



ACCESS TRADES

Advice to the Tertiary Education Commission
for training investment in 2026

November 2024



WAIHANGA ARA RAU

Construction and
Infrastructure

Workforce Development Council

KEY INFORMATION – 2026 TEC INVESTMENT ADVICE

This information is part of a suite of documents relating to the Waihanga Ara Rau advice to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) for investment in training for 2026 it should be read in conjunction with the following:

- ▶ **Introduction to the Waihanga Ara Rau advice to TEC for investment in training for 2026.**

This document includes the methodology behind the learner forecasts and industry narrative, including context and themes related to the advice.

- ▶ **The sector-specific advice summaries for the other 11 strategic industry sectors.**

These documents include sector data snapshot, industry-specific context information, learner number profiles, and 2024 Learner and Provider snapshot.

- ▶ **The complete Waihanga Ara Rau advice to TEC for investment in training for 2026.**

INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

45%
workforce
non-European
2022

583
businesses
2022

2,400
learners
2023

31%
workforce
aged under 25

30%
workforce
<1 year in industry

***Note:** Our data is derived from administrative data available to us and may not be a true reflection of the sector's businesses. Please refer to additional context section for more information.*

ACCESS TRADES NARRATIVE

Administrative Data

The Access Trades sector has faced ongoing challenges with ANZSIC and ANZSCO classification codes, which do not accurately represent the sector and its industries. For example, the entire sector is assigned a single ANZSIC code. Consequently, administrative data fails to fully reflect the sector's workforce, businesses, and economic contributions - key information used to determine funding and investment. Waihanga Ara Rau and several industry bodies submitted feedback to Stats NZ during consultation processes on these codes.

Construction and Infrastructure Narrative

In September, the Access Trades Strategic Reference Group provided feedback, highlighting that Access Trades spans both the Construction and Infrastructure sectors, with roughly one-third of its workforce involved in infrastructure. As a result, it was suggested that both construction and infrastructure considerations should be applied to the sector, similar to C&I Services. Consequently, the infrastructure methodology of a 12% increase has been applied to one-third of the Access Trades 2026 training provision. Below, we outline the qualifications that meet the TEC advice threshold.

For example:

New Zealand Certificate in Scaffolding (General) (Level 3) 2023 total: 135 ▶ Infrastructure: $135 * 0.33 = 45$ ▶ Construction: $135 * 0.66 = 90$	Applying a 12% increase to the infrastructure portion: ▶ 12% of 45 = 6	Revised totals: ▶ Construction: 45 ▶ Infrastructure: $90 + 6 = 96$	New total for 2026: ▶ 141 (up from 135 in 2023).
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TEC INVESTMENT ADVICE

What is our baseline year and the training narrative/forecast?

We are using **2023 learner numbers as our baseline**, as this is the latest full-year training data.

While training interventions such as apprenticeship boost and fees free were still influencing learner numbers and the five-year pipeline of work was only just coming off its all-time high of approx. \$300B total \$251B construction specific in December 2022 learner numbers were starting to fall during 2023. Learner numbers in most industry sectors have continued to fall in 2024, but we anticipate government investment indicator's and a falling Official Cash Rate (OCR) will see 2024 as the bottom of the training volume trough in both the civil infrastructure and construction sectors with enrolments building in 2025.

The 2026 projected learners numbers for construction reflect an expectation that 2024 will see the bottom of the trough in learner numbers which will start to rebound in 2025 and be back to 2023 levels in 2026, as highlighted above in the Construction five-year rolling Project Pipeline value nationally (2020 – 2026).

Qualification codes and corresponding qualifications are shown in the TEC Investment Advice table on page 6.



