



ON SITE CONSTRUCTION

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

145,742

workforce

2022

46,005

businesses

2022

29,390

learners

2023

21%

workforce
aged under 25

31%

workforce
<1 year in industry

ON SITE CONSTRUCTION NARRATIVE

There is general consensus from sector consultation, that the construction activity will remain stable, with an eventual uptick. However, this increase may occur slightly later than the timelines suggested above, potentially in 2026. The sector has observed from experience that market dips often lead to increased demand for training, especially at the pre-trades level. Therefore, it's essential to maintain a steady pipeline of trainees to ensure the sector is prepared with a sufficient workforce when the market picks up. A number of suggestions were raised, being:

- ▶ There is a need for increased investment across all programmes that support the transition from secondary to tertiary education, regardless of the specific qualifications or micro-credentials pursued by learners. This approach should focus on the purpose and needs of the learners rather than the qualifications themselves e.g. Trade Academies and Gateway
- ▶ It is important to ensure that apprentices can easily transition between on-job and off-job training, especially in situations where they have been laid off due to business downsizing.
- ▶ Building on the previous point, there is a need to focus on supporting former learners and workers who are partially qualified, helping them complete their training and qualifications. This effort would require targeted support and resources.
- ▶ Decisions regarding support mechanisms for employees and employers, such as the Apprenticeship Boost, should consider the medium- to long-term impacts on the workforce and the sector. This is important as the costs of inaction or delayed investment are likely to increase over time.
- ▶ The sector wants greater choice and flexibility within the broader vocational funding envelope to determine the specific number of learners, especially during the delivery year. We believe that both providers and employers can sustain this growth, but it is crucial that the demand being addressed is driven by industry and sector needs.

[4237] New Zealand Certificate in Construction Trades Supervision (Level 5)

2024 saw qualifications [NZQF 2381: New Zealand Certificate in Construction Related Trades (Supervisor) (Level 4)] and [NZQF 2382: New Zealand Certificate in Construction Related Trades (Main Contract Supervision) (Level 5)] being replaced by [NZQF 4237]. There was also a significant increase in 2024 year to date learners compared to 2023 (more than doubling). Several factors have contributed to this situation, with one of the primary ones being the sector's increasing demand for developing more effective supervisors and leaders. This focus has been emphasised in previous rounds of advice.

The impact of this on our advice, is that 2024 actual consumption will be used as the baseline year for [4237] New Zealand Certificate in Construction Trades Supervision (Level 5).

2023 saw an approximate 65% decrease on 2021 and 2022 which were heavily influenced by government support mechanisms (TTAF and Fees Free). However, even with minimal government support, the 2024 year to date saw an increase on 2021 and 2022 numbers (approximately 33%).

Consultation with industry has indicated that the demand should remain steady based on 2024 numbers. In addition to this, there is a potential for micro-credentials to come onstream related to this qualification.

