

Qualification Title: New Zealand Diploma in Photography (Level 5)

Qualification number: 2648

Date of review: 30 September 2019

This report refers to graduates awarded this qualification prior to: **31 December 2018**

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 create photographic works that meet industry requirements at an intermediate level.

Specifically, graduates will be able to:

- Apply problem-solving skills to a range of design challenges within a photographic context.
- Apply conceptual, creative and technical skills in photographic imaging.
- Apply knowledge of image making and use of technologies relevant to a range of photographic applications and genres.
- Create a range of photographic imaging works.
- Analyse and evaluate own photographic work and the work of others.
- Self-manage photographic project briefs within defined guidelines.
- Behave professionally in a photographic work environment.

The elements of the agreed threshold are the graduate profile statements for the qualification.

Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

The following education organisations have been found to have sufficient evidence:

Education Organisation	Final rating
Manukau Institute of Technology	Sufficient
Southern Institute of Technology	Sufficient
Universal College of Learning	Sufficient
Whitireia New Zealand	Sufficient

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Introduction

This 120 credit level 5 qualification was first introduced by providers in 2017 and, depending on provider, may be studied either full-time, on campus or full- or part-time via distance learning. Replacing a range of Level 5 diplomas in photography, this qualification is designed to support people into a career in the photographic industry or to develop industry-standard skills where they are needed in other career or creative roles. There are 72 graduates to date with a considerably increased number of graduates anticipated from one provider in 2019.

The diploma is designed for people either seeking entry-level (junior technician or assistant) roles within the industry or those who are already employed at this level. Many graduates are seeking (in the medium term) to become self-employed in the industry and/or pursue further studies at Level 6 diploma or degree level.

The qualification is due for review in July 2020.

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

Examples of evidence included course design, effective moderation processes, active industry input and commentary, feedback from graduates and feedback from tutors on graduates progressing to further study.

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

In general, evidence from graduates demonstrated that graduate profile outcomes were consistently achieved. This was supported by evidence of effective moderation processes, particularly external moderation, and good input from professionals in the industry. In some cases, graduates are winning awards in professional competitions or participating in exhibitions.

Self-assessments were generally thorough, with providers discussing any feedback outside positive norms.

Very few graduates have to date been employed by established companies within the industry, and there was no direct employer feedback. It was noted that the employment market for these graduates is increasingly limited and graduates are seeking to establish themselves as free-lancers (which may take a few years) or are undertaking further study or taking their skills into other fields.

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Overall, the self-assessment and supporting evidence supplied, demonstrates that their graduates meet the graduate outcomes at the determined threshold.

Special Focus (includes special focus on a strand or outcome)

There was no special focus in this review.

Examples of good practice

All programmes were clearly well constructed, with providers being careful to take an integrated approach to meeting the graduate profile outcomes and associated conditions.

One provider used a focus group of graduates to gain some rich commentary on their ability to meet the graduate profile outcomes.

One provider, in particular, has a long record of encouraging students to participate in professional awards and graduates of this programme have been successful in these competitions. This not only affirms that graduates are meeting industry expectations, but helps students build their own Curriculum Vitae's / professional credentials.

Issues and concerns

While some providers are recruiting very well, some institutions have recently reviewed their provision of this programme and have cut back, or discontinued provision completely.

The fact that the pathway into the profession is generally through free-lancing and self-employment, needs to be considered in both collecting and evaluating evidence for consistency.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

Providers felt that the current qualification is working well.

With digital imaging technologies now readily accessible to a wide proportion of the population, this kind of qualification has some challenges in ensuring beginning students gain an understanding of what they do not know. Providers feel that, in general, the present qualification accommodates this challenge. They also noted, however, that they felt current school leavers were less able to work independently and were more easily distracted than they have been in the past and that this affected class dynamics (particularly when there is a mix of young and mature students). However, this is being addressed by changes to approaches to teaching and is unlikely to necessitate changes in qualification design.

The qualification has both technical and creative / emotional dimensions and it is vital that an appropriate balance is maintained.

Providers agree that it is important to get a good cross-section of feedback from industry and that both the Advertising and Illustrative Photographers Association (AIPA) and the New Zealand Institute of Professional Photographers (NZIPP) should be fully involved in the review next year. It is important that the review does take a 'whole of New Zealand' view and is informed by a good understanding of what small business owners (often part-time) are trying to achieve within the industry.