



# A profile of learners in the ITP sector

This document profiles learners in the institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITP) sector, and highlights key changes since 2008.

## Profile of learners in the ITP sector in 2017

Table 1 provides key statistics for learners enrolled at ITPs in 2017. It compares these against the characteristics of learners in other Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) and against the volume of delivery in terms of equivalent full-time students (EFTS)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 1: 2017 ITP learner demographics**

	Learners	Volume of delivery (EFTS)	% for ITP sector (Learners)	% for ITP sector (EFTS)	% for all TEOs excluding ITPs (Learners)
<b>Gender</b>					
Female	91,411	38,831	50%	51%	59%
Male	89,779	37,052	50%	49%	41%
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
NZ European	108,634	40,859	60%	54%	52%
Asian	33,068	17,742	18%	23%	25%
Māori	35,950	15,532	20%	20%	20%
Pasifika	14,368	6,916	8%	9%	9%
Other	4,163	1,986	2%	3%	3%
<b>Age</b>					
17 years and under	16,584	4,829	9%	6%	4%
18-19 years	18,589	12,187	10%	16%	18%
20-24 years	39,608	22,261	22%	29%	34%
25-39 years	60,575	24,513	33%	32%	27%
40 years and over	45,834	12,093	25%	16%	17%
<b>Domestic v International</b>					
Domestic	160,560	63,213	89%	83%	87%
International	20,707	12,670	11%	17%	13%
<b>Total ITP sector</b>	<b>181,190</b>	<b>75,883</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: ethnicity data will not sum to total as it is possible to belong to more than one group. "International" includes full-fee paying international students and NZAID and Commonwealth scholarship students (who comprise 0.5% of international students). "Domestic" includes all other funding sources.

<sup>1</sup> One EFTS equates to the student workload that would normally be carried out in one year by a student enrolled full time.

Table 1 shows that compared with learners at other TEOs, ITPs have:

- an even split of learners by gender. This differs from the rest of the tertiary education sector where the proportion of female learners is higher (59 percent).
- more New Zealand European learners (60 percent compared to 52 percent for other TEOs) and fewer Asian learners (18 percent compared to 25 percent for other TEOs). ITPs have about the same proportion of Māori (20 percent) and Pasifika (8 percent) learners as the rest of the tertiary education sector.
- more learners aged 17 years and under (9 percent compared to 4 percent for other TEOs) and more learners aged over 25 years (58 percent compared to 44 percent for other TEOs). In particular, one-quarter of learners in the ITP sector are over 40 years of age (compared to 17 percent for other TEOs). However, only 32 percent of learners in the ITP sector are in the 18-24 year old age group, compared to 52 percent for the rest of the tertiary education sector.
- a slightly lower proportion of international learners (11 percent) than the rest of the tertiary education sector (13 percent)

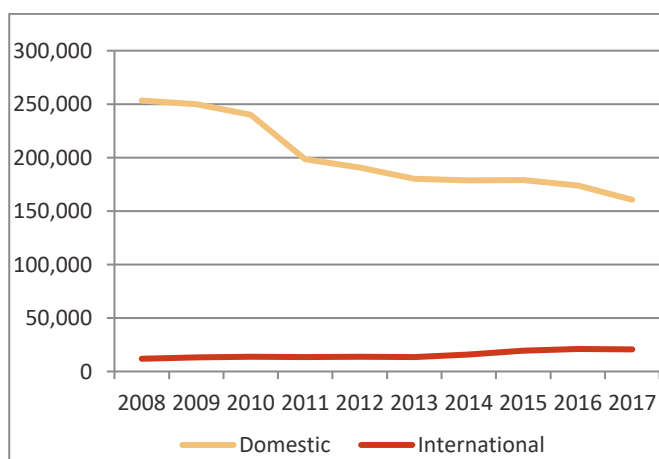
### Number of domestic learners in the ITP sector has declined

After a big drop between 2008 and 2011, the number of domestic learners in the ITP sector continued to fall steadily over the six years to 2017 (Figure 1). There are now 38,000 (or 19 percent) fewer domestic learners enrolled in the ITP sector than in 2011. Over the same period, the number of domestic EFTS in the ITP sector fell by 11,000, or 15 percent (Figure 2). The difference between the decline in learners compared to EFTS is due to fewer learners enrolling in short qualifications and fewer learners studying part-time.

