

Looking Forward to 2003

After the drama of the last few years 2003 looks like being a reasonably quiet year, at least as far as having to watch out for new things in the cycle of reporting to various Government agencies.

Each year Meta Office contacts these agencies to ask what changes will be made in the following year. So in May 2002 we asked NZQA, Skill New Zealand, and the Ministry of Education what we could look forward to in 2003. NZQA and Skill New Zealand tell us that there is no change expected. The Ministry of Education elected not to reply to most of our questions so we assume that it is pretty much business as usual with them.

No doubt everybody is keeping their powder dry for 2004 when presumably the new funding system will kick-in.

In the meantime our version 5, due for release in February/March 2003 will handle such change as is required for 2003.

Meta Office's plans for 2003 also include two major new developments, both of which will be integrated to our SQL Server edition of *Take2*.

- We will be implementing a Web-enabled interface to *Take2* progressively during the year. The key functionality will include: capturing registrations of interest from prospective students, allowing existing students to update their contact details and view and print their own record, allowing staff to perform a number of basic functions (e.g. record Unit Standard outcomes) through a Web

browser, and allowing students to enrol and re-enrol on-line.

- A new module for use by providers who recruit and enrol overseas students will be available mid-year. This module will handle processes such as dealing with agents, visas, homestays, etc. ➤

Who Uses Take2?

Take2 is used by an astonishing range of tertiary education providers, from the very largest (how does enrolling 40,00 students sound?) to some of the smallest. It is used on single PCs and wide area networks. Some providers just use *Take2* to do the Single Data Return, others use pretty much all the functionality and keep coming up with ideas for new features.

This month we start an occasional series in the Newsletter, featuring a *Take2* user and for the first of the series we would like to introduce **Ora Limited**.

Ora Limited is associated with Te Wananga o Aotearoa and has started offering a

programme for new New Zealanders. The programme, like the highly successful Mahi Ora programme, is not based in a class room but involves students receiving packs of instructional material and then being visited and assessed by specially trained tutors.

A new call centre has been set up and the people answering the phone will be able to speak to students and prospective students not only in English but in many other languages. In fact, as students are added into the *Take2* database, they will be



The new team at Ora Limited, ready to enrol their first students.

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assigned a person type to record their mother-tongue. ➤

National Student Index

Those of you who have not yet sorted out how you are going to connect to the National Student Index had better get a wriggle on. Leaving it until 2003 is a very bad idea for all sorts of reasons, not least of which is the amount of heartache that it would cause you next year.

In the meantime, if you are testing the *Take2* COM interface or you have already gone live using the COM interface, you should download the latest version of the *Take2* Main Module from our Web site (www.take2.co.nz). This version, 4.1.12, fixes an intermittent problem that related to a message being displayed which tells a user that they had updated an existing verified NSI record with unverified data when, in fact, that had not happened.

The problem does not do any damage or have an adverse impact on your future SDRs – it's just confusing if you stop to read the message. ➤

Statement of Objectives

Don't know about you but we're a bit confused about the Statement of Objectives/Statement of Service Performance process.

The confusion seems to arise because of two factors; firstly the dizzying frequency with which the objectives and measures are changed and, secondly, misunderstandings about which objectives and measures are currently valid.

Consider the 2002 year. The Guide to Tertiary Education funding published in August 2001 specified objectives and measures for **2002**. (They differed from those that had been used for the 2001 year.) You used these August 2001 objectives and measures to prepare your 2002 Statement of Objectives in October 2001.

In March 2003 you will have to prepare a Statement of Service Performance based on your 2002 Statement of Objectives.

In the meantime the Ministry has published a new Guide to Tertiary Education Funding in August 2002 with objectives and measures for “**200_**” (note now they are not now year specific). Once again there have been changes in the definitions. These objectives and measures had to be used for your Statement of Objectives for 2003.

In short you have to be on your toes to know which set of objectives and measures you are dealing with at any given time.

Can you imagine being able to set the objectives and measures for the Ministry?

- Objective – Provide consistent and meaningful performance measurement mechanisms for tertiary providers.
- Measure – Compliance costs are reduced by 50% against 2002, as is the incidence of nervous breakdowns amongst tertiary administrators.

Bits and Pieces

- This will be the last *Take2* Newsletter for 2002. It seems that, apart from Richard, there is no one at Meta Office who aspires to literary fame and glory and Richard is going away for two months from the end of November.
- Don't forget the upcoming Ministry of Education Roadshow. These are useful events when you can learn about the Ministry's plans and processes and enjoy a morning tea with your colleagues. Details of the times and venues, plus a booking form, are available at http://www2.minedu.govt.nz/Step/News_Information.asp
- And who said this “*Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account.*”?