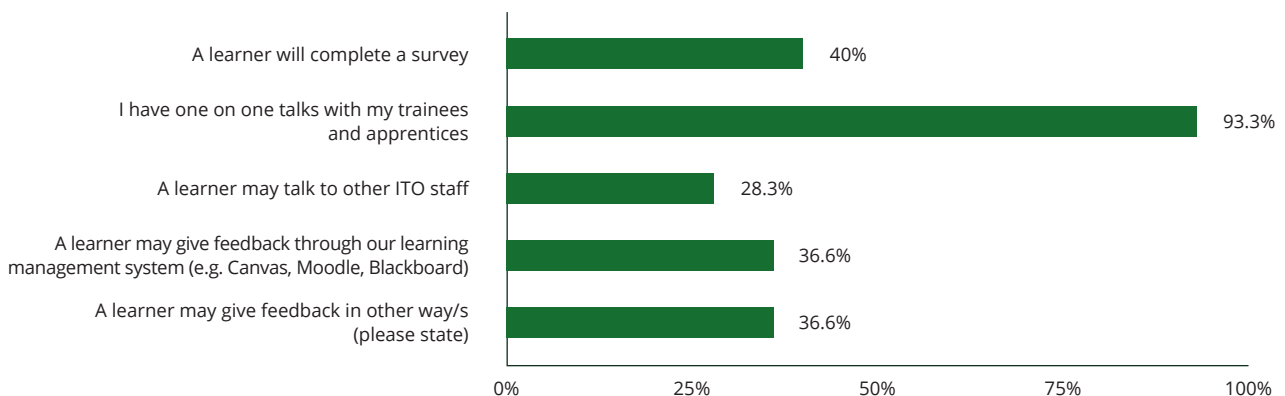
How do you give feedback about your learning experience to your ITO? (Select all that apply)

Remember, your learning experience is anything to do with completing your unit standards, it's not about your experience as an employee in your workplace.



How do your trainees and apprentices give feedback about their learning experience with your ITO? (Select all that apply)

For the purpose of this survey, learning experience is anything to do with the completion of unit standards, it's not about their experience as an employee within the workplace.



Work-based learner surveys

The process for analysing, sharing and actioning data from learner surveys is varied across the different types of surveys and the WBL business divisions.

- Some WBL business divisions utilise their learning management system to collect survey results from trainees and apprentices, while others rely on email or the training advisor to collect responses during site visits.
- The TITO that participated in this study has introduced additional surveys for 2022:
 - A withdrawal survey to ask learners if there was anything that could have been done that maybe could have resulted in a better outcome.
 - A survey for recently-started trainees to find out about their experience to date to learn about:
 - How they [the learner] have found their engagement with the TITO touchpoints
 - Are they [the TITO] giving them [the learner] the information they need
 - What do they/don't they [the learner] understand
 - How can the TITO improve their onboarding
- Overall, learner survey engagement varied from once-per-year learner satisfaction surveys, to surveys conducted at the end of each course or block course.
- 44% of learners reported completing surveys as the mechanism to give feedback about their learning experience.
- 40% of staff reported the completion of surveys as a mechanism for their learners to give feedback about their learning experience.
- 59% of learners signalled that allowing them to complete a survey in their own time would encourage them to provide feedback about their learning experience.
- Despite mechanisms often being in place to report back on survey results and actions to learners, some learners reported that they do not feel well informed about how their voice is being actioned.

One-on-ones with Training Advisor/Assessor or Customer Service Account Manager (CSAM)

Although surveys are a common tool used by WBL business divisions, a one-on-one on-site visit from a Training Advisor, Field Specialist or Customer Service Account Manager was identified as the most important feedback loop. Across all learners, WBL business divisions or TITOs interviewed in an online workshop or surveyed online, the one-on-one mechanism elicited the most comments.