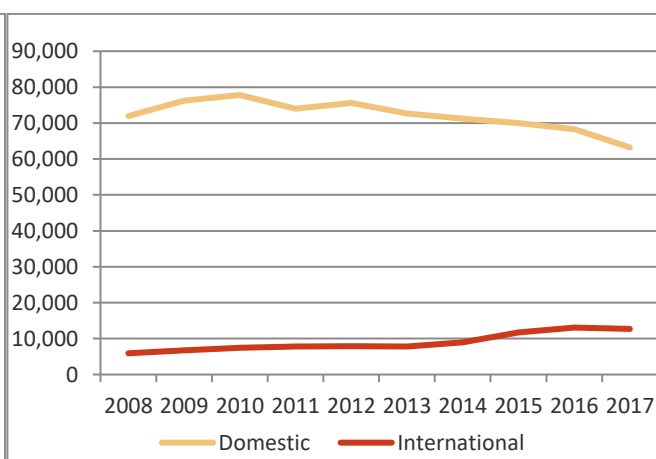
### This has been partially offset by an increase in international learners

After remaining relatively steady between 2009 and 2012, the number of international learners increased by 57 percent albeit off a low base, between 2013 and 2016. International EFTS increased by 67 percent over the same 2013 to 2016 period. Delivery to international learners now accounts for 17 percent of total delivery in the ITP sector, up from 10 percent in 2013.

**Figure 1: Domestic and international ITP learners**



**Figure 2: Domestic and international ITP EFTS**

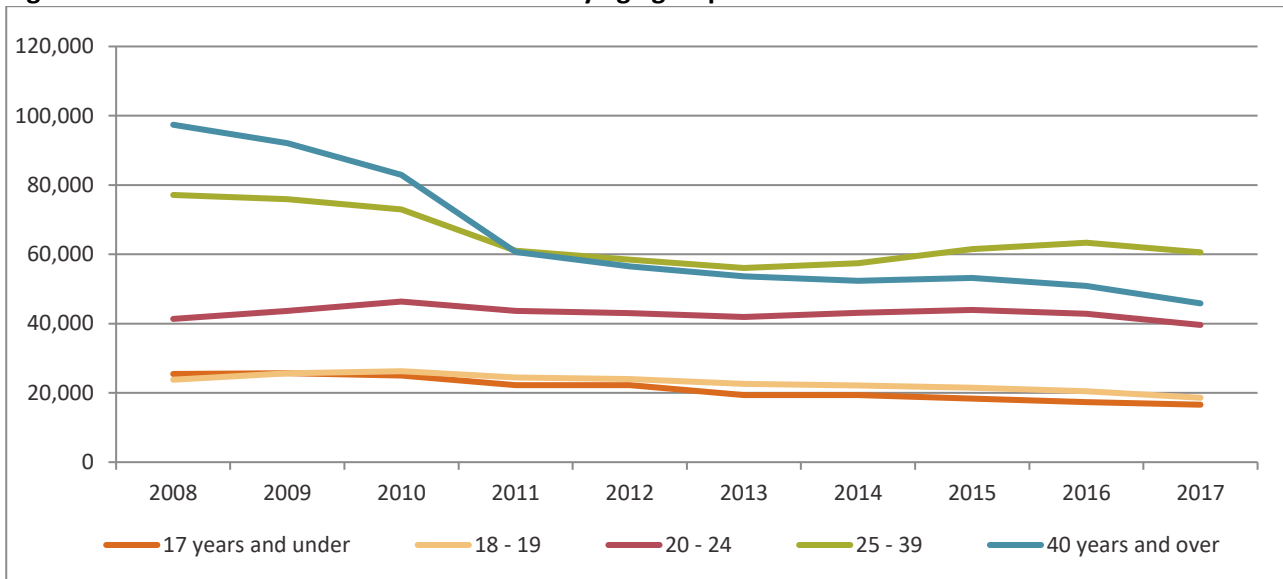


### Both younger and older age groups have declined significantly

The number of learners aged 17 years and under in the ITP sector has fallen by 25 percent (or 6,000 learners) since 2011 (Figure 3). A similar decline has occurred in the 18 to 19 year old age group, where numbers have fallen by 24 percent (or 6,000 learners). The number of learners aged 40 years and over has also fallen by 24 percent (or 15,000 learners) since 2011.

