



NEW ZEALAND BEAUTY EXPO

AUGUST 2009 FEEDBACK



NEW ZEALAND BEAUTY EXPO AUGUST 2009 IN AUCKLAND

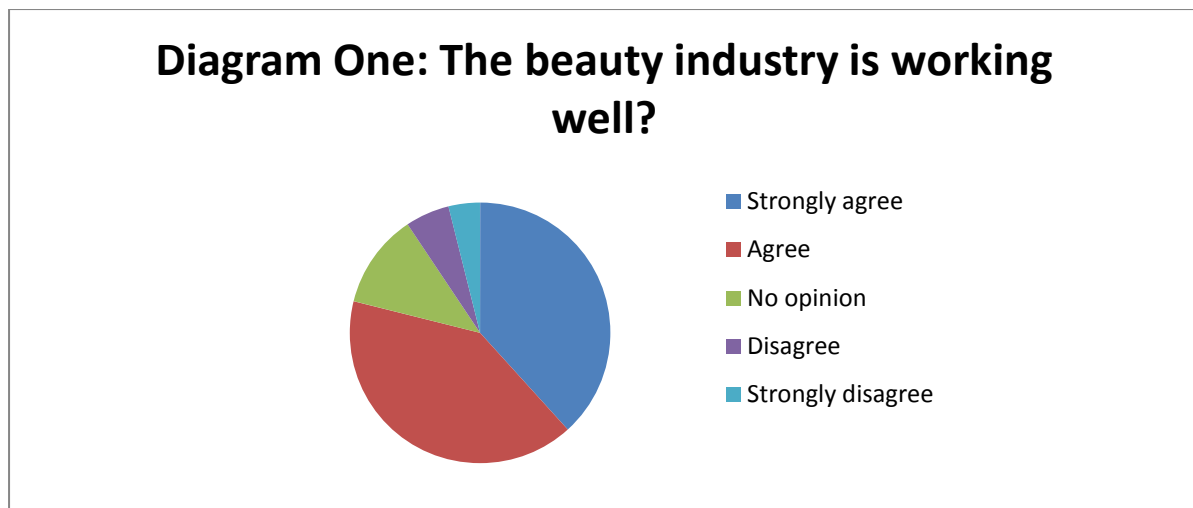
HITO attended the New Zealand Beauty EXPO (EXPO) to gather further feedback from industry concerning national beauty qualifications and wider position statements about the industry in terms of training and preparation for employment. 134 attendees with industry experience ranging from 2-27 years were randomly selected to respond to the survey, and the results of these questions are in this report.

Of those surveyed 84 percent were currently employed as qualified therapists, 14 percent were recent graduates who had gained employment and 2 percent were studying towards a national or branded qualification with the intention of seeking employment post graduation.

Perceptions

Questions concerning perceptions of how the industry was performing were given to gauge current issues and trends.

Those surveyed indicated that the industry was working well (see diagram one). Three people surveyed were looking to open a salon in the Auckland region this year supporting adhoc comments that the industry was still expanding to meet the needs of the public.



Those that disagreed with the suggestion that the industry is working well cited issues with industry standards and the too rapid rate of expansion into new technologies as the main concerns facing the industry. In particular there were concerns that comprehensive post graduate training is not sufficiently broad in scope to cover all post graduate needs or readily available in location. There was a concern that there is an over reliance on developers of products and equipment for training which places the industry in a vulnerable position because there is no agency designed to monitor the

quality of products or training. Other attendees cited concerns with no national standards for practice, and no local standards of practice and a few comments were made that new graduates were insufficiently prepared for the workplace in terms of basic skills, leaving the onus on the employer to train the new staff member to a standard they feel is acceptable to practice independently on clients. Where some employers have lower standards than others this can result in poor practice skills being translated across a wide range of practitioners.

