



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

*Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga*

13 August 2008

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This is to certify that Abigail Sykes was employed as a Communications Assistant with the Learning for Living project team, Tertiary Education, Ministry of Education, New Zealand from 21 February to 1 July 2007. When a vacancy arose we were pleased to appoint her as a Senior Support Officer for Tertiary Education Policy from 2 July to 30 November 2007.

Her tasks included:

- planning, arranging and supporting national workshops
- developing and implementing communications plans
- preparing material for publication (including newsletter, web page, work-books)
- maintaining distribution lists
- managing relationships with project developers, tertiary education sector representatives, partner government agencies, researchers and conference venues
- arranging printing and mail-outs.

Abigail was outstanding in managing a complex national project, the Learning for Living Workshops. This involved management of around 1200 participants, arranging venues, catering and air travel in many different regions of New Zealand and producing the printed material and tutor resources. In addition she liaised closely with the national team of 12 facilitators who ran the workshops which was a significant relationship management role. This project was externally evaluated and the areas for which Abigail was responsible received excellent rankings.

She combines efficiency with excellent personal relationships across complex teams which are skills that are rare to find. When problems arose as they must in large projects Abigail responded rapidly to make changes always maintaining equanimity and cheerfulness.

Abigail worked closely with our Communications Manager where her skills in interviewing and producing a wide variety of written and visual text demonstrated her passion and talent for media work.

Abigail left our division as she wished to advance her career. I would be delighted to recommend her for other positions.

Anne Lee  
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