



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
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External Evaluation and Review Report



Soshi Gakuen New Zealand Incorporated
trading as IPU New Zealand

Date of report: 19 September 2019

About IPU New Zealand

IPU New Zealand is a not-for-profit education organisation offering programmes teaching interdisciplinary and transferable skills, particularly communication, research and critical thinking. IPU is part of an international network of tertiary education organisations. Staff have a strong background in international tertiary education. More than 20 different cultures and nationalities are enrolled.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	57 Aokautere Drive, Fitzherbert, Palmerston North
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 53 equivalent full-time students in 2018, of whom 25 per cent are Māori and/or Pasifika International: 300 equivalent full-time students in 2018. Predominantly from Japan, Indonesia and Vietnam 90 per cent of students are under 25 years
Number of staff:	70 full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	IPU details on NZQA website
Last EER outcome:	June 2015: Highly Confident in both educational performance and capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	International Student Support and Wellbeing; English language programmes (including New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL); Bachelor of Contemporary International Studies. Most IPU students are accommodated in hostels on the campus.
MoE number:	8550
NZQA reference:	C34796
Dates of EER visit:	11-13 June 2019

Summary of Results

IPU is a strongly performing tertiary organisation which adds value to students through its programmes and qualifications, and to the wider Manawatu region and beyond through the collaboration and community activities it participates in.

Highly Confident in educational performance

The NZQA degree monitor described IPU's four higher-level programmes¹ as 'academic and engaging in terms of faculty teaching techniques, IPU academic support, and students' academic standards'. This evaluation supports this positive view.

IPU is collaborative and well connected, with numerous active and ongoing arrangements with local, national and international education-related organisations. These connections inform both programme currency and development, and offer unique opportunities for students and graduates.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Programme and qualification pass rates are strong. The NZCEL qualification has proved more challenging, with students spending longer in study to achieve a qualification as a result. Assessment quality in this programme needs improvement (see 2.2).

IPU enrolls primarily international students, and has a coherent, well-developed pathway from off-shore recruitment to support while in study. Monitoring and knowledge of graduate outcomes is generally effective.

The PTE makes changes to its delivery and services in response to student feedback. Most students are satisfied, retained in study, and succeed as a result.

Self-assessment for continuous improvement and supporting decision-making is well embedded at IPU. Some areas could be strengthened further (see Recommendations).

¹ Bachelor of Contemporary International Studies; Postgraduate Diploma of Contemporary International Studies; Graduate Diploma of International Studies; Master of Contemporary International Studies – 2018 monitoring report.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students achieve well at IPU, particularly at degree and postgraduate levels. Qualification achievement has been somewhat weaker in the newer NZCEL programme (see 2.2 and Appendix 1 for supplementary data). Analysis and use of achievement data is robust and embedded.</p> <p>In 2018, course completions for domestic, TEC³-funded students were 88 per cent (against an 84 per cent TEC target). In programmes at level 7 and above, course completion rates were 87 per cent for domestic students and 91 per cent for international students.</p> <p>Graduate and postgraduate programmes average 94 per cent course completion year on year, and 100 per cent in the Master's programme.</p> <p>For the 12 Māori students studying in 2018, course completions were 82 per cent. This is an improvement on both 2017 (78 per cent), and 2016 (74 per cent). The smaller number of Pasifika (four students in 2018) achieved 77 per cent, 92 per cent and 97 per cent course completions in the same period. Of all students aged under 25, course completion appears strong, with some variability in English language programmes.</p> <p>The weakest performing area was the level 5 travel and tourism programme, whose three domestic students in 2017 achieved a 42 per cent pass rate. This is an outlier which led to changes in student interview and selection processes.</p> <p>Moderation and processes for ensuring the authenticity of student work are robust, although NZQA monitoring has</p>

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ Tertiary Education Commission

	identified weaknesses in NZCEL, as discussed under 1.3.
Conclusion:	Student achievement, particularly at degree level and higher, is strong. Monitoring, analysis and recording of all dimensions of student achievement is detailed, used by relevant groups, and is improvement focused. The move to NZCEL has impacted pass rates in English (see 2.2).