- 65% of learners surveyed reported having one-on-one meetings with their training advisor or equivalent as a way of providing feedback on their learning experience.
- 57% of learners surveyed stated that talking to their training advisor during on-site visits would enable them to provide feedback on their learning experience.
- This was supported by 93% of staff respondents who reported having one-on-one meetings with their learners to enable the provision of feedback.

Feedback through a Learning Management System (LMS) such as Canvas, Totara, Moodle or Blackboard

- 37% of Training Advisors, Field Specialists or Customer Service Account Managers surveyed, reported learners using their LMS as a mechanism to provide feedback.
- 15% of learners reported use of LMS as their preferred method of providing feedback.

Discussions with other WBL/TITO staff

- A small number of responses indicated that engagement would or may take place with 'other' WBL or TITO staff. Staff roles included those at the helpdesk, the assessor (other than the TA) or a TITO manager.

Example of staff feedback:

"Most feedback provided to me as a TA from any learner struggling to complete their apprenticeship — unless they have a diagnosed learning difficulty such as dyslexia — centers around their inability to understand the terminology that we use. When I am going on-site to offer support, I am mainly required to re-word the terminology that we use in our resources."

Response rates

Not all staff interviewed had access to the response rates for surveys and those that did have the information estimated current response rates to be between 20% to 80%, depending on the style of survey delivery.

Survey response rates for underserved learner groups were not discussed in the interviews.

Example of current practice – staff feedback:

“We need to think about how we capture the learner voice moving forward, as we have created an online system but if the learner doesn’t engage with it, we cannot engage with the learner.”

Factors contributing to low engagement in surveys

- When learners must give feedback through their learning management system such as Canvas, Moodle, or Blackboard. Learners prefer to talk directly with their Training Advisor, Field Specialist or Customer Service Account Manager.

Learner comment (learner studying at Level 5, their team studying at Level 2 – 4):

“The approach is scary for some of my team, and they are scared of titles, like job titles. Many don’t know how to complete a survey and need to have it broken down and simplified.”

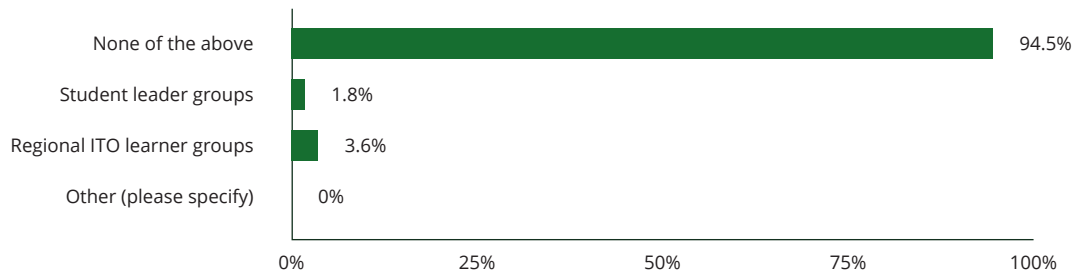
Staff comment:

“We’ve set up a one stop-system [Canvas], but if you can’t manage the system, then you will struggle.”

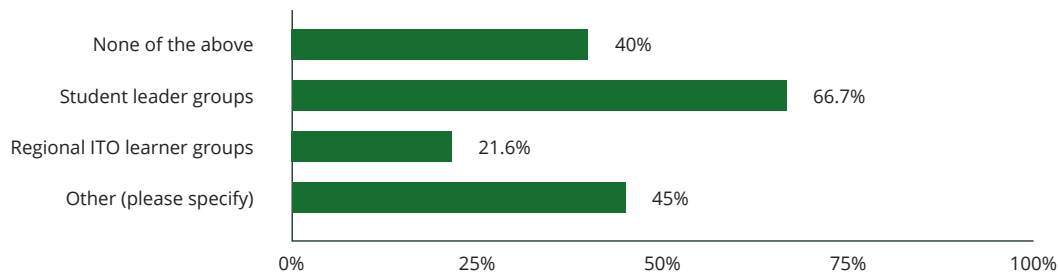
Formal learner groups

Learners and staff were asked if there was provision for WBL/TITO network formal learner groups. As with previous responses, a consistent reply was evident across the network.