The decline in learners aged 20 to 24 years has been relatively smaller (down 9 percent since 2011); while the number of learners aged 25 to 39 years in the ITP sector in 2017 is similar to 2011. The 25 to 39 age group showed growth over the 2013 to 2016 period, largely driven by increases in international learners. The 25 to 39 year old age group accounts for one-third of all ITP learners.

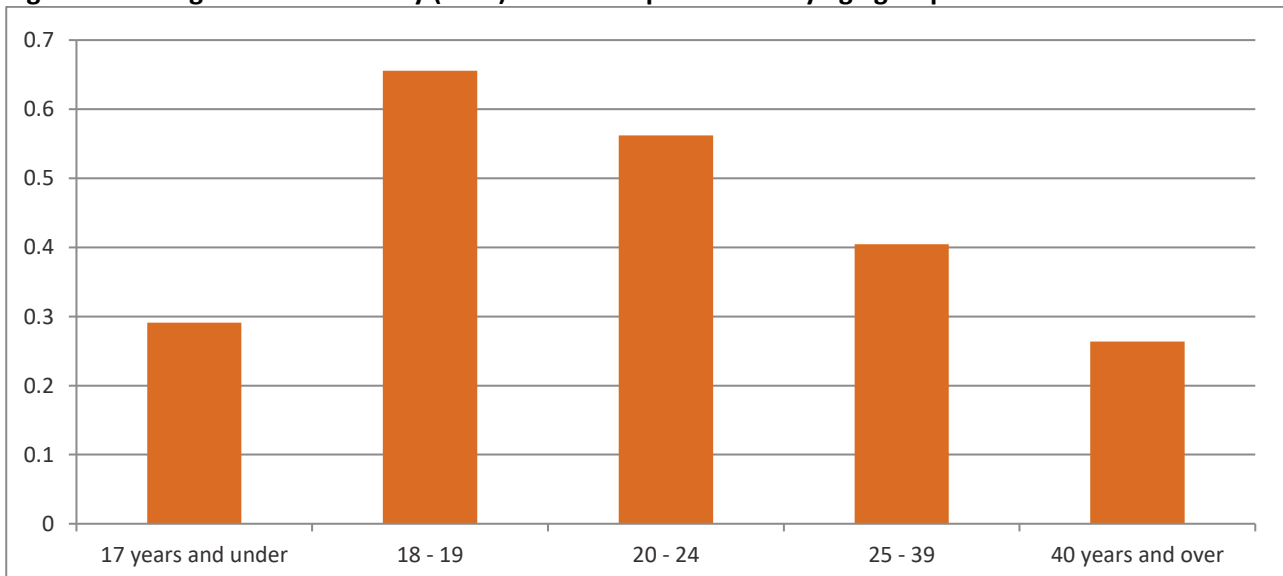
**Figure 3: Number of learners in the ITP sector by age group**



### Study workload varies by age group

The amount of study learners undertake varies significantly by age in the ITP sector (Figure 4). A learner studying full-time over the year would be undertaking 0.8 to 1 EFTS of study. Many of those aged 17 years and under or 40 years and over are therefore largely either enrolling in short qualifications, or are studying part-time. On average, they are undertaking less than half the amount of study of those aged 18 to 19 years, and about half the amount of study of those aged 20 to 24 years.