Interestingly those who expressed concern from a trainee perspective stated that their concern was that they had insufficient time to develop confidence in learning skills and that they felt rushed; suggesting the length of training for undergraduates needs to be considered. HITO staff advised those who expressed concern in the length of training that this was an important factor in terms of producing quality graduates and would be discussed in detail when the five national qualifications were reviewed.

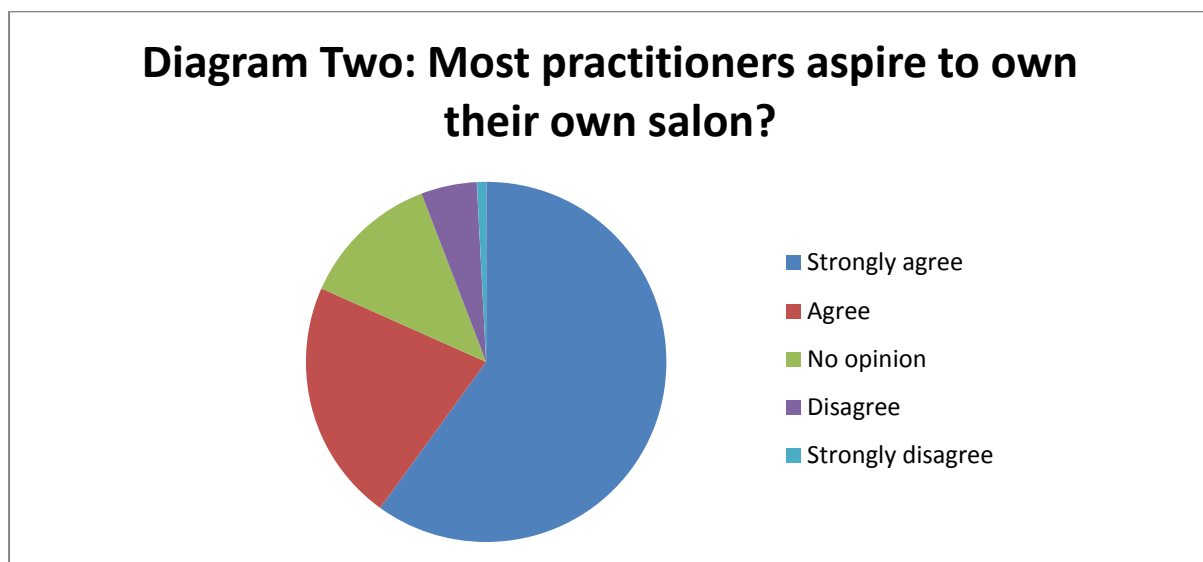
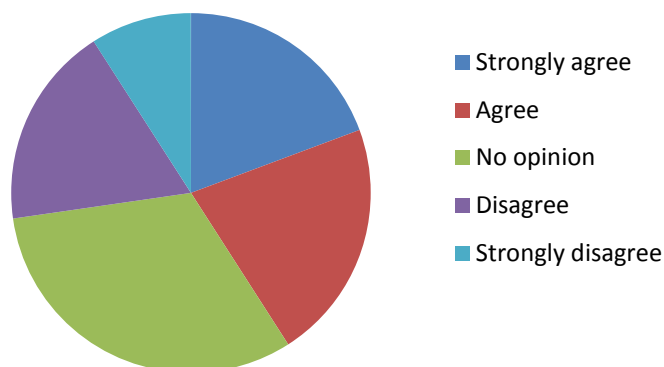


Diagram Two suggests that those working in the industry see themselves working within the industry for a long time which supports the positive growth perceived by those who commented that the industry is working well. This graph also suggests that those coming into the industry will require management training and this has been identified by HITO as an important component within the structure of the national qualifications. For instance to provide a strong platform on which pre and postgraduates can progress their career by undertaking management training and recognising the importance of management (self and others) in the national qualifications. Considering career pathways with sound management platforms embedded national qualifications will support those who intend to stay in the industry in the long term.