Do you belong to any formal groups organised by your ITO such as: (select all that apply)



Does your organisation provide and/or support any informal groups such as: (select all that apply)



Student leader groups

- 1% of learners surveyed identified as belonging to a formal student leader group.

Regional ITO learner groups

- Regional ITO learner groups were predominantly identified both in the staff and learner online workshops and in the online survey as a learner group. Through further discussion, it was clarified that these groups are 'informal' and operate at the instigation of a training advisor or equivalent for the WBL/TITO surveyed.

No formal learner groups

- In most cases, for the WBL and TITO engagement within this stocktake, there are currently no formal learner groups.

Other learner groups

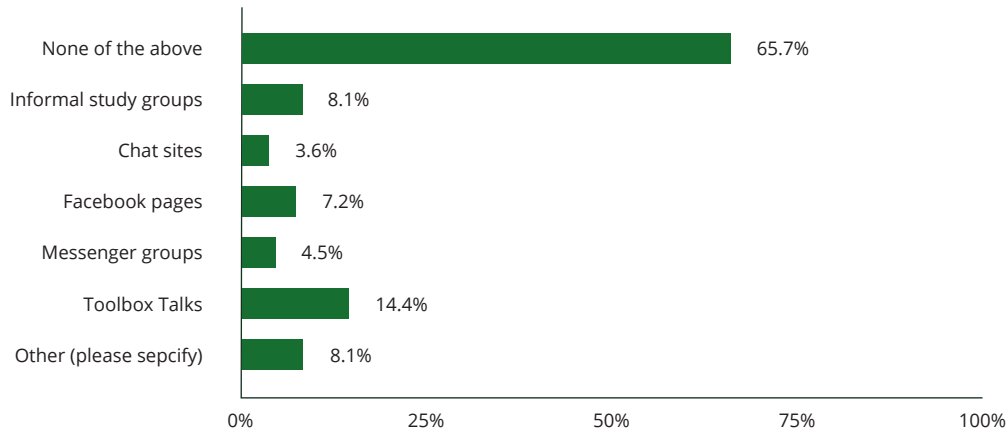
Responses about other learner groups included (but were not limited to):

- Learner representatives were sometimes sought during product development
- Online study or numeracy and literacy groups existed
- Learner representation was enabled on a number of industry working groups at one WBL.

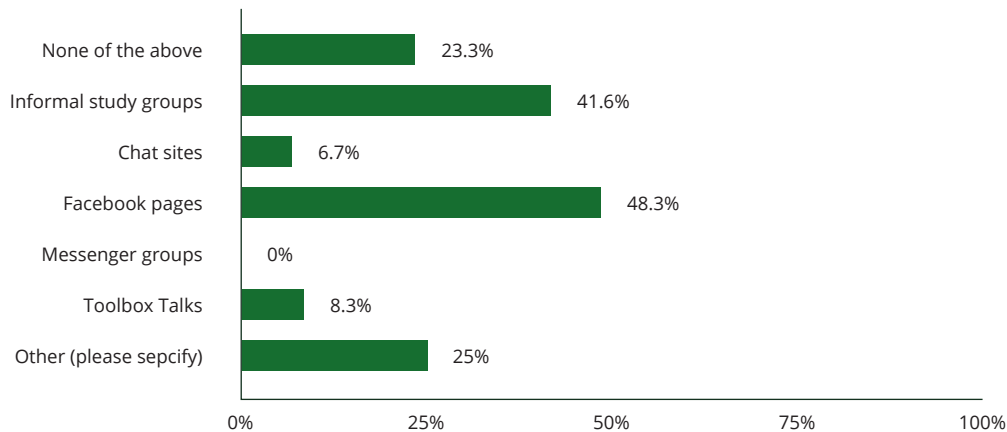
Informal learner groups

When asked about informal learner groups, both learners and staff responses showed a stronger connection to this mechanism of engagement.

