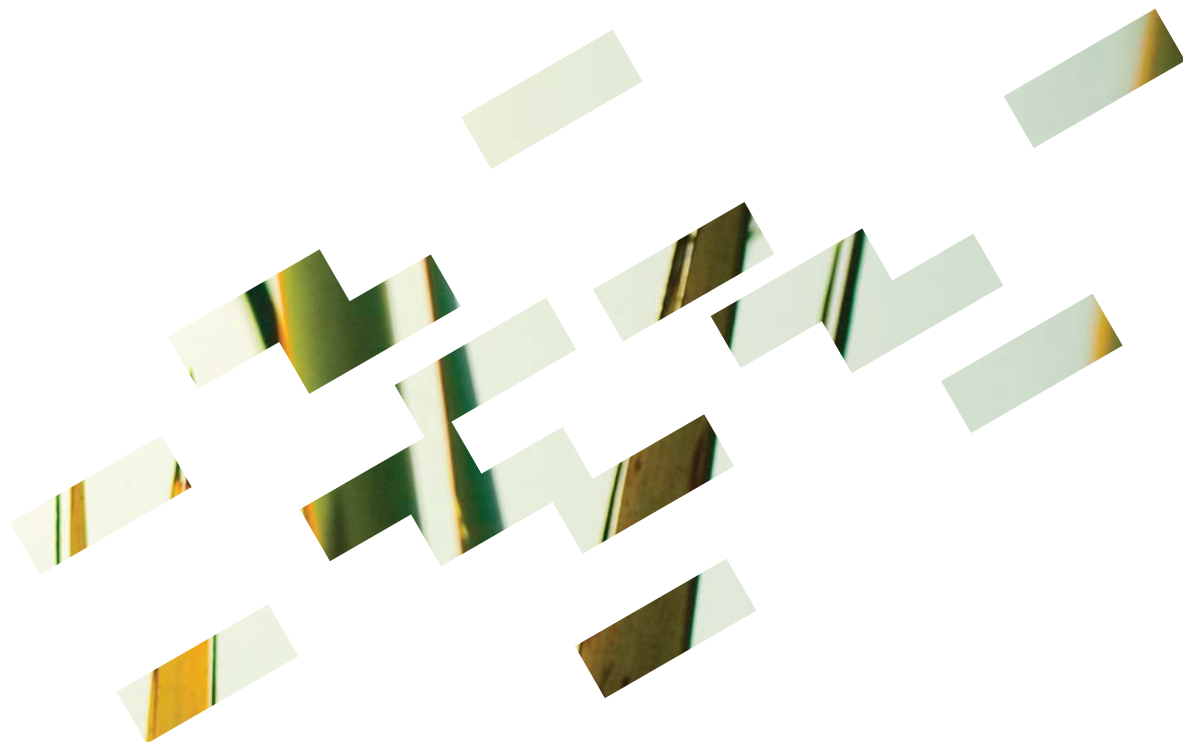


Professional Development for Leaders in Education





WORLDWIDE

Realising the Potential of People

Accent Learning specialises in delivering professional development to educators and school leaders from different countries.

From an Accent Learning program you will gain new ways of thinking about your own country's system and new ideas to use in schools.

Accent has extensive knowledge of the New Zealand education system, which is internationally held in high regard. We provide an introduction and exposure to the New Zealand system through professional development programs held in Wellington, the capital city (<http://www.growwellington.co.nz/page/experience.aspx>).

Accent has grown out of the Faculty of Education at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) and continues to be informed by the complementary capabilities of the Faculty. We are a division of Victoria Link Ltd, a company owned by VUW.



The New Zealand Education System

New Zealand is at the leading edge in curriculum implementation, pedagogy and school leadership.

- Our approach is evidence based and informed by leading research from local and international academics.
- While New Zealand has a national curriculum, there is scope for innovation and flexibility at the school level.
- Schools are self-managing: each one designs its program according to the needs of its students and community. Teaching is based on inquiry (reflective practice) and is student centered – the focus always comes back to positive outcomes for the student.

- Responsibility for learning is shared between teachers and students.
- Teachers form learning communities, which continuously reflect on and improve the way they work.

What is Reflective Practice?

Reflective practice leads to sustainable, positive change. It involves thinking about what we have done and asking ourselves: Why? Did it work? Where to from here?

Reflective practice:

- stems from school leadership
- is informed by internal and external feedback
- is self-sustaining
- means challenging and supporting our own and our colleagues' teaching and learning strategies
- improves teaching and learning practices.

Accent Learning offers an innovative approach to developing new tools and different ways of thinking, so as to revitalise teacher-student relationships and improve learning.

Our approach is inter-disciplinary and involves the whole school.

We help make sense of what knowledge you already have. Changes become so embedded in everyday practice that they can't help but grow and be sustained.

- Deidre Vercauteren,
Education Program Manager



Who are we?

