

Survey

We would like to thank all the clients who completed our recent survey of the support service we offer, and also those who completed our IT survey.

The responses are not yet fully collated but what we have seen has been most instructive. In terms of the support service the response has been very positive, which is great – you guys even like the Newsletter! There are

also some very reasonable concerns, particularly about documentation and the availability of support during the very busiest times. We are looking closely at these issues and hope to be able to introduce improvements gradually over the next 6 months.

Documentation will be reviewed and, we hope, progressively revised by a professional technical writer. Additional dedicated “cheat sheets” will be provided to cover tricky topics – feedback on the Newsletter consistently said that the *Top Tips* section was very useful. We are also looking at further increasing staffing for the Help Desk. There seems to be no avoiding the fact that compliance requirements increase year after year, and each increase put more load on our support service (and on the MoE and TEC support services).

The IT survey also has some pretty clear messages. Very few *Take2* users are planning to upgrade to Office 2003 any time soon. Windows 98 enjoys a longevity far beyond most software products.

And We Have a Winner!

The responses to the IT survey went into a draw and the winner receives a \$500 credit against their next annual support fee. And the winner is Ian Douthwaite at Going Places Education! Congratulations Ian.

August SDR

The August SDR is rattling down the track towards us. This return is “as at” 31

August and is due for submission by 15 September. Traditionally the August SDR is the cruisy one of the year. April is always horrible because of newly introduced changes and December is a bit nerve wracking because, being the final return of the year, it has to be perfect.

Still, there are a few things to watch out for in the August return and here they are:

- Make sure that you have entered any mid-year enrolments.
- Remember that, within a given year the SDRs are cumulative. The August return includes students who were (or should have been) reported in the April SDR. So, if you had forgotten to enrol some students in April, you can do a catch up by getting the enrolments into *Take2* so that they will be included in the August SDR.
- Don't forget that you have to make a staffing return with your August SDR. This is a kind of census of staff on your books during the week of 31 July. See page 15 of the SDR Manual (version 6.5) for more information on this return.



Take2 Newsletter

Error 366

Sounds terrible, doesn't it? "Error 366", it's like "Catch 22" or "Room 101", so what is it?

Some providers doing the June Course Completion return experienced this error when doing the validation. Essentially the error arose when a course completion outcome other than "4" was reported in June for a course enrolment record which, in the December 2003 SDR included a withdrawal date.

Affected providers who contacted the Help Desk were supplied with a utility to allow them to complete the June SDR.

With the introduction, from 2005, of a more frequent course completion return, it is necessary for us to make a modification to *Take2* that will prevent error 366 occurring again when it didn't ought to.

Accordingly we will be providing a new release of *Take2* before the end of August (at the end of August for SQL Server edition users) and you should use this new version when doing your August SDR. The new version will also include a "catch-up" function to modify any 2004 course enrolment records which could be incorrect. You will receive a formal release notice with more information about the new version.

Bits & Pieces

- Recently spotted in Wellington were Mike Balk, our Help Desk Maestro, and John Bingham (Programmer Extraordinaire). These two managed to get Chicken Pox and are nursing their spots as you read this. Bottles of Pinetarsal may be sent to the usual address.
- Richard Hamilton-Williams, editor of the Newsletter, is going on holiday to a secret destination where there is no electricity and no telephone. He will be away from the 20th to the 31st of August.
- Special thanks to Mary Stenton of TEC here in Wellington. Mary was really helpful in finding out about STAR students for us.

Take2 Top Tips

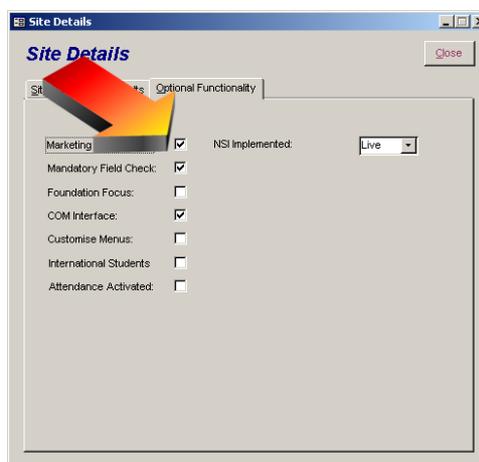
STAR Students

One effect of the recent MoE Roadshow was for providers to be reminded that, if an SDR has to be made, it must include all students. STAR students are no exception and we have been contacted by a number of providers asking how to go about this task.

This is not an unreasonable request because the documentation provided by MoE and TEC gives no clear guidance on the mechanism that is used. The SDR Manual used to include this information but, pouff, one year it was gone! Like so many things, it fell down the cracks that litter this brave new world of the management of tertiary funding.

Anyway, enough of the melodrama, how do you report STAR students?

- Set up a qualification called "STAR Programme" on the TEC Qualification Register. It must have the code "PCSTAR". You will need to have a stab at the other fields that have to be filled in since no guidance has been given about how to do that.
- If your STAR students are doing Unit Standards and you have disaggregated down to Unit Standard level, then you don't need to add any special courses to the TEC Course Register.
- If you have special courses for STAR students, or you do not disaggregate to Unit Standard level, then you will need to add at least one course to the TEC Course Register. Have a stab at the various fields but make sure that the funding category is "Z".
- Next add STAR student on the *Students* form. Remember that the only data you need for STAR students is name, date of birth, and gender. You do also need an NSN but STAR students do not have to have an "Active" status. If you have the *Mandatory Field Checking* feature of *Take2* switched on, remember to switch it off whilst adding STAR students. The switch is on the *Site Details* form that can be opened from the *System Management* menu in the Administration Module.



- Now enrol students into the STAR qualification and the relevant courses/Units.
- The STAR students are now ready report through the SDR.