Profile & Trends provides a summary of information on the performance and key characteristics of the New Zealand tertiary education system. To assist providers, the government and students to continue to respond confidently to the challenges we all face in tertiary education, we need good information on the system and on how it is developing.

This edition is the 12th annual survey of the performance of the tertiary education system published by the Ministry of Education. It contains data on trends and changes in the 2009 academic year. The report’s forward-looking commentary, the postscript and the discussion of New Zealand’s third tertiary education strategy aim to capture the latest information on the government’s direction for the tertiary education system.

Profile & Trends is supported by a detailed set of statistical tables and three web booklets – New Zealand’s tertiary education system, What the tertiary education sector provides and Finding out more about tertiary education. The tables and booklets are indexed and can be easily accessed from the Profile & Trends home page on the Education Counts website: www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/2531.

The report starts with an overview of the key tertiary education trends in 2009. A month-by-month summary of important events follows. Recent changes to the tertiary education system and what the sector provides are discussed next, followed by information on the outcomes of tertiary education. The latest highlights about students at the various qualification levels, in both provider-based and workplace-based settings, are covered by chapters 5 to 11. These chapters include information on where students are studying, the qualifications they are taking, their success and achievement, their fields of study and other important characteristics of their work. Also included here is information on non-formal education and the financial support for students. Then the sector’s research capability is described and there is information on how this is funded. Chapters 14 to 16 look at the financial performance of providers, government funding for tertiary education and the human resources in the system. The Tertiary Education Commission has contributed a new chapter covering the performance of providers at the sub-sector level.

While the statistics provided in this report and on Education Counts are derived mainly from returns provided by tertiary education organisations to the Ministry of Education and to the Tertiary Education Commission, care has been taken to consult with the different agencies and organisations outside the ministry that have responsibilities for tertiary education. A considerable amount of information in this report has also come from these agencies. I thank all contributors for the data and assistance they have provided in preparing this report.

I trust you will find Profile & Trends 2009 both relevant and useful for your future decision-making in the face of continuing challenges in the tertiary education system.

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