

Qualification Title: New Zealand Certificate in Animal Care (Fish, Horses, Companion Animals, and Lifestyle Block Animals) (Level 3)

Qualification number: 2487

Date of review: 6 November 2017

Final decision on consistency of the qualification: National consistency confirmed

Threshold:

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

- Under limited supervision, graduates can assist with the day to day care of companion animals including identifying and responding to normal and abnormal health and behaviour. While undertaking this work graduates comply with regulatory requirements and relevant industry codes of practice for animal care.

Tertiary Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

Tertiary Education Organisation	Final rating
Otago Polytechnic	Sufficient
Universal College of Learning	Sufficient
Waikato Institute of Technology	Sufficient
Wellington Institute of Technology	Sufficient
National Trade Academy Limited	Sufficient

Introduction

This report covers the 130 graduates who gained the qualification before the end of 2016. The qualification must be completed in one of the following contexts; fish, horses, companion animals, or lifestyle block. All the graduates in the scope of this review completed in the companion animal context and this is reflected in the threshold. The companion animal context requires assessment of the general skills and knowledge relating to the care and handling of a minimum of three species commonly kept as domestic pets, or assistance animals.

The review was attended by all providers with graduates in 2016. Additionally, three providers with approved programmes who did not have graduates in the scope of the review attended as observers. A representative of the Primary Industry Training Organisation attended as qualification developer.

Evidence

The education organisations provided a range of evidence to demonstrate that their graduates met the graduate profile outcomes.

The criteria used to judge the evaluation question were:

- The nature, quality and integrity of the evidence presented by the 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 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 assessment results (including workplace assessments), employer surveys, graduate surveys, graduate employment data, feedback from work experience opportunities and performance of graduates in higher level related programmes. Additionally, all the providers participated in a group moderation exercise to ensure consistency of assessment across the different programmes.

All programmes included practical work (often in a simulated work setting) and work placements. Feedback and assessment of students in these settings formed an important component of the evidence that graduates met the graduate profile. Almost half of the 130 graduates went into further study with most of these (54) choosing to study the level 5 New Zealand Certificate in Animal Technology (Veterinary Nursing Assistant). Feedback from this related destination programme is also important source of evidence. Because of related subject matter graduates can demonstrate their skills and knowledge in relation to the graduate profile in practical and workplace components of the level 5 programme.

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

Graduate student achievement in the New Zealand Certificate in Animal Technology (Veterinary Nursing) (Level 5) demonstrates the graduates are meeting the graduate profile of the level 3 programme that is the subject of this review. This evidence was in the form of student achievement of related subjects in the higher level programme and statements from staff teaching on the level 5 programme. Students demonstrate the application of the skills identified in the graduate profile in the practical and workplace components of the level 5 programme. However, this is not applicable to all providers as one provider did not identify graduates following this pathway.

All the providers have programmes that are approved by NZQA and have the learning outcomes mapped to the graduate profile. Assurance that assessment of these learning outcomes is at the appropriate level is provided by group moderation that involves all the current providers with graduates. This enables benchmarking between providers in both the level and interpretation of the graduate profile, and there were effective examples of both. Employer, industry and graduate feedback were often less useful as it was mostly general in nature and did not specifically address the requirements of the graduate profile. For example, few commented on graduates' ability to comply with the requirements of relevant codes of practice and regulatory requirements. However, industry and employers were enthusiastic about the quality of graduates indicating that they to some extent met employer needs. Work placements and practical work in simulated work environment provided stronger evidence of the graduates meeting the graduate profile. All programmes had these components and assessments that took place in "real world" settings. This provides good evidence as the learning outcomes assessed are mapped to the graduate profile.

For most providers, the evidence made a convincing case to demonstrate that the graduates match the graduate outcomes at the appropriate threshold.

Examples of good practice

Examples of good practice identified in submissions to the review included:

- Providers having a good knowledge of learner outcomes and followed up with employers and destination programmes
- The use of multiple sources of evidence to verify that graduates meet the graduate profile
- Group moderation by all current providers allows for benchmarking of the level and interpretation of the graduate profile.
- Assessment of learning outcomes in “real world” contexts

Issues and concerns

Overall employer, industry and destination feedback on graduates was not sufficiently focused on the graduate profile outcome statements. Additionally, analysis of this data could usefully be strengthened in order to demonstrate that graduates meet the graduate outcomes.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

Consider revising the education pathway for the qualification. The current qualification identifies a pathway to the New Zealand Certificate in Animal Management (Level 4), however, almost all the graduates who progressed moved to the level 5 New Zealand Certificate Animal Technology (Veterinary Nurse Assistant).

Consider the role of contexts in the qualification. All contexts are included in the qualification title so graduates receive a certificate with all contexts on it. For example, a graduate who has done only the fish context will receive a New Zealand Certificate in Animal Care (Fish, Horses, Companion Animals, and Lifestyle Block Animals). The qualification conditions specifically allow graduates to repeat the qualification in a different context. Consequently, learners may receive two qualifications that are the same which do not reflect additional learning.