Do you belong to any informal groups that connect you to other learners such as: (select all that apply)



Does your organisation provide and/or support any informal groups such as: (select all that apply)



Informal study groups

- These groups appeared in the formal group structure, though upon further kōrero, it was discovered that these groups were informal in their delivery mode. These groups are dependent on the training advisor and, therefore there is inconsistency across the network.
- Some WBL have 'study hubs'. These are informal and not used to gather formal feedback. Study Hubs may be specific to new learners, targeted groups or region- specific.
- One staff group confirmed that there were study groups that existed within companies/ employers. While these groups are formal within the company, they were informal for the WBL. It was identified that some of the trainees get together and form their own study groups on weekends.
- Despite the inconsistencies, the formation of groups can be (and are) created and individualised to meet a need – such as literacy, numeracy or general support.

'Toolbox Talks' or similar

- Toolbox Talks (or similar) were specific to a particular WBL or TITO through their learning management system portal. Identified as a mechanism by both learners and staff alike, restrictions within this mode sits within any accessibility limitations.

Social media

- Chat sites (including MS Teams), Facebook pages and Messenger groups were identified as mechanisms that connect learners.
- There is an inconsistent approach to Facebook across the WBL/TITO network. Some within the network use the channel as a mechanism to connect with learners, or keep learners informed, while others rely on their learning management system only.
- Despite the inconsistent approach across WBL/TITOs, learners view the ability to connect via Messenger or social media as an important connection.

None of the above

- Elicited the largest response rate amongst learners surveyed online.

Other learner groups

- The greatest response from learners – both within the workshop and within additional survey engagement - was peer-to-peer connections.
- Examples from responses are as follows:
 - I talk to other apprentices at work on the same course
 - I connect with other company trainees and mentors
 - I help the other apprentices if they don't understand or need guidance
 - I speak with a colleague who is on the same course and journey.

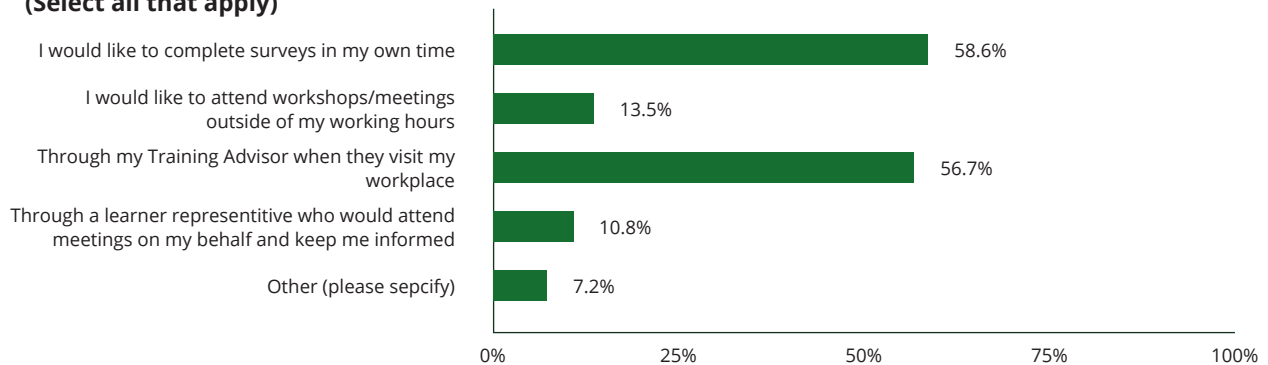
Online workshop learner comment:

“When I first started, I felt alone because I live remotely. Going to the block weeks gave me the opportunity to tap into different skills from other workplaces that were much bigger than where I worked, through talking to people in the same role.”