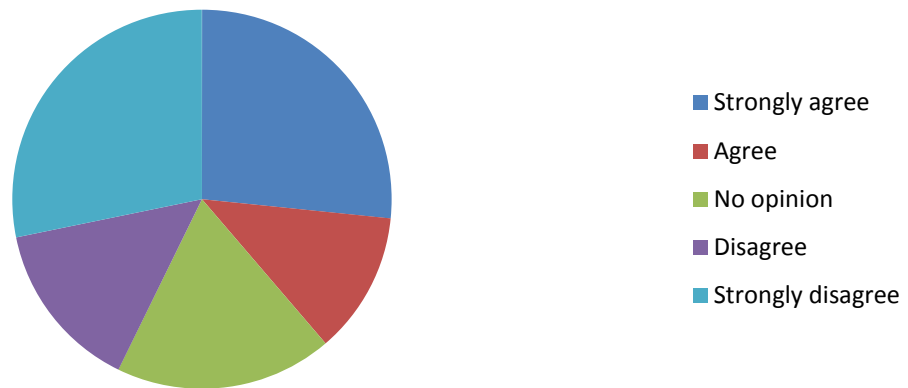
Diagram Three: Are there are literacy issues in the beauty industry?



One of many areas Industry Training Organisations are currently researching are literacy levels in the workplace with a view to supporting trainees in their learning and fostering opportunities for literacy levels to be improved for those who do have difficulty with written, oral and numerical literacy. While the diagram above suggested that there are literacy concerns in the beauty industry, more research will be required in this area to clarify feedback from those who gave no opinion. Those who gave no opinion were often not aware of what literacy meant in the broader sense of the term i.e. reading, writing, numeracy etc and how it applied in the workplace. With a clearer understanding of what literacy means in the 'applied sense' the results may have been different.

Those who stated that there were literacy issues in the workplace believed that the cause of this was the lack of barriers to entry in the national qualifications and the overall attraction to the industry for those who have not progressed through main stream education as successfully as other learners.

Diagram Four: Recent graduates have a good understanding of the industry?



While this diagram would appear at first glance to suggest that there is a balanced opinion whether graduates having a good understanding of industry or not, the results actually show that the majority belongs to those who do not think that graduates have a good understanding of the industry.

When asked why graduates did not have a good understanding of the industry comments included: lack of workplace experience, lack of maturity, the attraction to the industry of those who were not as successful in mainstream education as other learners, lack of appreciation for the complexity of knowledge required to be a competent beauty practitioner, lack of confidence in graduates due to insufficient training (i.e. not enough time to practice their skills to a level where they can perform independently).

There is an opportunity for industry to consider the importance of workplace training (in the early stages) to identify those with the capacity to complete qualifications, but also to ensure that those who do commit to training have the correct perspective on what the industry is about including a sound understanding of the complexity and depth of training they will be prepared to commit to.

Diagram Five: Effective communication is important in the salon?

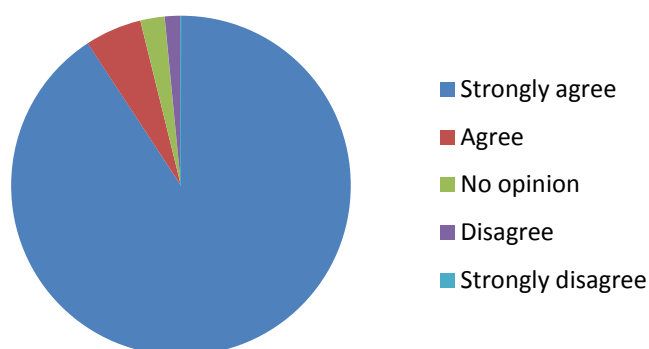


Diagram Five supports the review of the national qualifications with a view to ensuring that effective communication skills are embedded across the qualifications. Effective communication in the broader sense does not only consider verbal communication, but also non verbal communication such as body language, presentation skills, written communication in form of letters, product promotions and general advertising etc.

In the same way that management training is important to industry communication skills are also considered equally as important.