Accent's permanent team of specialist advisers is experienced in leading professional development programs in education.

We are fully acquainted with the research that shows what works, and can apply that knowledge. We have been principals and teachers too, so are 'hands on'.

We are experts in the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum, which has links to educational developments within the OECD. We believe in partnerships.

Accent people:

- are passionate about taking others on the upward journey of learning
- strive to ascend new heights
- share their expertise and in turn learn from others
- challenge themselves and others to develop new skills.

We are outward looking, always learning - our clients have something to teach us too.

- Deidre Vercauteren,
Education Program Manager



Rosemary Christian, Malcolm Menzies and Deidre Vercauteren.

Research

The New Zealand Ministry of Education funds the Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) Program, which we use to inform and direct our work. Dr. Linda Kaser, Professor of Education at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, has hailed the BES Program as “the smartest intellectual property in the world”.

The BES Program gathers evidence of what works in education from local and overseas studies. The research helps educators and students reach their full potential.

Visit www.educationcounts.govt.nz to discover the research domain used by Accent Learning.

The Program

We offer tailored programs delivered in New Zealand, with follow-up back in our clients’ home countries.

A typical program comprises:

- an introduction to the research base
- introduction to the New Zealand Curriculum
- presentations on approaches to professional development:
 - *the whole-school approach*
 - *in-depth development: school priorities, designing programs, self review, working over time to implement sustainable systems*
 - *building communities of practice*

– *insights into best practice school leadership*

- field trips to New Zealand schools for observation and interaction with principals and school leaders
- reflection on field trips
- New Zealand’s cross-cultural environment
- sightseeing, rest and relaxation
- post-course follow up.

Professional support is provided in workshop settings, seminars, and school-based visits.

University academics critique our programs so they have high professional integrity.

Why Accent Learning?

To achieve positive change sometimes you have to step outside of the system you’re in and look at it with fresh eyes.

– *Dr. Malcolm Menzies, Divisional Manager, Accent Learning.*

- We have access to the best principals and teachers in the business, and can match you with the ones that best meet your needs.
- We are expert in the theory and practice of teaching and learning.
- We respond to your specific needs.
- We achieve real outcomes.
- We are well versed in communicating and working in cross-cultural contexts.
- You will have a good time during your stay in Wellington, and a Certificate of Completion will be offered at the end of the program.



Recent Case Study

In August 2009 a group of primary teachers from the UK visited on one of our programs, organised by LECT (League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers). The theme of the visit and its subsequent report was Primary Teaching and Learning Strategies.

Along with six school visits, the group had an overview of teacher professional development, a meeting with the Program Manager for Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour and two senior lecturers from Victoria University. The first visit was to a marae (Māori meeting place).

Key outcomes included:

- evidence of a strong focus on small group, guided work with literacy and mathematics at the core
- overview of detailed planning and regular diagnostic assessment
- innovative approaches to inquiry based, student-led learning across the wider curriculum
- observations of integration of specialist provision
- awareness of multi-cultural approaches.



The report makes these statements based on first-hand observations:

There is a commitment to highly personalised learning and developing learning through enquiry - learning to know and learning to do. There was a cross-curricular approach where children directed their learning depending on their interests. This was monitored and controlled very tightly by teachers with detailed planning.

The whole-school approach meant that it was a very clear assessment procedure for the children and also meant school was creative and exciting and the learning was clearly embedded in the work.

The main innovation seen was the inquiry based learning and how well a flexible child-centred approach was planned out in detail, with purposeful learning objectives, whilst still allowing some flexibility for the interests of different children. This approach clearly put the pupil at the centre.

Planning and assessment in the school was rigorous and detailed. Although the children were driving their own learning in many ways, the teachers had a clear planning structure, which showed that they were facilitators of learning. Assessment was aimed at trying to uncover deeper thinking rather than knowledge of particular facts.

Below is sample feedback from two visiting professionals.

A well-rounded opportunity to observe and understand the bigger picture and reflect on my own practice.

The visit has served as a very valuable contribution to my professional development.

Wellington offers the delights of a big city but without the stress. It's easy to get around and there's a great sense of community and friendliness. Wellington is home to national treasures like the Museum of New Zealand, the National Library and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

The heart of Wellington is the city itself, snug in a valley of green hills, where museums, theatres and cafes flourish. You can take a parliamentary tour, swim at the beach, grab a coffee at one of dozens of chic cafes, or watch a film, all within minutes' walk or bus from each other. Eat at award-winning restaurants - Wellington is renowned as a cuisine capital.

Wellington's greater region is made up of five cities and districts. So, if you're keen to head out of the city centre, there's plenty to do.

Wellington is a smart region too. Wellingtonians are more highly trained and educated than New Zealanders as a whole.

To find out more visit www.growwellington.co.nz



Accent looks forward to welcoming you to New Zealand.

www.accent.ac.nz