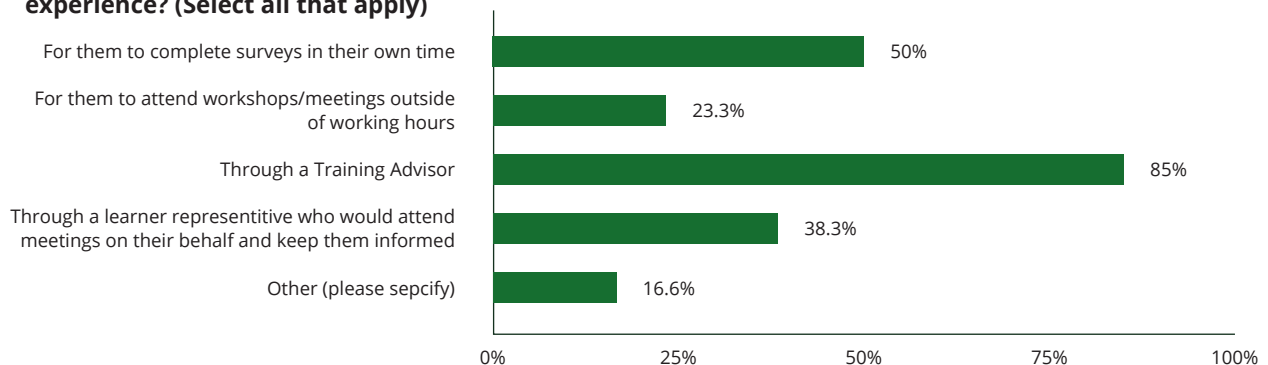
Mechanisms to encourage learner feedback

When asked what would encourage or make it easier to give feedback on learning experiences, both learners and staff responses showed a strong connection to existing mechanisms of engagement.

What would encourage you or make it easier for you to give feedback on your learning experience? (Select all that apply)



What would encourage your learner or make it easier for them to give feedback on their learning experience? (Select all that apply)



- 59% of learners questioned preferred completing surveys in their own time and 57% of responses indicated that encouragement would best given through their training advisor or equivalent when they visit their workplace.
- By comparison, 50% of staff questioned, believed that learners would prefer to complete surveys in their own time and 85% of staff responded they felt that encouragement should be through a training advisor or equivalent.

Responses to 'other' mechanisms or encouragement included (but were not limited to):

- Learner – “The other apprentices at work or in formal training.”
- Learner – “Access to industry experts who are willing to help trainees via email or voice.”
- Staff – “During work hours as long as it is structured well.”
- Staff – “Embedding a questionnaire into online learning that must be completed to access the next step.”
- Staff – “Giving feedback is fine as long as there is a mechanism to make use of and act on the feedback.”

Mechanisms that discourage learner feedback

There was a greater variation to learner and staff responses when asked what would discourage the giving of feedback on learning experience. Learners' responses were variants of a similar theme, though many staff responses expanded on these themes.

Examples of the responses are listed below (but are not limited to):

Factors that discourage the giving of feedback

Learner comments:

- "Judgement for sharing your thoughts and personal opinions would discourage me from giving feedback. Not that I have experienced this yet."
- "Not being heard or nothing being done about problems I may be having."
- "Computer-based feedback. In-person is best."
- "If the feedback is received by my workplace."
- "Training advisors telling me this is just how the system works."
- "Not being heard."
- "Not knowing where to go and who to get in contact with."
- "Time."
- "I don't really get discouraged, it's just anxiety that stops me sometimes."

Staff comments:

- "The process of giving feedback needs to be incentivised and learners need to be assured that feedback is confidential."
- "Most of my learners barely have time to complete the learning, let alone give feedback. There could be dedicated time to do this."
- "Peer pressure. Backlash from employer."
- "Time and technology. A lot of the workforce in our sector are older and have very little time or patience for technology. They are not interested in on-line stuff as they don't understand it."
- "Generally, most apprentices want to do their +40 hours per week and go home. I don't think that they see any value in doing surveys unless they have a negative comment."
- "Fear of repercussions in their training. Their sense of self is important. If something is not working well, often the learner will assume the problem is with them."

