

Qualification Title: New Zealand Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services with strands in Airport, Urban Fire and Rescue Operations, and Vegetation (Level 2)

Qualification number: 1833

Date of review: 6 March 2017

Final decision on consistency of the qualification: National Consistency is Confirmed

Threshold:

The threshold to determine sufficiency with the graduate profile was determined as evidence of graduates being able to:

- understand basic health and safety requirements for operating safely within a team in a fire and rescue environment
- under general supervision meet the operational requirements of incidents or aid incident reduction
- perform first aid
- communicate and operate appropriately with crew members during a fire and rescue incident

This threshold is closely aligned to parts of the strategic purpose statement for the qualification.

Tertiary Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

Tertiary Education Organisation	Final rating
The Skills Organisation	Sufficient
New Zealand Fire Service, National Training (NZFS)	Sufficient

Introduction

This level 2, 43 credit qualification provides the fire and rescue industry with personnel that have the core knowledge and skills required to be a fire fighter. Graduates will be able to operate within a crew, using appropriate equipment and techniques to meet the operational requirements of incidents, or aid incident reduction, under the general supervision of a crew leader. Graduates are able to specialise and progress to the New Zealand Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services (Airport) (Level 3), New Zealand Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services (Urban Fire and Rescue Operations) (Level 3) or New Zealand Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services (Vegetation) (Level 3).

While this qualification has three strands where graduates can specialise in airport, vegetation, or urban fire and rescue, this review only considered the urban fire and rescue operations strand which aligns with the New Zealand Fire Service's Training and

Progression System (TAPS) for a firefighter where subsequent qualifications align to further promotion. For Defence Force personnel, this qualification contributes towards the rank of Aircraftsman in the Air Force, and Lance Corporal in the Army.

At the time of this review the two organisations presenting had 344 graduates from this qualification and both organisations attended the review meeting one being the qualification developer/provider The Skills Organisation, New Zealand.

Evidence

The organisations provided a range of evidence to demonstrate that their graduates met the graduate profile outcomes. Evidence was provided of work on the job within the roles of learning in completely different contexts but that still met the consistency threshold criteria.

The criteria used to judge the evaluation question were:

- The nature, quality and integrity of the evidence presented by tertiary education organisation
- How well the organisation has analysed, interpreted and validated the evidence, and used the understanding gained to achieve actual or improved consistency
- The extent to which the tertiary education organisation can reasonably justify and validate claims and statements relating to the consistency of graduate outcomes, including in relation to other providers of programmes leading to the qualification

Evidence provided included:

Alignment of the programme to the Qualification

Both tertiary education organisations presented evidence of alignment or mapping of the programme and assessments to the qualification.

The NZFS has processes in place for two programmes; Volunteer Qualified Firefighter (VQF) and Career Recruit (CR) rather than on specifically evaluated outcomes aligned to the New Zealand Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services with strands in Airport, Urban Fire and Rescue Operations, and Vegetation (Level 2) graduate profile. This is partly attributable to the NZFS Training and Progression System (TAPS) programmes being broader than the NZQA-approved programmes.

The Skills Organisation was not actively involved in supporting training or in the assessment process for the trainees reported in 2015 and 2016. The trainees reported were inherited from Fire and Rescue Services Industry Training Organisation. (EMQUAL) The Skills Organisation put together a programme, conducted a qualification completion check and identified gaps for each trainee. Workplaces then supported the trainee through to completion. The Skills Organisation reported qualification completion when trainees had successfully bridged the gaps.

Relevant 'real world' learning experiences

An overview of employment, work experience or engagement with either real or simulated 'real world' experiences in the urban fire and rescue operations industry was provided by both tertiary education organisations.

Both tertiary education organisation's noted that in the course of their roles the graduates have to face authentic and very real hazards and use the skills learnt.

Evidence of relevant 'real world' learning experiences included:

- Work engagement
- Work engagement via community events
- Fire and rescue volunteer work

Employer and Graduate Surveys and end user feedback

NZFS evaluation processes largely draw on evidence from participants (i.e. students and trainers) rather than end users (Chief Fire Officers for volunteer firefighters, or the supervising Senior Station Officer(s) for career recruits).