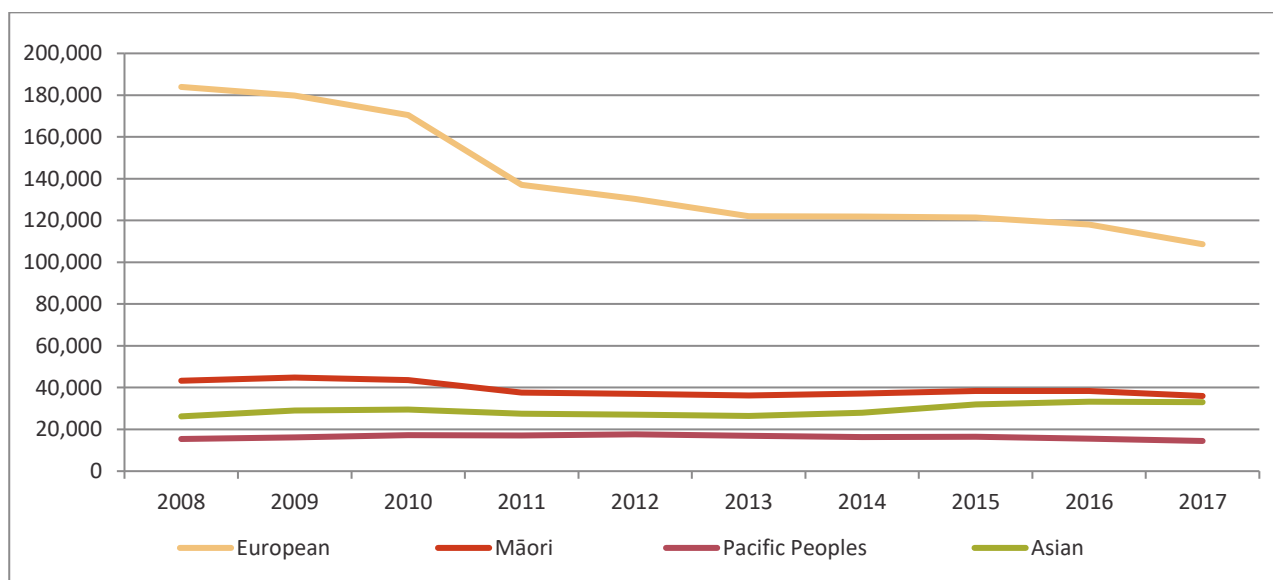
**Figure 4: Average amount of study (EFTS) consumed per learner by age group in the ITP sector in 2017**



## New Zealand European learner numbers have declined

The ethnic composition of the ITP student body is changing (Figure 5). Around 60 percent of learners identified as New Zealand European in 2017 – down from 69 percent in 2008. Over the same period, the proportion of Māori and Pasifika learners increased. Māori learners now represent 20 percent of all ITP learners (up from 16 percent in 2008) and Pasifika represent 8 percent of all learners (up from 6 percent in 2008). The number of Asian learners in the ITP sector has consistently increased since 2008, to 18 percent of all learners (up from 10 percent in 2008).

**Figure 5: Number of learners in the ITP sector by ethnic group**



In terms of learner numbers (rather than proportions), since 2012, the greatest decline in the ITP sector has been for Pasifika and New Zealand European learners. In 2017, there were 18% fewer Pasifika learners, 17 percent fewer European learners, and 3 percent fewer Māori learners in the ITP sector compared to 2012. The growth in international learners has seen a 22 percent increase in the number of Asian learners. Nearly 90 percent of international learners in the ITP sector are Asian. The number of domestic Asian learners has fallen by 6 percent since 2012.