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Between 2015 and 2018, 461 international and 70 domestic students (including eight Māori and two Pasifika) graduated from IPU with a diploma or degree. For the English language programmes in 2018, 31 students gained entry into higher programmes, with 24 of these entering the degree.</p> <p>IPU has comprehensively analysed outcomes, in particular for Japanese students: ‘of Japanese students who graduated between 2011 and 2018, [IPU has] information for 71 per cent. Of those whom we have successfully tracked...95 per cent are in paid work and 5 per cent are in further study. [And] of all graduates who qualified [at IPU 2017-2018], 33 per cent had already secured a job at the point of graduation’.</p> <p>The evaluators also found positive outcomes in relation to the needs of Education New Zealand, the Ministry of Education and local communities. Much of this was confirmed through stakeholder interviews. Stakeholder engagement is positive and ongoing.</p> <p>Multiple sources are used to gain a picture of graduate destinations and to analyse this in relation to institutional and programme aims and student aspirations. Quantitative data is supplemented by numerous positive testimonials from a range of graduates. Data is presented and described across multiple years and linked to specific vocational areas.⁴ IPU also has close working relationships with some other Soshi Gakuen institutions. This has benefits for staff and student exchange, and fosters the PTE’s goal of intercultural learning.</p>

⁴ Alumni Graduate Destinations Project analysis

Conclusion:	Although knowledge of graduate outcomes is generally strong, there are limitations in establishing a match between the desired IPU graduate profile and the skills graduates display in the workplace. Efforts are underway to clearly align all assessments to this profile, but there is more that can be done here to demonstrate exemplary self-assessment evidence.
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1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>IPU has an overarching graduate profile which is current and relevant. The graduate profile is explicitly linked to teaching and learning. Since the previous EER, IPU has developed numerous new NZCEL and diploma programmes. It has introduced international business specialisations into the degree programme and revised the Master's programme structure. IPU has been actively creating new and retiring dated programmes to maintain an up-to-date offering.</p> <p>There are logical programme pathways for both domestic and international students. Some graduates have reportedly progressed from an English language programme to degree graduation at IPU and subsequent achievement of a PhD in New Zealand. Some New Zealand graduates are employed in Japan using their qualifications and skills off-shore.</p> <p>A quality teaching intent statement has been developed with staff. This explicitly links to staff performance through 'key result areas'. These, along with student feedback from surveys, can lead to 'performance' discussions between a teacher and their line manager.</p> <p>Digital learning is being advanced through an e.learning strategy. A learning management system is used, and professional development is occurring. Quality teaching is fostered. Internships, although optional, are now well embedded and have a relevant connection with employers and voluntary agencies. They have relatively modest student uptake, but external stakeholders affirm their value.</p> <p>An active and well-informed external advisory committee operates. The academic board and sub-committees apply</p>

	<p>appropriate academic oversight and controls, as seen through their minuted discussions and decisions.</p> <p>IPU is collaborative and well connected, with numerous active and ongoing arrangements with local, regional, national and international education and business-related organisations. These connections inform programme development and currency and opportunities for students and graduates. Activities for students have included presentations from country ambassadors and/or diplomatic staff.⁵ This links to the programme content and IPU purpose and vision.</p> <p>Authenticity of student work is managed using widely accepted protocols. A major advantage is small class sizes – teachers know the capabilities and writing styles of their students. IPU continues to have a targeted and effective internal and external moderation system. Examples include grade analysis by the internal moderation committee, blind marking of papers to compare consistency, and purposeful sampling of all marked work. External moderators from other tertiary organisations (including universities) are used to ensure subject expertise.</p> <p>Overall, assessment is managed well. However, recent NZQA monitoring has identified gaps and weaknesses in NZCEL assessment.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Teaching, collaboration and research are strengths of IPU. The programmes on offer are relevant to the target students, contemporary in content and academically challenging. Assessment for NZCEL needs improvement.</p>

⁵ Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Mexico and the Netherlands most recently.