The NZFS noted there is sufficient evidence that VQF students in particular meet behavioural skills, including effective communication. A newspaper report on a volunteer recruit course held locally reflects a successful response to the ongoing challenge of making the training more accessible for volunteers.

A survey of Chief Fire Officers and Brigade Training Officers (BTOs) was conducted by Region 4 Training (operating from Woolston Training Centre) regarding their views on the effectiveness of the recruit stage of VQF training courses during the period 1 July 2015 to 31 June 2016. The large majority of responses to the questions; *How did your recruit firefighter find the course?* and *Did your recruit firefighter now feel prepared to go to incidents?* were positive.

Clever mapping of the graduate profile outcomes with the questions was completed by Skills Organisation and then a telephone survey of graduate and employers revealed a positive result in meeting the graduate profile outcomes.

The evidence from graduate feedback, employer attestations and graduate destination supports the evidence given for outcomes.

Moderation:

Internal moderation within the NZFS via field visits during 2015 indicate assessment practice observed in the CR and VQF practical courses was consistent, and moderators verified all assessment decisions. No issues were raised in the CR moderation reports and therefore the evidence is valid of the graduates meeting the profile outcomes.

External moderation on a selection of Fire and Rescue unit standards with the NZFS was last completed with the previous ITO - EMQUAL in 2014. No internal or external moderation has been carried out on the Skills Organisation graduates as the trainees reported were inherited from EMQUAL. Assessments either have been developed by industry for industry or have been pre-moderated by the EMQUAL at the time to ensure compliance. All assessments had been pre-moderated by a Subject Matter Expert who understands the requirements of the industry and therefore is evidence of the graduates meeting the profile outcomes.

How well does the evidence provided by the education organisation demonstrate that its graduates match the graduate outcomes at the appropriate threshold?

Evidence presented before, at and after the review meeting demonstrated the graduates match the graduate outcomes. Overall this evidence makes a convincing case for this evidence to demonstrate that the graduates match the graduate outcomes at the appropriate threshold.

Discussion points of interest

A project is underway to establish Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ), an amalgamation of the New Zealand Fire Service, the National Rural Fire Authority, 12 enlarged rural fire districts and 26 territorial rural fire authorities. A single amalgamated organisation will be set up from 01 July 2017.

Discussion of what the new education and training arrangements will be, how these relate to as yet undecided FENZ firefighting roles and ranks, and how these might relate to New Zealand qualifications and ITO-managed unit standards is therefore at an early stage, with firm decisions to be made sometime in the future.

Tertiary education organisation	Rating	What evidence is good and what gaps are there in the evidence?	What is needed for evidence to become sufficient?
<p>New Zealand Fire Service, National Training</p>	<p>Sufficient</p>	<p>The New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) awards the New Zealand Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services (Urban Fire and Rescue Operations) (Level 2) (the NZCL2) to volunteer firefighters who successfully complete all training and assessment requirements for the rank of Volunteer Qualified Firefighter (VQF programme).</p> <p>The evidence in this report and in supporting documents is sufficient to demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • career firefighters successfully completing the CR programme consistently achieve (and exceed) the NZCL2's (high level) graduate profile outcomes at (or above) NZQF level 2 • volunteer firefighters successfully completing the VQF programme consistently achieve the NZCL2's (high level) graduate profile outcomes at NZQF level 2. <p>This demonstrated the clear relationship between individual learning outcomes and the graduate profile, providing confidence that successful completion would meet the graduate profile.</p> <p>Good evidence was provided through each of the graduate outcome areas which included:</p> <p><u>Evidence from two programmes:</u></p> <p>NZFS acknowledge that most evidence is derived from processes in place for the two programmes rather than on specifically evaluated outcomes aligned to the NZCL2's graduate profile. This is partly attributable to the NZFS TAPS programmes being broader than the NZQA-approved programmes but mainly because evaluation processes largely draw on evidence from participants (i.e. students and trainers) rather than end users (Chief Fire Officers for volunteer firefighters, or the supervising Senior Station Officer(s) for career</p>	