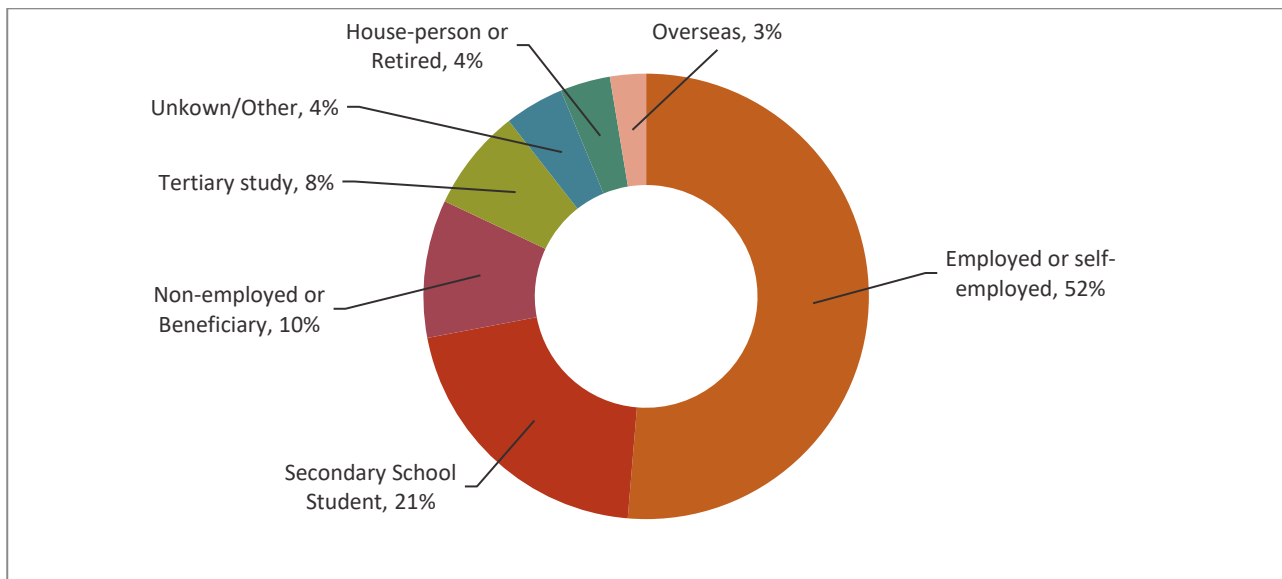
## A minority of domestic ITP learners come directly from secondary school

In 2017, more than half (52 percent) of all ITP learners were either employed or self-employed in the year before their enrolment<sup>2</sup> (refer Figure 6). Only 21 percent were at secondary school, while 10 percent were either not employed or were beneficiaries. Around 8 percent were engaged in other tertiary study.

This is very different to university learners, where 47 percent come straight from secondary school, and only 29 percent were employed directly before enrolling at a university.

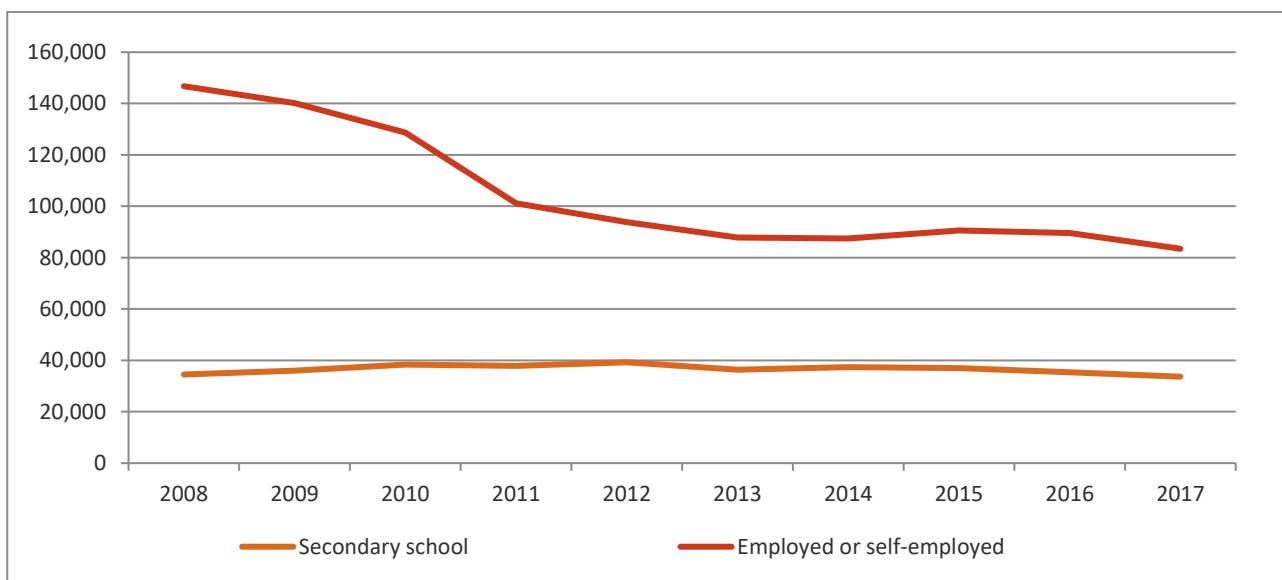
<sup>2</sup> This is self-reported data, collected from students at the point of enrolment, about the student's main activity at 1 October in the previous year.