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>IPU has a range of well-staffed services to support students, both academically and socially. This includes counselling and medical services on campus. Close attention is paid to student wellbeing, and most students are satisfied and succeed as a result. Some students receive fee-reduction scholarships based on performance.</p> <p>Credible and ongoing efforts are made to monitor student satisfaction with all aspects of their experience at IPU. The semester 2, 2018 survey found that 83 per cent of respondents said they were 'happy or very happy with pastoral care'. Ninety-four per cent of 2017 and 2018 graduate respondents reported satisfaction with the level of academic support provided. Survey response rates increased to 50 per cent in 2018 because of changes to the mode of gathering feedback. Survey questions and means of eliciting feedback have been subject to review and refinement.</p> <p>Recent work on a new student wellbeing strategy is notable. It is a well-considered, holistic strategy which links to the latest Education New Zealand strategy goals, desired Code of Practice outcomes, and IPU strategy and values. A measurement framework on the key dimensions of targeted success and outcomes may prove valuable. Student bodies include a student council, hall leaders and a new student diversity panel. Training and support is given to develop student leadership.</p> <p>Most IPU staff interviewed have been exposed to Code of Practice training. Funding and implementation of professional development for all staff in responding to Māori learner needs is also positive. Deeper analysis of Indonesian students' experience may be useful.</p>
Conclusion:	IPU reviews its programmes and responds to students' views by making adjustments or offering new services. This effectively supports student learning and wellbeing.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>IPU is well led, with a clear vision and strategy and a chief executive who is increasingly involved in operational decisions. A board of trustees, management team and academic board meet regularly and are effective in overseeing numerous aspects of policy, programme performance, planning, research and academic quality. Communications within IPU have improved according to both staff and management.</p> <p>Staff employed by IPU are well qualified and experienced. Teachers engage in management-supported professional development and/or research. There have been improvements to their working arrangements and some internal promotions since the previous EER (see Recommendation 1).</p> <p>New investment includes refurbishing some hostels and classrooms and extensions to library hours and online resources. The library is a well-used and resourced facility and a hub for activities as well as study.</p> <p>The academic learning centre is now an autonomous department. More broadly, review has led to changes in the programme portfolio and nature of service delivery to students.</p> <p>IPU has implemented benchmarking and deeper analysis of performance data, as recommended by the previous EER. One example is the qualification completion rate report (including projections). This explored projected pass rates following changes IPU made to student data reporting and changes to TEC calculation methods. As a result of positive achievement over the previous three years, the TEC allowed IPU to enrol 10 additional domestic students annually from 2019.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>IPU operates within a sustainable business model and has a clear and well-formed direction and purpose. Resource allocation supports student engagement, teaching and research. Ongoing connections with stakeholders and the wider community are mature and valued. Strong self-review supports all of this.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>For IPU management, a key focal point is the compliance calendar which shows extensive coverage and is clearly in active use. A range of examples sampled include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEC audit findings and related SDR results reporting and student management system controls show that IPU's compliance is appropriate. A few relatively minor areas were promptly corrected. • Delivery hours, including monitoring of student-directed study, and programme content are being delivered as approved. Additional coaching is available and is mandatory for at-risk students. • Programme change applications, declarations and all other required attestations have been made to NZQA as and when required. The NZQA-approved English language test is no longer used for programme entry, complying with changes to NZQA's Rule 18. • An audit of student files by the evaluators found all items correct. • A critical incident involving an international student was reviewed by the evaluators, and processes were appropriate. • Agent management processes are appropriate. Visa approval rates are consistently very high (currently 96 per cent). • Charities Commission status is maintained, as required.
Conclusion:	Overall, performance and management of compliance was well evidenced at this evaluation. Deficiencies in the retention of samples of student work in NZCEL detract from the overall performance (see 2.2). IPU needs to ensure that all staff follow policy, and particularly when linked to external agency rules.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: International Students: Support and Wellbeing

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>IPU enrolls mainly international students. Support includes hostel or homestay accommodation for most. Key features include deliberate efforts to engage students with local communities to enhance their experience in New Zealand, and rigorous academic programmes to support academic and personal growth.</p> <p>The PTE effectively supports implementation and review of the Code of Practice. Support systems are clearly understood by students and staff. Review processes are robust, well documented and led by people who have training and experience in international education. The self-ratings derived from the PTE’s Code review are realistic, and actions arising are relevant.⁶ Communications with agents and families, including parents of under-18 students is ongoing and documented. Any incidents, concerns and complaints are well managed.</p> <p>The students make use of the comprehensive student handbook. Relevant academic information and pastoral guidance is also explained at induction. Students interviewed were well satisfied, able to describe the support available, their use of facilities (such as the gymnasium, library and common areas), and interaction with the Palmerston North community. A free bus to the city is well used.</p> <p>Achievement data and external survey data⁷ suggest continued strong performance by international students – retention on programmes, pathways to higher-level study, and satisfaction with the knowledge and skills learned are all positive.</p>
Conclusion:	IPU has a coherent pathway from off-shore recruitment to pre-enrolment, arrival, orientation and support on shore. Students

⁶ Two new managers were not well versed in the Code – see Recommendations 3 and 4.

⁷ For example, the International Student Barometer survey, and graduate surveys.

	achieve well, Code of Practice processes are robust, and student support is comprehensive and responsive. Stakeholders are well engaged and knowledgeable about IPU, which they describe as a valued contributor locally and nationally.
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2.2 Focus area: English language programmes