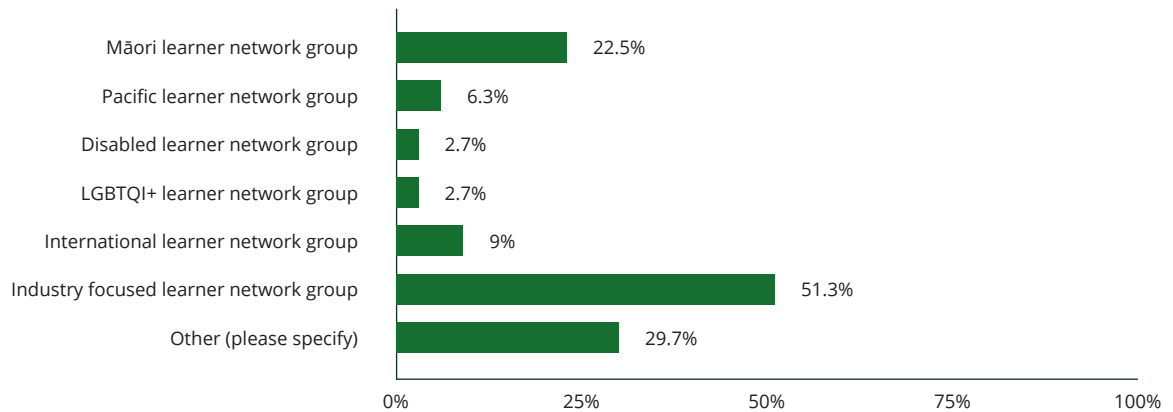
Online workshop staff comment:

- "The big part of the feedback we're hearing is that there's not enough learning support. They [the learners] don't know how to go about doing particular things, and that is because our training agreements are tripartite, so the workplace has got a strong component in that partnership around providing the learning, and if they don't get the learning from the workplace, learners are then reluctant to say anything because that's the workplace and that is a power imbalance."

Connection through learner groups

Learners were asked if they were interested in joining specific learner groups should they be made available to them. Of all learners surveyed:

Would you be interested in joining any of the following learner network groups if they were available? (Select all that apply)



- 51% of learners indicated interest in being part of an industry-focused network group.
- 23% of learners indicated interest in being part of a Māori learner network group.
- 9% of learners indicated interest in being part of an international learner network group.
- 6% of learners indicated interest in being part of a Pacific learner network group.
- 3% of learners indicated interest in being part of a disabled learner network group.
- 3% of learners indicated interest in being part of a LGBTQI+ learner network group.
- Responses to 'other' included but was not limited to):
 - "Women in trades."
 - "None."
 - "Other local students that are doing the same thing."

Providing open-ended spaces for additional feedback

Additional space was offered to all those completing an online survey to provide additional narrative to their survey. This was an open-ended response provision, with a high text limit (500 characters). The list below shows examples of learner and staff responses.

Question: Is there any other feedback regarding learner voice that you would like to share?

Learner comments:

- "I would like to see the Training Advisor more."
- "Frequent learner updates from the provider would greatly be appreciated and transparency if they are unable to fulfil their obligations and make provisions because of that."
- "I would like to thank you for your care of learners."
- "I don't feel like I have one."
- "At the moment it's the material that I struggle with sometimes. Mostly in regard to working it in with the exams."
- "Love learning new things - I'll never stop learning. I've gained so much knowledge from my workplace and though Connexis. I'm dyslexic so it's hard to understand words, but I found a way of making it work for me through asking for more pictures and a lot of questions."
- "I find I learn better with face-to-face learning so would like to see learning modules set up with an online work session with tutor."
- "Online information should still be able to be read and used after passing the assessment."

