

The Literacy Professionals

Languages International Investment Plan 2013

Who we are

Languages International is a PTE with a strong international reputation for high quality language and literacy provision since it began trading over 30 years ago. It operates as a market leader in language and literacy education for adults and in language teacher education out of its two locations in central Auckland and central Christchurch. Its core business remains in the export education field providing General English, Business English, Academic English and teacher training courses to international students. It also provides teacher training to language teachers from New Zealand. Since 2008, the school has been providing workplace literacy training in addition to its core business.

Our mission

Languages International's mission is to "grow human capital". Internally this means we strive to increase the value of our business by developing the human competency of our employees through strong professional development and seeking out new challenges and opportunities. This internal focus is supported by robust quality assurance as well as strong systems. Educationally, our mission is to assist our clients to develop their human capital through language, literacy and teacher education.

Our vision

Our vision, with regards workplace literacy, is to become the workplace literacy provider of choice for business clients operating in Auckland and Christchurch.

Our positioning as a workplace literacy provider

- We are small enough and independent enough to be able to respond flexibly to the labour market's needs. We have shown we can do this with academic and linguistic rigour.
- Our background in private sector education means we are pragmatic and well suited to working with businesses. Our small scale allows us to run programmes with smaller businesses and also low risk pilot programmes for larger businesses who may then decide to introduce organisation wide programmes.
- Our background in ESOL means that we are a good fit with businesses in the Auckland area where often the majority of employees speak English as an additional language.
- Our city centre location in Auckland is a good base to engage with the numerous retail and service businesses based in the city centre who often have staff with low levels of language and literacy.
- Our background in Business English programmes puts us in a strong position to work with learners with higher level literacy needs based in the city.
- Since we began working in the workplace literacy sector, we have gained experience and skills working with Maori and Pacific learners and have achieved strong academic results.

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- We have developed expertise in the following employment sectors: security, healthcare, policing, insurance.
- We have developed our capability in assisting our business partners along the road to sustainable outcomes.
- We are still operating in Christchurch and remain committed to the regeneration of the Canterbury area.

Labour Market Forecasts in Relation to Future Literacy & Numeracy Training Needs

When reviewing the Infometrics labour market forecasts, we have focused mainly on the data for Auckland and also on the data available for low-skilled jobs. The key projections that we have taken on board from this are:

- Continued high demand for people with certificate level qualifications (levels 1-3) which is encouraging given the employment sectors we are focusing on.
- Continued dominance in Auckland of “professionals” in the employment market. When immigration data and projections are taken into account alongside these, it is clear that there are going to be training needs associated with business communications skills.
- Continued growth in the numbers of care-givers and medical professionals to cope with an ageing population.
- There is going to be increased demand for engineers with higher levels of qualifications.
- There is unlikely to be significant growth in manufacturing or retail – both traditionally high sources of employment for people with low levels of skills but the numbers of low skilled workers in these sectors is still significant across the region.

The demographic information is interesting showing that employment growth is likely to be lower for Maori and Pasifika and that there are likely to be fewer jobs for under 25s. Yet, we also know from demographic data that these groups are becoming a larger part of Auckland’s population. This data supports the TES priorities for Maori, Pasifika and young learners. The key for these groups to gain employment and keep it is by developing a broad set of transferable skills and higher level qualifications.

The demographic data does not cover immigration, which we know is significant in the Auckland area and this data is highly relevant for the workplace literacy sector in Auckland.

Reviewing this data shows the challenge for the tertiary sector as a whole. It is encouraging for workplace literacy and numeracy providers such as us working in the Auckland area – there will be continued need for foundation literacy skills at levels 1-3 (in the workplace and at pre-employment level) as well as higher level business communications skills training.

Support for the TES

The main priority we aim to address is TES Priority 4:

- TES Priority 4: improving literacy, language, and numeracy and skills outcomes from levels one to three study

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We will do this by:

Continuing to deliver high quality education to international students.

Continuing to engage with employers and work with them in partnership on sustainable workplace language and literacy interventions. We have engaged with a number of new businesses in 2012 and worked successfully with them in a funded and private capacity.

Continuing to conduct thorough needs analysis with new employers we work with in order to help them understand the LLN needs of their employees. Successful methods we have employed in 2012 are consultation, observation, assessment of staff, assessment of competencies needed at work and discourse analysis of key work texts and tasks.

Building understanding and capacity within the organisations we work with in order that they are able to maintain LLN support for employees when we move on.

Developing trainers in the workplaces we are involved in in their capacity to embed LLN into their training practices. We have managed this successfully in 2012.

Where possible, aligning our workplace literacy courses with vocational qualifications at Level 2, 3 and 4 in particular.

Continuing to engage with migrant community groups and migrant coordinators and looking at ways that we can best meet the language needs of migrants.

We continue to support the following TES Priorities:

- TES Priority 2: Increasing the number of Maori students enjoying success at higher levels.
- TES Priority 3: Increasing the number of Pasifika students achieving at higher levels.

We will do this by:

Engaging organisations with large numbers of Maori and Pasifika employees. To this aim, we have been focusing our marketing efforts on the healthcare and security sectors. We are also interested in working in some capacity in the prisons and have made some movements towards delivering programmes for Corrections recently. We will continue to build our relationship with the NZ Police and are interested in delivering foundation level literacy courses for potential Police applicants which would be pitched at these priority groups.

Continuing professional development for our tutors and course designers in creating a learning framework geared towards success for Maori and Pasifika employees. We are not a Maori or Pasifika organisation but would welcome partnerships with organisations that are and seek out opportunities for professional learning in this area.

We also remain interested in delivering foundation learning programmes to enable young Maori and Pasifika learners. We did not feel we were ready to tender for foundation focused funding in 2012 but we see this as strategically important in the long run.

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- TES Priority 6: Improving the educational and financial performance of providers

We will do this by:

Seeking out collaboration where this is useful to deliver for larger, national organisations. We recently worked with the Methodist Mission in Dunedin on a proposal for Corrections.

Building relations and connections with key organisations in the field. The National Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy, the Industry Training Federation and Careerforce are organisations that we have linked with in 2012.

We have used the ALNAAT since 2009 and will continue to do so.

We support the work that has been undertaken with Pathways Awarua and will encourage its use to a greater extent by our learners in the future.

- TES Priority 7: Strengthening research outcomes.

We took part in the National Centre's Workplace Action Research Group in 2012 and remain convinced that Action Research is a great fit in terms of both providing professional learning and sharing learning across the sector. We are committed in house to carrying out further Action Research studies and sharing the results on our website and will seek out ways of linking to the National Centre again in 2013.

Key Changes Planned

As a small organisation, we need to focus our attention on the markets where we have developed some expertise: Healthcare, Policing, Security and broader "business communications" but at the same time remain open to new challenges. We remain interested in working with Corrections in some capacity in the future.

Continued investigation and development of pre-employment foundation learning programmes focusing on literacy and numeracy (for Police, MAF, NZ Customs etc.). This represents a new market for us as an institution and there is definitely a need for high quality "specialised" literacy and numeracy training. We are not sure as yet about the best way to fund this programme as yet and are interested in talking with other providers in terms of delivering these qualifications.

The TEC have signalled they are interested in developing income streams from the infrastructure already developed. One idea is to license the ALNAAT for individual organisations to develop contextualised units. We can see that this approach has value. A more contextualised tool will create better buy in with some learners who will be able to see greater relevance in the tasks. We have some expertise in aligning assessment tasks with the ALNAAT through our work with the NZ Police and considerable experience developing contextualised language and literacy assessments for businesses. We are interested in being involved in this development.