

# Workforce Matters!

Together growing the workforce and good local jobs

**Workforce matters!  
Especially to our local employers and businesses.**

They're key stakeholders in our Mahi Ora Ōpōtiki - Pathways to Work mahi. And the Workforce Development team at Ōpōtiki District Council works with and alongside them and many other important agencies and individuals to help create more pathways into good local jobs.

## Having a drivers' licence really matters

Ōpōtiki College knows how important it is for rangatahi to have their Drivers Licence. It's a requirement for most jobs, and with so little public transport locally and in the Eastern Bay, it means you can get around legally.

So three years ago, Ōpōtiki College set up "Drive to Thrive", a College-led programme to support all students who want to achieve their Class 1 Learners and Restricted and be on their pathway to their Full Licence.

Toi EDA and the Council's Workforce Team have helped get the programme underway, and over the last two years, thanks to the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs programme students have also gained their Defensive Driving Certificates which gives them more skills, and cuts six months off the wait to sit Full Licences.

We're excited about the programme the College is organising for June, for students keen to get started or progress their licence, learn about road safety (including safe vehicles and maintenance), and diverse pathways having a licence can help with.

## College students learn about the world of work

One of our key partners is Ōpōtiki College. Their academic outcomes are improving and their success is everyone's success as we help young people prepare for their future.

Research shows that rangatahi who learn about a wide range of work options when they are young are much more likely to find and follow a pathway into training or a job. We can all help with this! Madeline from our Workforce Team works closely with the College to help create activities for students alongside our businesses, school leadership, and staff.

### Seeing workplaces in real life

Students make many choices during college about their subjects and areas of study. Knowing the sort of work options that are available really helps them make informed choices. Getting a chance to go and explore some of these options is a great way to learn.

The Workforce Team, alongside many of our local businesses, partner with the College to run a week-long programme each year for students to learn about vocational pathways and spend a couple of days visiting local businesses to see how they run, meet some of the managers and staff and the different jobs they do.

## Our team



Barbara MacLennan and Madeline Kaa

Ōpōtiki District Council has a dedicated workforce development team to help support and coordinate this mahi. We work with local iwi, employers, community, central government and other agencies.



Students outside Ōpōtiki Seeka OPAC ready to learn about the kiwifruit industry.

Students listening to local entrepreneur Jakob Carter as he explains what it takes to run your own business.



Ōpōtiki College students with Deputy Mayor Shona Brown, learning about Local Government.

## Get in touch with us!

Email: [workforce@odc.govt.nz](mailto:workforce@odc.govt.nz)

Visit: [odc.govt.nz/workforcematters](http://odc.govt.nz/workforcematters)

## More than meets the eye

It's always fun when we ask young people if they think there are lots of job options in Ōpōtiki – often their initial answer is "no". But when we help them brainstorm all the businesses and jobs they know about including through their whānau and friends, they quickly create a large "map" that shows just how many varied and interesting job options are right here in our district.

Another way we help rangatahi to see the many work and training options available is to ask past pupils of the college to pop in and talk with the thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds. They chat about their journey at college all the way through to the job they have now.

These conversations help students to ask lots of questions with their whānau and friends, like "What's the best job you've had? What did you do? Why did you like it?" This all expands their understanding of the world of work.



Students using VR headsets courtesy of the Ministry of Social Development to explore different work environments and activities.