TEC INVESTMENT ADVICE

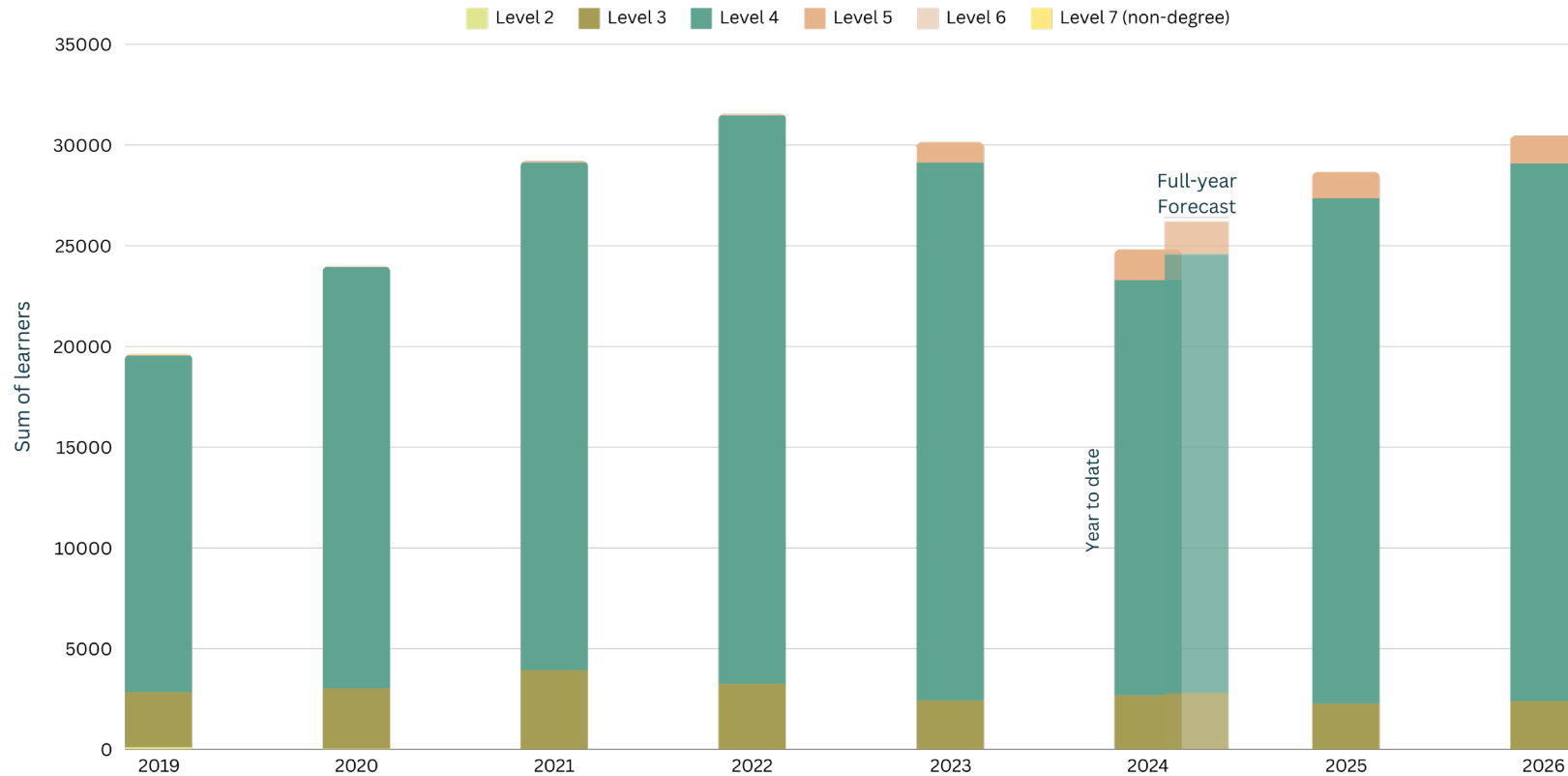
What is our baseline year and the training narrative/forecast?

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

While training interventions such as apprentice 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 indicators 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 learner 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). Please note that the Qualification codes and corresponding qualifications are shown in the *Investment Advice table* below.

Actual and forecast learner numbers to September 2024 year to date and three-year forecast training numbers based on workforce indicators



Investment Advice Table

Code	Qualification or credential name	Mode	Region	2023 Learners	2026 Advice Provision
16	National Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4) <i>Expired replaced with 2738</i>	N/A	N/A	10	N/A
1613	National Certificate in Concrete Construction (Sawing and Drilling) (Level 3) <i>Expired replaced with 4186</i>			5	N/A
1633	National Certificate in Concrete Construction (Placing and Finishing) (Level 3) <i>Expired replaced with 4189</i>			15	N/A
1634	National Certificate in Concrete Construction (Level 4) <i>Expired replaced with 4188</i>			60	N/A
3640	New Zealand Certificate in Glass (Level 3) <i>Expiring in Dec 2024. Currently delivered with 2945, but 2945 revised to encompass. 2023 numbers included in 2945</i>			0	N/A
1814	New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Construction (Level 3) with strands in Concrete Foundation Walls and Concrete Slab On-ground, and Pile Foundations (with optional strand in Concrete Placing and Finishing)	Preference for WBL	National	140	140
2737	New Zealand Certificate in Stonemasonry (Level 4) with strands in Monumental Masonry, Construction Stonemasonry, and Natural Stone Fixtures and Fittings (with optional strands in Banker Masonry, and Conservation and Preservation)			60	60
2738 ¹	New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4) – <i>replaced 16</i>			21,430	21,440
2945	New Zealand Certificate in Glazing (Level 4) with strands in Residential Glazing, and Commercial Glazing			445	445
3137	New Zealand Certificate in Trowel Trades (Level 4) Brick and Block Laying and Refractory Installation strands			425	425
3512	New Zealand Certificate in Roofing (Installation) (Level 4) with strands in Concrete or Clay Tile Roof, Profiled Metal Roof and Wall Cladding, Metal Tile Roof, Roof Membrane Systems, and Shingle or Slate Roof			2,780	2,780
3843	New Zealand Certificate in Building, Construction, and Allied Trades Skills (Level 1)			200	200
3844	New Zealand Certificate in Building, Construction, and Allied Trades Skills (Level 2)			370	370
3845	New Zealand Certificate in Building, Construction, and Allied Trades Skills (Level 3)	105	105		
2834	New Zealand Certificate in Construction Trade Skills (Level 3) with strands in Carpentry, Joinery and Allied Trades	1,705	1,705		

