

Report of External Evaluation and Review

IBANZ College Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 19 September 2012

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Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	IBANZ College Limited
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 1, 143 Nelson Street, Auckland Central
First registered:	31 March 2010
Code of Practice signatory?	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 50 part-time students (96 per cent Pakeha/European)
Number of staff:	Four full-time equivalents
Courses currently delivered	As well as National Certificates in Financial Services, IBANZ College offers a wide range of technical courses for insurance brokers across New Zealand.
Scope of active accreditation:	The National Certificate in Financial Services (Level 4) and National Certificate in Financial Services (Level 5) are made up of Standard Sets or units. IBANZ College is a delegated assessing organisation accredited by the ElectroTechnology Industry Training Organisation (ETITO) to offer training for all unit standards contained in the Standard Sets A, B, C, and E. They are also able to provide assessment against Standard Sets A, C, and E.
Distinctive characteristics:	All education offered through IBANZ College is delivered in blended learning mode. Most of the course materials are available to students online,

and this content is supported by events and workshops across the country.

All programmes are self-funded, with the majority of learners either fully funded or part-funded by their employers.

All learners are in full-time work. Study in the certificates is self-paced at a distance and part-time.

Recent significant changes: The level 5 National Certificate in Financial Services qualification was developed as a new benchmark for practising financial advisers. Initially, the level 5 was thought to become the minimum requirement for all financial advisers, including insurance brokers, but this has not been the case. There is still no minimum qualification for the sector.

The Christchurch earthquakes have had a significant impact on the insurance sector. The significance for IBANZ College is the amount of time required by brokers to renew policies, which places significant pressure on the workloads of current students.

Previous quality assurance history: An NZQA compliance review conducted in December 2010 found IBANZ College fully compliant. National external moderation material submitted to ETITO and NZQA successfully met required standards.

Other: IBANZ College operates under the IBANZ (Insurance Brokers Association of New Zealand) Ltd umbrella and delivers training and education for insurance brokers throughout New Zealand. IBANZ College was established as a named, separate entity in May 2009 and decided to become an NZQA-registered PTE. NZQA registration was awarded 31 March 2010.

The majority of IBANZ College students are members of IBANZ.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review (EER) consisted of the mandatory focus area: governance, management, and strategy, and the programme with the largest number of students: the National Certificate in Financial Services (Level 5).

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

The principal of IBANZ College supplied the evaluation team with a self-assessment report prior to the visit.

The evaluation team of two visited the Auckland site over two days. Interviews were conducted with two college directors, the principal, and trainers and tutors who deliver the technical courses and national certificates. The student liaison officer was also included in an interview. Phone interviews were conducted with a number of students and other key stakeholders chosen randomly from a list supplied by the college. A range of documentation was reviewed, including the business plan and quality improvement plan, course evaluations, notes from focus group interviews, database records, reports to the board, and minutes of trainer and staff meetings.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **IBANZ College Limited**.

IBANZ College was established in response to a demand to lift the professionalism of those who work in the financial services sector, including insurance brokers. The aftermath of the Christchurch earthquakes has revealed a number of incidents that highlight inadequate training. The vision, to lift professional standards, that guides the college's activities is shared across the organisation. In the past year there has been a three-fold increase in the demand for the short technical courses offered by IBANZ College, and participants report that the courses are relevant and engaging and provide them with relevant industry knowledge and skills. Industry stakeholders also attest to the value of the training being delivered by IBANZ College, particularly the professional development courses which target technical skills.

For a range of reasons, the National Certificate in Financial Services (Level 4) does not match industry needs well; however, the level 5 qualification is in increasing demand. To date, the numbers achieving these qualifications have been low. This can be explained by the fact that the programme is relatively new and study is self-paced, at a distance, and part-time. Furthermore, all insurance brokers have had increasing demands on their workload since the Christchurch earthquakes. However, the level 5 programme is still under development and improvements have been made to the blended learning delivery and support given to students.

In response to the low achievement rate, the organisation has been refining its teaching and learning processes and there is evidence of quality improvements in content delivery, in workshops and online, and in moderation processes and student guidance and support. The value of these improvements was reflected in key stakeholder feedback, including moderation reports and course evaluations, but this has not affected the outcomes of the programme as yet.

While achievement in the qualifications is low, the evaluation team is confident in IBANZ College's educational performance. This is based on the increasing demand and success of the short technical courses being delivered and the quality of the learner-centred education processes now in place.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **IBANZ College Limited**.

There is good alignment between IBANZ College's vision, business plan, and quality improvement plan and the development of tools such as the students 'learning journey' which documents how different pieces of the quality management system link with student success.

The organisation has good processes for gathering trainee, employer, and industry feedback and it was clear from reports to the board and meeting minutes that this feedback is being used to inform improvements. There is a genuine attempt to engage with the sector; examples are the forward-focused surveys, focus groups, and an active engagement in the NZQA-led Targeted Review of Qualifications process. The evaluation team saw multiple examples of improvements that have been made to teaching and learning and student support. These include improved induction processes and an increased number of workshops and online tutorials.

The database being used to track the achievement of national certificate students is adequate and it is clear that every student is being closely monitored. However, it is not effective for being able to analyse data at the certificate or cohort level and this could become a problem if and when student numbers grow. While the enrolment and participation in the technical courses is growing, analysis of quantitative data around these courses is lacking.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Adequate**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Adequate**.

Students participating in the technical courses achieve continued professional development credits. Furthermore, their survey feedback and feedback from managers attest to important skills and knowledge being gained through participation in these courses.

