



PSETA Reports

You will of course be familiar with the work of PSETA – the Post Secondary Education and Training Agency. The Take2 Newsletter is privileged to bring you, exclusively, a leaked report from the PSETA CEO to the PSETA Board. The report makes for disturbing reading. Few of us were aware that the organisation was in any kind of trouble and now, according to the report, it appears that the entire senior management is about to resign leaving the Agency's work to be carried out by the receptionist, a junior policy analyst, and a random number generator.

Now read on.

It is with some sadness that I as, CEO of PSETA, must offer to the Board my own resignation and that of my senior management team. Whilst there are a number of factors that have resulted in this action, the Board will be aware that the primary issue relates to PSETA's inability, after eight years, to be able to report meaningfully on the performance of post secondary education and training organisations.

The final straw has been the realisation that the recently published performance league tables are completely erroneous. It appears that the figures published by PSETA were in fact based on early childhood education data supplied in error by the Ministry of Education rather than, as we had supposed, data sourced from the SDR (Singularly Daft Return).

It appears that many, if not most, of the organisations reported upon, lodged objections to the draft indicator values circulated earlier this year.

Unfortunately the complexity of the definition of the performance measures is such that the only person capable of understanding them – namely the PSETA policy analyst who developed them and who was a bit under the weather at the time – was not able to spot the problem. That staff member's manager was on study leave, and that manager's manager, the Deputy CEO, had been seconded to the State Services Commission. That left me, and I'm an arts graduate.

Sorry.

As a footnote to the above report it is interesting to observe that many of our Take2 clients have been in receipt of curricula vitae from ex PSETA managers.

Sorry.

Reality Bites

The Minister has spoken. It seems that studying to get a job might be a good thing for students and the taxpayer after all. As an arts graduate myself (but not that one!) I naturally have mixed feelings on the subject but one thing is clear to me: lots of people want to study to get a pay rise, to get a better job, to get a job at all, or to feel a sense of worth that can be measured in vocational terms.

Of course it will be fiendishly difficult for anyone (least of all TEC) to measure vocational (dare we say "labour market") outcomes. However it can be done and there are a bunch of training providers who do it already for TOPS and Youth Trainees and get paid next to nothing for doing so. Maybe they could provide a few tips.

Anyway it may be time for you to remember that Take2 does provide a mechanism for recording and reporting graduate outcomes. Click on *Student Management* in the Main Module and then *Graduate Outcome*. Select an enrolled student and you will see that you can add both entry and exit profile data. It is the exit profile data that will allow to produce reports of graduate outcomes.

Assessment of Graduate Outcome - Aardvaark, Andrew [ID: 4659]											
Enrolment Data:		Qualification		Diploma in Wildlife Watching							
Performance:	Complete	Start:	15/09/2008	Finish:	24/12/2009	Enrolment Status:	C	Complete?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Date of Completion:	24/12/2009
Entry Profile:		Count	Recent	Organisation	F/P	Score	Level				
Education / Training:	0					0	0				
Employment:	0					0					
Prior Activity:	03										
Exit Profile:		Immediate	Organisation	F/P	Score	Level					
Education / Training:					0	0					
Employment:	CEO		Tertiary Education Commission	F	3						
Community/Social:					0						
Skill/Economic					0						
Post Activity:											
Record Created: 29/07/2010							Record Updated: 29/07/2010				

Top Tips – Counting EFTS

Three percent here, three percent there. Not a great difference really. But when did a government get within 3% of its budget? When did TEC's education performance indicators get within 3% of reality?

If you receive Student Achievement Component (SAC) funding 3% is the sword dangling over your head because enrolling too few or too many EFTS by more than 3% can result in penalties. So getting it right counts. That means, of course, that your organisation has to be able to do what governments and TEC cannot do, namely predict the future. Perversely, and thanks to the vagaries of probability, the smaller your organisation the more chance you have of getting it wrong. The Happy Days Institute with a 30 EFTS allocation is up against Auckland University with an allocation of tens of thousand. Happy Days is on a hiding to nowhere because one student more or one student is 10% of its allocation. For Auckland one student means nothing.