**Figure 6: Prior activity of domestic learners in the ITP sector in 2017**



The number of learners in employment before undertaking study in the ITP sector declined significantly between 2008 and 2013, then remained relatively static until 2017 when it again declined slightly (Figure 7). The number of learners entering ITPs directly from secondary school has gradually declined over the past five years – down 14 percent between 2012 and 2017.

**Figure 7: Prior activity of domestic learners in the ITP sector – secondary school verses employment**

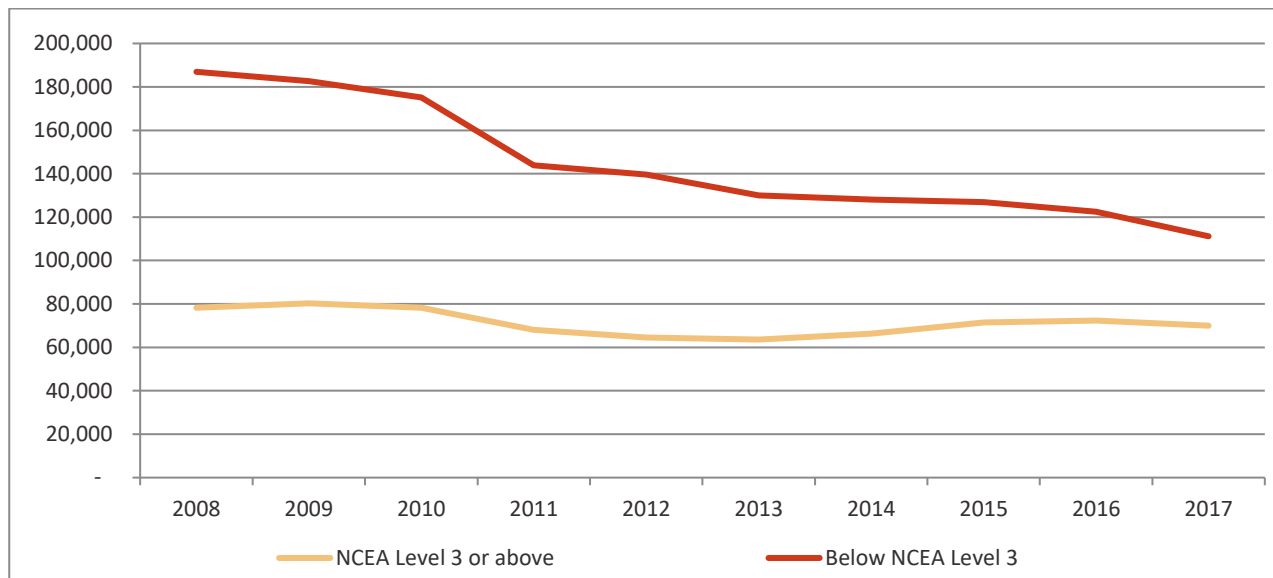


### Most domestic ITP learners' highest school qualification is below NCEA level 3

Most learners enrolled in an ITP have a highest secondary school qualification below NCEA level 3 (Figure 8). The decline in enrolments in the ITP sector since 2012 has been in those learners whose highest secondary school qualification was below NCEA level 3 – down 20 percent. This is consistent with the large decline in delivery by ITPs at levels 1 and 2 over this period.

The number of learners whose highest secondary school qualification was at NCEA level 3 or above has increased by 8 percent between 2012 and 2017.

**Figure 8: Highest secondary school qualification for ITP learners**



### Further information

Further statistics on ITPs and the overall tertiary education sector can be found on the [Education Counts website](#).

Information on funding allocations for ITPs and all other TEOs the TEC funds can be found on the [TEC website](#).

TEOs can access further information through the information products in the Ngā Kete Portal.



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