Staff comments:

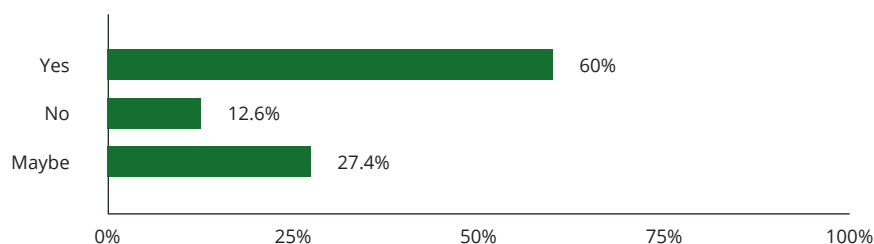
- "Understand the target audience and focus on the issues that affect them. Generic communication loses peoples interest and so they do not see the point of further engagement."
- "The forestry trainees are not classroom-based and so can feel a disconnect from the academic side of the training pathway. Tend to be very practically focused. Feedback may need to be embedded as much as possible within a practical training plan."
- "There needs to be open pathways of communication between all parts of the organisation, not just between learners and their Training Advisors or Account Managers. Online assessors need to be more available and open to contact by the learners. The learners would feel more included and in control of their training. It would enable the assessors to understand the type and level of feedback a learner needs when doing this level of study."
- "The learner has always had a voice. However, it cannot be heard without proper 'receptors', and is not useful without the proper perception. The 'medium' in the current model is 'muddy' because of poorly designed (or outdated) modes of feedback, employer influence, and the delivery organisation's viewing it as a 'tick box' exercise."

Future state — Opportunities to enable learner voice

An additional survey was provided to learners who participated in the 'Work-Based Learner Voice Survey' to further understand how they would like to create networks and see the learner voice captured, and to gauge WBL learners' willingness to receive information on learner governance opportunities.

- The time taken to complete the additional survey was an average of two minutes.
- 85% of the respondents from the first learner survey completed the additional survey.

Would you be interested in joining an online group of learners across the country who are studying the same qualification as you?



- 68% of those who responded indicated they would be interested in joining an online group of learners across the motu, studying the same or similar qualifications.
- Learners were asked how they would like to remain in contact with other learners, and were able to select all responses preferred by them:
 - 59% indicated a preference for contact via a Facebook page
 - 49% indicated a preference for contact via regular (monthly) online meetings
 - 45% indicated a preference for contact via an interaction occurring through their learning management system
 - 17% indicated a preference for 'other' contact which included alternative online platforms or email.
 - A limited number included face-to-face meetings.
- 60% of WBL respondents indicated an interest in receiving more information from Te Pūkenga regarding a role on the Learner Leadership Group.
- A further 27% indicated they 'may be' interested in receiving more information from Te Pūkenga regarding a role on the Learner Leadership Group.

As a result of the above responses, the Learner Whānau Engagement (LWE) team invited Expressions of Interest from work-based learners interested in joining the network Learner Leadership Group.

Future state — Opportunities for learners to connect

Consistent feedback throughout the engagement sessions highlighted a work-based learners' willingness to connect. Work-based learners indicated they felt a sense of isolation and sometimes separation from work colleagues. Whilst work-based learners are employees, some learners indicated that an employer may not also see them as a learner, creating a sense of detachment.

The ability for a work-based learner to connect to other learners – especially those in the same field of study – promoted a sense of support and wellbeing. Those learners who participated in block courses as part of their programme indicated a sense of comradery that extended beyond the duration of the block course in-turn creating a peer-to-peer support network external to the WBL or TITO.

A minimal number of trainees or apprentices have access to block courses within their programme, or the ability to connect with learners completing the same field of study. Most informal study groups were arranged in a regional or specific genre (i.e., at the instigation of their Training Advisor or equivalent).

Upon further discussions with WBL external to those surveyed, loneliness and the need for connection received the highest responses from work-based learners.



Te Pūkenga