Qualifications

95 percent of those surveyed said that if a therapist qualified with a national beauty qualification (at the same level as a branded qualification) that they would be considered as qualified as a therapist who held a branded qualification.

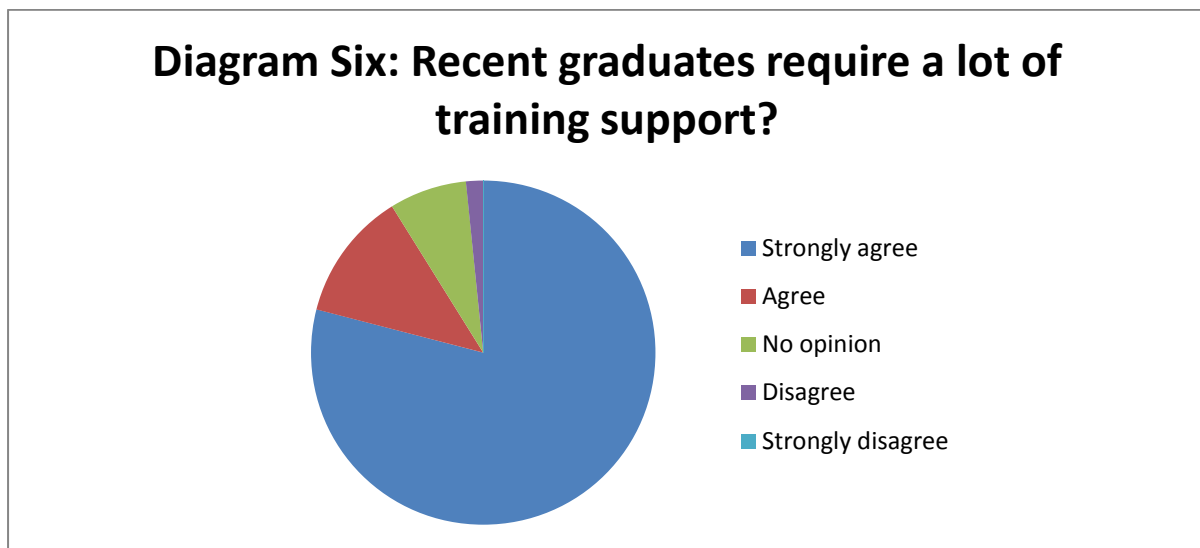
Prior to revision national qualifications can be benchmarked against key international (branded) qualifications such as CIDESCO and CIBTAC to ensure that revised national qualifications are equivalent to these qualifications (if not an improvement on). This statistic also supports previous research at national forums in 2009 where attendees said that they would like the national qualifications to reflect the New Zealand beauty industry and its unique style.

Those surveyed at the EXPO were also increasingly cognisant (more so than those surveyed in the national forums) of the fact that national qualifications would be reviewed frequently to ensure that they remained current with industry practice, where as international qualifications (branded qualifications) were not reviewed as frequently and not constantly quality assured with a robust moderation system.

98 percent of those surveyed said that if a national qualification was equivalent to a branded qualification, that the national qualification would be more desirable.

Training

Training for the purposes of this survey included pre and post graduate training.

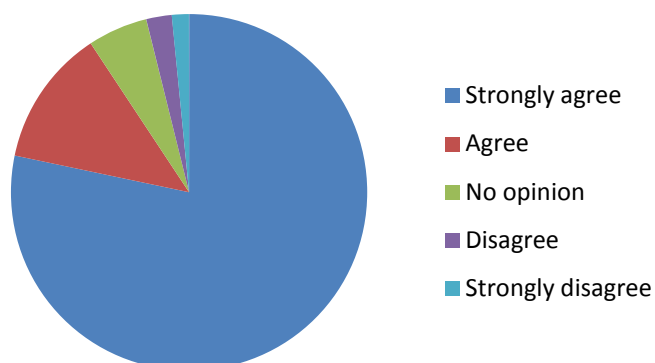


As discussed earlier in the results concerning perceptions of the industry working well (Diagram One) the overwhelming feedback is that trainees do require training post graduate. However considering the findings below in diagram seven the findings largely show that ongoing training is important to qualified practitioners regardless of their level of experience.