¹ The 2026 figures represent 'growth' figures based on the collated learner total of the 'replacement qualification' plus the previous or expired qualification.

4186 ²	New Zealand Certificate in Concrete (Specialist) (Level 4) with strands in Concrete Sawing and Drilling, Prestressed Concrete, Precast Concrete, Concrete Pump Operation (Line Delivery System), and Concrete Pump Operation (Boom Delivery System)	Preference WBL	15	50
4188 ³	New Zealand Certificate in Concrete Construction (Commercial and Civil Infrastructure) (Level 4) with optional strands in Premanufactured Elements, and Post-tensioned Concrete		320	425
4189	New Zealand Certificate in Concrete Construction Skills (Level 3) with strands in Formwork, Reinforcing, Placing and Finishing, Specified Concrete Finishes, Concrete Product Manufacture, Concrete Sawing and Drilling, and Precast Concrete Manufacture		170	185
4449	Install Insulation (Micro-credential)	Preference On Campus or WBL	170	170
4571	*Basic Construction Skills (Micro-credential)		245	245
4572	*Demolition and Renovation Skills (Micro-credential)		0	20
4573	*Introductory Exterior Envelope Skills (Micro-credential)		20	50
4574	*Introductory Interior Linings and Joinery Skills (Micro-credential)		0	20
4575	*On-site Assembly Skills (Micro-credential)		25	50
4842 ⁴	NEW: Steel Fixing/Reinforcement Installation for Construction and Infrastructure (Entry-Level) (Micro-credential)		0	50
4971 ⁴	NEW: Trades Essentials (Micro-credential) (Level 2)		0	200
5058 ⁴	NEW: New Zealand Certificate in Demolition (Level 3)		0	40
4237 ⁵	New Zealand Certificate in Construction Trades Supervision (Level 5) with strands in Commercial Construction, Construction Related Manufacturing, Construction Related Trades, and Residential Building		1,510 <i>(2024 numbers)</i>	1,510
Total			30,225	30,685

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").

² **Ref:4186** New Concrete Pumping strands were introduced in February 2024, and we anticipate that on top of the 2023 baseline there will be an additional 30 learners in 2026.

³ The qualification includes learner numbers from the expired qualification 1644. Additionally, about 50% of the 2023 learners are associated with Civil Infrastructure components. Given this mix, we propose an increase in line with the evidence and narrative related to infrastructure.

⁴ **Ref: 4842 Ref:4971** and **Ref:5058** are recently registered credentials where overall there were no or limited numbers of registered learners in 2023. The 2026 scale of change is based on learner numbers identified during the business case and development of each credential / qualification.

⁵ Refer to [above](#).

2024 Learner Snapshot

Age		Region		Gender	
Under 25	51%	Auckland	29%	Female	4%
25 – 39	38%	Wellington	12%	Male	96%
40 plus	11%	Waikato	8%		
		Canterbury	14%		

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
Paving qualification	TBC	TBC	Qualification	2025/26	This has been approved for development. More details will be provided as the project is developed further.
Swimming Pools Construction credential	TBC	TBC	TBC	2026	Developing business case.
Sustainability MCs	TBC	TBC	Micro-credential	2026	Developing business case. Part of a wider project (Core Construction).
Garage Door Installation credential	TBC	TBC	TBC	2026	Idea being developed further.
Complex glazing project management	TBC	TBC	Micro-credential	2025/26	New product resulting from review of NZC Glazing (Level 4) [2945-2].
Frameless glazing installation	TBC	TBC	Micro-credential	2025/26	New product resulting from review of NZC Glazing (Level 4) [2945-2].