
NZPI EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW

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The NZPI has decided to review its Education Policy, and a draft of a proposed new policy was circulated to planning programme heads on 3rd July 2009. As always, it will be a difficult issue. The educational needs of the profession are always hard to define because of the varied skills and knowledge that is required of a planner, and the many fields of professional planning. There is also the question of how much should be taught on the job and how much at University and the distinct differences between form of delivery of research-led education required by the government and the expectations of those not involved in tertiary education.

The Tertiary Education Commission, for instance, is heading toward adopting the international standard (the Bologna Agreement) which is based around a 3 year bachelors degree with options of plus 1year, and plus 2 years for post graduate qualifications. This is the model that Lincoln has established and has recently been reaccredited by the NZPI. It means that if a

student has not met the standard to advance from undergraduate to postgraduate study they will not be able to complete a professional planning qualification at Lincoln. The traditional planning programmes at Auckland and Massey, however, have four year undergraduate planning degrees. This means that their students do not need to meet the post graduate academic entry standards that the Lincoln students do. On the other hand, students at Lincoln can complete a BEMP with a professional planning minor after three years, but not be eligible for membership of the NZPI. Such issues are bound to form part of the discussion of the draft policy, as will the proposed content of the education programmes.

Planning education has not featured on the NZPI annual conference programme for some time. Consequently, Lincoln's Prof Ali Memon has initiated a meeting of New Zealand planning programme representatives at the Australia and New Zealand Planning Schools' annual conference which is being held at

Griffith University in Australia in August 2009. Fortuitously, the Australian planning schools are reviewing their equivalent accreditation procedures at the same conference. It is expected that this will enable useful comparisons of content and delivery.

NZPI MEMBERSHIP A general reminder to folk to keep up their NZPI membership! Recent issues of Planning Quarterly have focused on Coastal Planning and Transport Planning. The upcoming issue will focus on the RMA reforms and the following issue will feature structure planning.