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English is taught by qualified and experienced staff. IPU has the leadership, teaching expertise and resources to deliver effective English language teaching. Students make good progress in their skills. Japanese students targeting improved TOEIC⁸ scores make very good progress. Although pass rates are improving, it is not yet clear that NZCEL is the most effective programme for most candidates.</p> <p>IPU was involved with NZQA’s mandatory review of qualifications, then developing multiple programmes leading to NZCEL. However, transitioning to the new form of student assessment did not suit all staff, and so there has been considerable teacher turnover.</p> <p>Students have found achieving the standards challenging, leading to longer durations in study before entry to the diploma or degree of their choice for those seeking that. Pass rates have been improving from a relatively low base but compare favourably to other providers. IPU staff are still coming to grips with the new qualifications. That said, the appointment of new programme management and creation of leadership roles within the English department seem timely. All staff engage in professional development and interact with other ESOL⁹ groups nationally and locally.</p> <p>English language outcomes are perhaps the least explicitly presented in IPU self-assessment. However, numerous Japanese graduates return to Japan for further study, and outcomes for others are also plausibly captured under the diploma or degree data which is positive. TOEIC scores are closely monitored and show strong progress by students.</p> <p>NZQA’s external moderation sampling process for NZCEL found</p>

⁸ Test of English for International Communication

⁹ English for Speakers of Other Languages

	gaps in the retention of marked student work and the quality of assessment. ¹⁰ Further training is being given to English language teachers on making appropriate assessment decisions. Management oversight of the programmes has also been strengthened in 2019.
Conclusion:	Students make good progress. Quality control needs improvement – see Recommendation 6.

2.3 Focus area: Bachelor of Contemporary International Studies (Level 7) (BCIS)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>With over 140 full-time student EFTS in 2018, the BCIS is the cornerstone of IPU education. It is an interdisciplinary programme with a well-defined set of graduate attributes/outcomes. The programme development and assessments seek to consciously incorporate and develop these attributes. The introduction of international business specialisations in accounting, finance, management and marketing reflects ongoing review and identification of student and stakeholder needs.</p> <p>International students in 2018 achieved a 91 per cent pass rate. For 2016-2018, the domestic completion rate increased from 82 per cent to 87 per cent. Students benefit from small class sizes and high teacher contact, and 'open door' staff availability.</p> <p>Learning outcomes are clearly matched to the graduate profile outcomes, and staff have a heightened awareness of the importance of this. Assessment is relevant and appropriate, and again reflects the desired graduate profile – for example self-directed research, presentations, debates and case studies as well as reports and preliminary work towards postgraduate research. Lecturers have a proactive approach to eliminating plagiarism and ensuring authentic student work. Moderation</p>

¹⁰ IPU New Zealand met the majority of national external moderation requirements for 2017 and 2018. In 2019 NZQA moderators carrying out monitoring of the NZCEL agreed with 3 out of 18 (17%) assessor decisions that the learners provided sufficient evidence to meet individual learning outcomes. None of the assessor decisions to pass students on the overall skill/module were able to be verified.

	<p>processes are robust.</p> <p>Students are taught by research-active staff. A good range of activities and publications, ranging from books to seminar presentations, reflects a healthy research culture. IPU participated in the Performance Based Research Fund exercise for the first time in 2019 (one of only 12 PTEs) and received additional funding for research as a result.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>IPU has strong achievement across all student groups, effective moderation processes, a suitably structured programme being delivered in line with NZQA approval, and well-qualified and research-active teaching staff. Ongoing processes of academic quality management and review underpin the programme.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory, but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that IPU New Zealand:

1. Seek staff feedback to confirm that changes and responses by management made since the last survey in 2016 have had the intended results.
2. Implement a specific documented monitoring and review approach to the educational performance, socialisation and satisfaction of the unique Indonesian student cohort.
3. Ensure all staff with academic leadership responsibilities (in particular) are enabled to access suitable Code of Practice implementation training.
4. Consider adopting more specific performance measures (time-bound and key role-holder focused) in the Code of Practice review to further strengthen the tools and processes already in use.
5. Consider developing a measurement framework on some key dimensions of targeted success and outcomes sought from the student wellbeing strategy.
6. Consider implementing an internal audit cycle to sample and check adherence to key academic policies, in particular assessment retention.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix 1

Achievement – supplementary data

Table 1. Foundation English programme (now superseded by NZCEL) course completions

2016	87% (97 EFTS*)
2017	92% (24 EFTS)

*Equivalent full-time students

Table 2. New Zealand Certificate in English Language 1-5 course completion

	2017	2018
NZCEL 1-4	57% (151 EFTS)	68% (172 EFTS)
NZCEL 5	68% (8 EFTS)	77% (9 EFTS)

Table 3. Bachelor of Contemporary International Studies (Level 7)

	Course completions				
Reporting year	2016	2017	2018		
Course completion	82%	84%	87%		
	Graduation rate				
Reporting year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cohort year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Graduated	28	34	48	-	-
Total cohort	37	48	67	75	57
Graduation rate	76%	71%	72%	-	-
Potential graduation rate	-	-	-	85%	74%

Source: IPU New Zealand – Qualification Completion Rate Report (including projections)

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. 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.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud¹¹*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

¹¹ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, training schemes and consents to assess and 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 Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. 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). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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