		<p>recruits). This demonstrates the clear relationship between the evidence for the graduate outcomes and the two programmes offered.</p> <p>Assessment and Moderation:</p> <p>Internal moderation field visits during 2015 indicate assessment practice observed in the CR and VQF practical courses was consistent, and moderators verified all assessment decisions. No issues were raised in the CR moderation reports. Concern was expressed in some reports relating to first-stage volunteer recruit courses regarding time pressure on assessment.</p> <p>External moderation (field visits) by EMQUAL during 2014 (relating to unit standards 3285 and 3287) raised inconsistency issues which NZFS subsequently addressed. External moderation by Skills Active in 2014 and 2016 (paper based, relating to unit standard 4573) raised no issues.</p> <p>Evidence from some Lead Trainer and Training Quality Advisor reports for volunteer recruit courses indicate some issues with training materials and the primary evidence collection tool (the training log) and concern that some unit standard details are not adequately covered. As a result, a review of all training and assessment materials for the recruit stage of the VQF programme, including socialisation of the reviewed materials with trainers, has been scheduled for the first half of 2017.</p> <p>Graduate, employer and end user feedback</p> <p>A newspaper report on a volunteer recruit course held locally reflects a successful response to the ongoing challenge of making the training more accessible for volunteers.</p> <p>A survey of Chief Fire Officers and Brigade Training Officers (BTOs) was conducted by Region 4 Training (operating from Woolston Training Centre) regarding their views on the effectiveness of the recruit stage of VQF training courses during the period 1 July 2015 to 31 June 2016. The large majority of responses to the questions, <i>How did your recruit firefighter find the course?</i> and <i>Did your recruit firefighter now feel prepared to go to incidents?</i> were positive</p>	
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		<p>evidence collection tool (the training log) and showed some concern that some unit standard details are not adequately covered. In response to this, a review of all training and assessment materials for the recruit stage of the VQF programme, including socialisation of the reviewed materials with trainers, has been scheduled for the first half of 2017.</p>	
<p>The Skills Organisation</p>	<p>Sufficient</p>	<p>Graduates to date (136) come from a single specific programme leading to the qualification.</p> <p>Good evidence was provided through each of the graduate outcome areas which included:</p> <p>Well executed acquisition and pastoral care of trainees from the past governing organisation.</p> <p>The Skills Organisation was not actively involved in supporting training or in the assessment process for the trainees reported in 2015 and 2016. The trainees reported were inherited from EMQUAL. The Skills Organisation put together a programme, conducted a qualification completion check and identified gaps for each trainee relative to the graduate outcomes. Workplaces then supported the trainee through to completion. The Skills Organisation reported qualification completion when trainees had successfully bridged the gaps and had attained the relevant outcomes. This demonstrated the clear relationship between individual learning outcomes and the graduate profile, providing confidence that successful completion would meet the graduate profile.</p> <p>Employer, graduate and end user feedback:</p> <p>Clever mapping of the graduate profile outcomes with the questions used in a telephone survey of graduate and employers revealed a positive result in meeting the graduate profile outcomes. Of the Skills Organisation graduates 94% are still involved in the Fire and Rescue services. Skills Organisation surveyed 11 questions for graduates and 10 questions for employers.</p> <p>Based on the responses that Skills Organisation have received, the authentic and very real hazards that the graduates have to face in the course of their roles they were confident that they meet the graduate profile outcomes. The comments endorse the achievement of the</p>	

		<p>graduate profile and that students are gaining the right skills, knowledge and attributes at the right level.</p> <p>The above comments provide clear evidence of graduate destinations and indicates that the Skills Organisation NZ know not only whether students are in employment or further study, but gives a level of specificity to indicate whether this is related to the programme of study from which they have graduated.</p> <p>Assessment and Moderation:</p> <p>Assessments either have been developed by industry for industry or have been pre-moderated by the SSB at the time to ensure compliance. All assessments had been pre-moderated by a Subject Matter Expert who understands the requirements of the industry and therefore this give good evidence of the graduates meeting the profile outcomes.</p> <p>Self-Assessment</p> <p>The self-assessment documents reflect on the documents above concluding that consistency has been achieved.</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Skills verbal presentation provided greater depth and elaboration of documents received.</p> <p>Contextual information made available for the NZQA consistency review</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessor Criteria, 2. Samples of Assessment Materials, 3. Graduate and Employer Survey Results, 4. Survey Report, 5. Delivery Plan, 6. Sample of Moderation Reports (actual samples of post-moderated assessments were provided on the day) 	
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