Employers who said that they did train recent graduates explained that this was not always because of lack of skill, rather it was to train the new staff member to provide services in their particular working style, or to give the new staff member time to gain confidence in working independently with clients.

Interestingly the majority of those surveys stated that they expected to provide training to new staff (as an industry norm) and that they factored this into induction programmes for new staff members. The general feeling from employers was that while they didn't like having to train recent graduates, that they accepted it as part of working in the industry and being a good employer.

Diagram Seven: Ongoing professional development is expected after graduation?



The majority of those surveyed were engaging in professional development in the next twelve months, and when asked what they would be likely to look for in a training package their answers included: Makeup (application and contents analysis), advanced skin analysis, eyelash extensions, microdermabrasion, gel art, marketing and sales, massage (pregnancy, facial), IPL, spray tanning, electrology, red vein treatment, reflexology, waxing, pregnancy treatments, wraps/scrubs, and hot stone massage.

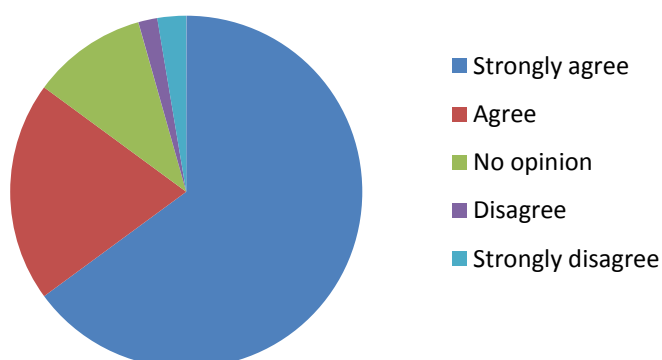
Sourcing for training included the internet, NZ Beauty Magazine, in house salon product suppliers, overseas expos, Private Training Establishments, The NZ Beauty Association website, and local Polytechnics.

The training experience

When asked how they chose their particular provider for their training, the majority of trainees said they first obtained verbal references from friends about what the tutors were like (i.e. were they knowledgeable and supportive), and then they considered the proximity of the potential provider to their home.

Clear preferences were for tutors who were supportive and communicated effectively (in the first instance when selecting a training provider). The reputation of a tutor could result in a trainee choosing one provider over another.

Diagram Eight: Pre employment training is enjoyable?



Trainees who provided anecdotal feedback about their training stated that they felt they were often rushed through their programmes and that they had too short a timeframe to learn a skill before moving on to the next.

The frequency within which a trainee was able to practice a new technique was often commented on by trainees as an area of risk. One trainee said they learnt a new technique in class and that same day had to go home and practice on family and friends then be assessed the next day.

Trainees feared they would not have the confidence to perform a technique on a client in a real workplace environment, even if they could perform the technique in a simulated workplace environment. The fear of harming a client had considerable impact on the confidence of the trainee.