The numbers of students that have completed the national certificates is small. Of the 69 students who have enrolled since 2010, only three have completed, 11 have withdrawn (five as a result of the earthquakes), and 55 are still active. The organisation is tracking the progress of those still active, and it is expected that most will achieve. The delays are partly due to the work demands on brokers increasing since the Christchurch earthquakes. In addition, a number of strategies have been adopted to improve student achievement, including better enrolment processes, flexible assessment options, and the appointment of a dedicated student support person. However, the effects of these strategies are yet to be felt and the organisation acknowledges that the low achievement is a disappointment.

The feedback from those participating in the qualification is mostly positive, and trainees attest to the fact that they are gaining valuable professional knowledge and skills. The mechanisms for tracking the achievement of these students are in place and it is clear that the progress of every student is being carefully tracked, although the system will be difficult to use if numbers grow.

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

A graduate from the focus area programme noted that she had learned valuable skills which improved her performance at work and with clients. She believed her qualification set her apart and enhanced her career prospects. This view is supported by the feedback gained from interviews with current students and

¹ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

managers. Key stakeholders, including human resources managers and chief executive officers, noted that they value a national qualification that ensures brokers have a level of competence and professionalism.

There is also great value seen in having the delivery of technical courses undertaken by people with great depth of knowledge and expertise. The lack of technical ability across the industry is acknowledged and this was highlighted by the situation after the Christchurch earthquakes. The demand for technical courses has tripled in a year and this is a strong indicator of perceived value. A significant majority of participants rate positively the relevance and scope of the course to their work.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Adequate**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

It is a widely held view among insurance brokers and members of IBANZ that the National Certificate in Financial Services qualification, as currently configured, is too general for those who work in the insurance sector. IBANZ College is well aware of the issue of relevance and has worked to make its course material and assessment applicable and relevant. However, the organisation is restricted by an inflexible qualification. The principal is actively participating in the targeted review of the qualification.

IBANZ College has reviewed its content and assessment material to ensure they have relevance to the industry. All materials are pre-moderated by industry advisors before being approved to give assurance that in all technical aspects the information is current, relevant, and accurate.

The national certificates are offered by distance, and online materials provide background information and assessments. Currently the online component is adequate but not particularly engaging. The online material is supported by workshops which are held in different regions at different times. These workshops are well received by learners for the ability to interact with their tutors and fellow students and engage with the content offline. The distance mode enables learners from across the country to participate in study while they are employed, and the workshops are useful for engaging learners with the content.

As noted above, there has been a significant increase in the demand for the technical courses. All participants who attend these courses are surveyed about what technical subjects they would like for the future. This information is used to plan further offerings. The content of these courses is carefully moderated by a range of industry advisors to ensure accuracy and relevance. Feedback from

participants is monitored carefully to ensure they are highly satisfied with all aspects of the course, and most of them are.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

There has been a programme of work to improve the quality of delivery on the programme, both online and in workshops. The principal uses information from observations and trainee feedback to support trainer development. There was good evidence to show that trainers found the support from the principal helpful.

IBANZ College actively participates in moderation, both internally and externally. Reports from NZQA and ETITO show that assessment material is meeting standards, ensuring that learners' achievements are valid. The organisation has found interesting ways to support learner assessment when necessary, including sitting alongside candidates in the workplace to find naturally occurring evidence of competency.

The blended delivery mode of teaching is in development and the recent adoption of webinars is an example of this. The webinars have not worked for all students, and the college continues to look for new approaches. Student feedback notes that the teaching approach in workshops is interactive and engaging. The relating of industry experiences that link the theory to practice is particularly useful.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

As a result of the disappointing achievement rate, there has been a change of focus across the small team to being increasingly learner-centred. The learning journey document is analysed regularly by staff, discussing strengths and weaknesses and sharing good practice.

Consequently, improvements have been made to student support. These include the appointment of a student support and liaison person who has the responsibility for making regular contact with each student. The feedback from students demonstrates that they feel they can get support by phone whenever they require and that when they have rung they have had the queries promptly dealt with.

A new induction process for every student ensures that they know what they need to do and where they can go for support and guidance. A webinar has been

created for this induction, and at times the induction has occurred in the learners' workplace. This flexible approach has resulted in an assurance that all students have a clear idea of what they are committing to when they sign on to the programme.

Other strategies to support learners include the facilitation of regional study groups, where possible, to bring learners together. Some learners participate in workshops before signing up to the qualification programme. Liaison with learners' employers could be strengthened. Often these employers have made a significant financial contribution to the learners' fees and their support can at times be pivotal in enabling learners to participate and achieve.

1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

There is a clear vision that guides IBANZ College and the activity within it. This vision is shared across the organisation, which is small and collegial. The principal has overseen a number of positive developments based on sound educational principles, and they have been supported by the board. It is expected that the developments will have an impact on learner achievement.

Regular reports to the board and other key stakeholders demonstrate that information is being sought and used to understand how the organisation can better match the needs of all key stakeholders. The shift in focus to the technical courses is an example of this, and considerable work has gone into their development. A three-fold increase in enrolments is a strong indication of demand, and feedback is used continuously to ensure the courses match expectations.

While achievement in the national certificate programmes is not yet satisfactory, NZQA is confident that in time the improvements seen at this EER will be reflected in improving achievement rates and a further increase in both demand for and the quality of the technical courses that are delivering training to the insurance brokering sector.

Focus Areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

2.2 Focus area: National Certificate in Financial Services (Level 5)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Adequate**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review, other than those expressed or implied within the report.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of programme approval and accreditation (under sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the Criteria for Approval and Accreditation of Programmes established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act and published in the Gazette of 28 July 2011 at page 3207. These policies and criteria are deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under the new section 253.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual programmes they own or provide. These criteria and policies are also deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under section 253. Section 233B(1) of the Act requires registered PTEs to comply with these rules.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the EER process approved by the NZQA Board.

The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz).

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>

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