Anyhow, enough of the theory, what about counting EFTS?

Well there is only so much that Take2 can do – after that it's down to common sense – so this month's top tip is less about clicking on buttons on the screen and more about thinking carefully and doing a bit of arithmetic.

1. *Counting your actual EFTS.* TEC counts your EFTS from what you report in the SDR. Whilst there are a variety of EFTS reports in the two editions of Take2, the key report is the "EFTS by Source of Funding" audit report produced when you run a December SDR extraction. Running the report for December means that you will count EFTS from all enrolments in the system, not just those valid at April or August.

Single Data Return Audit File

Course Enrolment File

Happy Days Institute

This report lists records included in the SDR Course Enrolment file.

Return Year: 2010

Extract Date: 31/12/2010

Actual EFTS Consumed by Source of Funding

Funding Source	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
01 Student component funding (for	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.9175	1.4954	1.6034	1.2371	36.6366
TOTAL of all EFTS	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.5479	3.9175	1.4954	1.6034	1.2371	36.6366

2. *Get enrolments into the system.* It is vital that you enter enrolments into Take2 as soon as you can because it is only then that the December EFTS by Source of Funding report will be accurate. If you put a pile of enrolment forms to one side and don't enter them until November you will be in trouble.
3. *History never repeats?* Only you can know this and every organisation has different factors that affect enrolments but, if you have no cause to think that this year is much different from last year in terms of enrolment peaks and troughs, then open up Excel and enter some formulae. Say that when you run an April 2009 SDR (which you still can in Take2) the EFTS by Source of Funding report shows 100 SAC funded EFTS for the year. Then you run the December 2009 SDR the total SAC EFTS is 150 – i.e. a 50% increase. Now run the April 2010 SDR. Say the SAC funded EFTS is 120 then, all things being equal, the December SAC funded EFTS will be around 180. In fact, if highest growth is observed in months having above average EFTS (measured at the April SDR) then the absolute EFTS increase could be even greater as in the example below.

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2009	Take2 April 2009 SDR	5	15	15	15	10	8	8	8	4	6	3	3	100
	Take2 December 2009	5	15	15	15	12	12	12	15	15	12	11	11	150
	Growth April to December	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	50%	50%	88%	275%	100%	267%	267%	50%
2010	Take2 April 2010 SDR	8	16	16	16	11	12	12	10	5	6	4	4	120
	Take2 December 2010 assuming same growth rate as 2009	8	16	16	16	13	18	18	19	19	12	15	15	184

4. *But think about the variables.* Start with the calculation described above but then think about what might have changed or be changing and adjust accordingly. Is an intake of 20 students, each generating 1 EFTS over 10 months, happening two months later in 2010 than it did in 2009? That would mean 4 EFTS fewer in 2010 ($0.2 \times 20 = 4$). Importantly that also means 4 EFTS more in 2011.
5. *Enrolments late in the year aren't worth much.* As the above example shows, the start date of enrolments really does affect the spread of EFTS. If you are dropping behind your EFTS target you need to get onto it as soon as possible. A new enrolment in November will help enormously with your 2011 EFTS count but won't solve your 2010 problem.
6. *Staggered course enrolments can affect your EFTS count.* A number of providers are now staggering course enrolments because it assists in boosting successful course completion rates and can help control overshooting the EFTS cap. For example, say a student enrolls in a nine month programme made up of three courses. Traditionally the provider enrolled the student into all three courses using the start and finish dates of the enrolment event – say 01/01/2010 to 30/09/2010. If however the three courses are delivered in sequence then it is possible to apply dates that are specific to each course – say course 1 is from 01/01/2010 to 31/03/2010, course 2 is from 01/04/2010 to 30/06/2010, and course 3 is from 01/07/2010 to 30/09/2010. In this case if the student withdraws after completing course 2, but before commencing course 3, the total EFTS will be reduced by one third.

Finally, though, remember that the most reliable report produced from Take2 for counting EFTS is the "EFTS by Source of Funding" audit report produced when you run a December SDR extraction.

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