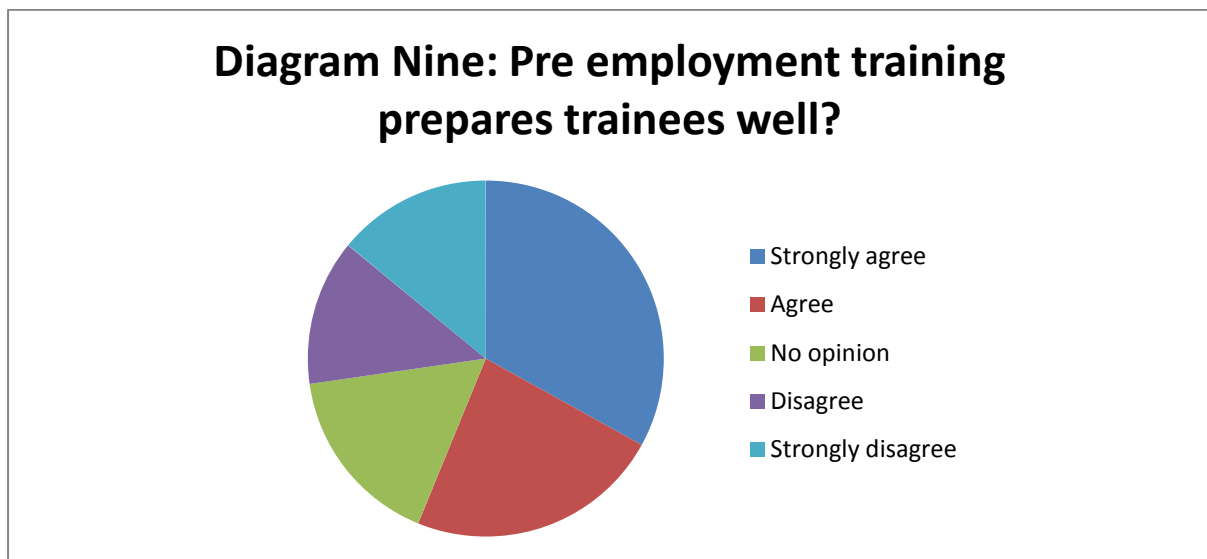
Workplace training and experience

The purpose of obtaining feedback about training in the workplace was to quantify how many qualified therapists had workplace training as part of their formal training, and whether they found it valuable. Interestingly those who said that they *did not* have workplace training would have liked to have had it because it would have helped bridge the gap between working in the 'real world' and working in a simulated training environment.

Those who supported workplace training raised concerns over how it could be managed, and how the public and business owners would respond to having trainees in the workplace.

Resolving the issues regarding workplace training would allow trainees who are early on in their training to determine if the industry was right for them, and allow trainees to see if they would want to specialise in one aspect of beauty practice rather than developing a more generalist knowledge.

Experience in the workplace would afford the trainee with the opportunity to see the level of professionalism required to be a competent and successful practitioner. Diagram nine shows that the majority of those working in the industry consider workplace experience to have an important role in training the future beauty practitioner.



Ongoing issues

Miscellaneous and random comments from those surveyed included:

- National qualifications should include selling skills.
- Workplace training would be supported if the expectations of all stakeholders were clear.
- There is still a perception that people working in this industry are not intelligent.
- Current nail qualifications are poor (lack substance and relevance).
- Training providers are variable in terms of the quality of the training they provide, and quality of their graduates.
- Trainees are lacking communication skills and caring skills (for clients).
- New Zealand qualifications are harder to achieve than branded qualifications.
- There should be entry criteria for national qualifications.
- Apprenticeships will be good for the industry.

In general participants were very willing to share their thoughts. This method of obtaining feedback from industry was invaluable in terms of direct access to industry stakeholders.

The review of the national beauty qualifications in 2010 will be supported by the feedback from this report which concludes that clear career pathways are required with strong emphasis on management and effective communication skills.

There is an opportunity to consider the importance of literacy skill within training.

The benchmarking of national beauty qualifications to branded qualifications will identify areas in which national qualifications can be strengthened to be equal to or improve on branded qualifications so that national qualifications do in time become increasingly the first choice of future learners. Branded qualifications are an important part of training for those who intend to gain workplace experience internationally therefore no suggestion is made that branded qualifications should not be a part of training pre or post graduation for beauty practitioners.

The promotion of national qualifications and introduction of a robust moderation system will ensure that employers have more direct involvement and dialogue in the review of national qualifications.

More work is required as to an appropriate model for workplace training. It is recommended that a trial model be designed and implemented to measure whether the use of workplace training does in fact add value to the learning experience of the trainee.

Attending the EXPO provided assurance to industry of the commitment that is being given by the HTO to develop national qualifications that reflect industry need and reinforced industry awareness of the role of the HTO as the new standard setting body for beauty.