

# AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION DELIVERY

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The Auckland University of Technology (AUT) has been working with the Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT) for some five years in an environmental curriculum development programme, supported by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The initial model envisaged that FIT students would at first study at FIT for two years gaining a FIT qualification. They would then travel to New Zealand to study at AUT for a further year and obtain a Bachelor of Applied Science.

However, it became obvious that few students would be able to afford to study in this manner and an alternative model was developed. The alternative model contains five major components:

- Students study at FIT in Year 3 taught by AUT lecturers (theory material is taught by distance and AUT lecturers travel to Fiji to conduct the field portions of the programme).
- FIT staff provide local tutorial assistance for the theory portions of the programme and help on field trips.
- The third year of the AUT programme delivered at FIT has been modified to reflect a Fijian and South Pacific flavour and thus be far more relevant for the FIT students.
- A strong capacity building element has been built into the programme which will hopefully enable FIT eventually to operate the third year of the programme independently.
- The programme will be self-funding once the development phase ends.

The first cohort of 14 environmental science degree students are currently finishing the third year of the programme and the alternative model appears to be functioning very well.