Investment Advice Table

Code	Industry	Qualification or credential name	Mode	Region	2023 Learners	2026 Advice Provision
2355	Rigging	New Zealand Certificate in Rigging (Level 3)	Work based learning preferred (mixed mode an option)	National	5	5
2358	Rope Access	New Zealand Certificate in Industrial Rope Access (Level 3)			155	161
3708	Scaffolding	New Zealand Certificate in Scaffolding (General) (Level 3)			135	140
3709	Scaffolding	New Zealand Certificate in Scaffolding (Proprietary Suspended) (Level 3)			10	11
3730	Cranes	New Zealand Certificate in Cranes (Level 3) with strands in Cab-Controlled Overhead Crane, Dogman, Load Lifting Rigging Production, Pendant-Controlled Overhead Crane, Self-Erecting Tower Crane, and Truck Loader Crane			55	*68
2359	Rope Access	New Zealand Certificate in Industrial Rope Access (Level 4)			25	26
3710 ¹	Scaffolding	New Zealand Certificate in Scaffolding (Trade) (Level 4)			1,875	1,950
3731	Cranes	New Zealand Certificate in Cranes (Level 4) with strands in Advanced Dogman, Crawler Crane, Mini Crane, Mobile Crane, Non-Slewing Articulated Crane, and Tower Crane			15	16
2363	Scaffolding	New Zealand Certificate in Scaffolding (Level 5)			125	130
2356 ²	Rigging	New Zealand Certificate in Rigging (Level 4) with optional strands in Construction Rigging, and Telecommunications Rigging			0	150
2357 ²	Rigging	New Zealand Certificate in Rigging (Level 5)			0	100
2360 ²	Rope Access	New Zealand Certificate in Industrial Rope Access (Level 5)			0	50
3732	Cranes	New Zealand Certificate in Cranes (Advanced Crane Operation) (Level 5)			0	0
5064	Scaffolding & Rigging	NEW: Tube and Coupler Scaffolding Under Five Metres (Micro-Credential)	TBD	N/A	50	
Total					2,400	2,857

Shaded cells in 2026 column represent changes to qualification provision which we reflected in our formal advice to TEC (see "Advice to TEC for construction and infrastructure training investment 2025").

¹ **Ref: 3710** Industry engagement and workforce needs suggest that a 23% increase on 2023 numbers would support sector needs. There is also appetite for delivery and learner demand.

² **Ref: 2356, Ref: 2357** and **Ref: 2360** qualifications have a combination of suppressed data and no registered results in 2023. The Access & Trades sector has however indicated that they have a clear indication that there is learner demand for these qualifications and providers prepared to deliver, leading to the scale of change numbers set out above. Note, however, these are dependent on completion of qualification reviews (Rigging Level 4 under way, Rigging Level 5 and Rope Access level 5 review projects starting early 2025) to address identified barriers to completion.

2024 Learner Snapshot

Age		Region		Gender	
Under 25	31%	Bay of Plenty	34%	Female	1%
25 – 39	60%	Auckland	23%	Male	99%
40 plus	9%	Canterbury	9%		
		Waikato/Wellington	7%		

NEW PROVIDERS

Qualification	Mode	Region	Rationale for inclusion	Evidence status (already supplied, attached, available on request).
Ref:3730: New Zealand Certificate in Cranes (Level 3) with strands in Cab-Controlled Overhead Crane, Dogman, Load Lifting Rigging Production, Pendant-Controlled Overhead Crane, Self-Erecting Tower Crane, and Truck Loader Crane	Mixed mode	National	The Cranes industry has supported the desire to expand their delivery partners, outside of those currently delivering the qualification.	Evidence is available on request. Provider(s) have received programme approval to deliver the specific qualification and supported by industry.

NEW QUALIFICATIONS AND CREDENTIALS

Area of provision and/or qualification/ credential name (if known)	Level	Mode	Qualification or micro-credential	Estimated date it will be available	Description
Tube and Coupler MC	TBD	TBD	Micro-credential	2026	Approved for development. Included in previous advice rounds (2023).
Temporary Works Procedural Control	TBD	TBD	TBD	2026	We are currently developing the business case.
MC in Exterior Cleaning	3	TBD	Micro-credential	2026	Being developed. Included in previous advice rounds (2023).
Cranes Entry MC	TBD	TBD	Micro-credential	2026	Being developed. Included in previous advice rounds (2023).
Edge Protection MC	TBD	TBD	Micro-credential	2026	Being developed. Included in previous advice rounds (2023).
Power Access Technician credential	TBD	TBD	TBC	2026	Developing the 'idea' with industry. Potentially outside of coverage.
Gantry Cranes	TBC	TBC	Micro-credential	2026	The idea is being developed with industry which will include identifying our involvement.

FUTURE WORKFORCE NEEDS

Area of need or project	Expected occupations or skills that may be impacted	Timeframe	Who is involved (from tertiary education) e.g., WDC, providers etc
Changes to Industry/occupation setting and impacts on the Immigration system.	All (scaffolding, cranes and rigging may have slightly bigger impacts).	2024 - ongoing	Stats NZ and MBIE (Immigration NZ) are involved in a piece of work where adjustment of industry classifications (ANZSIC) is likely to have flow-on effects on immigration operational policy. The work is around making ANZSIC (and later ANZSCO) more accurate so Immigration NZ can ensure the right skills are coming through the immigration system.
Literacy and numeracy capabilities are falling	All (scaffolding, cranes and rigging may have slightly bigger impacts).	2024 - ongoing	Industry and government agencies. The sector's approach to addressing this issue is still being refined.