

Qualification Title: New Zealand Certificate in Horticulture (General) (Level 3)

Qualification number: 2677

Date of review: 28th July 2020

This report refers to graduates awarded this qualification prior to: 31 December 2019

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:

In a range of horticultural contexts, and under limited supervision, graduates will be able to:

- Apply knowledge of plant and soils science to the identification, selection and growing of plants
- Apply knowledge of growing systems and environments to the establishment and growing of plants
- Comply with Health and Safety requirements and workplace procedures
- Demonstrate sustainable practices

Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

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

MOE Number	Education Organisation	Final rating
6007	Eastern Institute of Technology Ltd	Sufficient
6011	Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology Ltd	Sufficient
6012	Northland Polytechnic Ltd	Sufficient
6013	Otago Polytechnic Ltd	Sufficient
6015	Southern Institute of Technology Ltd	Sufficient
6017	Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki Ltd	Sufficient
6019	Waikato Institute of Technology Ltd	Sufficient
6022	The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand Ltd	Sufficient
6025	Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology Ltd	Sufficient
7402	National Trade Academy Ltd	Sufficient
8405	Land Based Training Ltd	Sufficient
9328	Skills Update Training and Education Group Ltd	Sufficient
9981	Valley Education and Training Enterprises Ltd	Sufficient

Introduction

This 60-credit level 3 certificate will provide the horticulture sector with graduates who have a theoretical knowledge of plant and soils science, and growing systems and environments, to underpin practical capability in a range of horticulture sectors. Graduates of this qualification may be employed or self-employed, and/or move flexibly between a range of horticultural

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enterprises. It is also suitable for small block owners or for mature learners who wish to gain knowledge of horticultural science in a range of general horticulture growing systems and practices.

This qualification may also lead on to the New Zealand Certificate in Horticulture Services (Level 4) with strands in Amenity, Arboriculture, Cemetery, Landscape Design, Landscape Construction, and Sports Turf [Ref: 2674].

Thirteen education organisations had graduates between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2019. The numbers of graduates per organisation ranged from six to 169.

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 was provided of graduate, employer and next-level tutor feedback. Programme evidence included internal and external moderation, programme alignment and the applied nature of the programme and assessments. Programme evidence was strongest while evidence from employer and graduates was weaker, and for some organisations, non-existent.

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?

Programme evidence was generally strong, while graduate and employer data was not as convincing and, in several cases, weak or non-existent. Evidence was provided showing the programmes of study meeting the requirements of the qualification. Moderation is occurring with the Primary Industry Polytechnic Tutors' Association (PIPTA) playing a significant role in external moderation for the polytechnics offering this qualification.

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

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

While there was no special focus for this qualification, a number of organisations offer it in conjunction with a second more specialised Level 3 Horticulture qualification to create a one-year programme of study.

Examples of good practice

The Graduate Profile Outcomes (GPOs) require the application of theoretical knowledge. Some organisations provided examples of applied projects, student journals and photos of tasks undertaken to provide evidence of application. Some education organisations also

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incorporated into their programme work experience for their students, thus improving the chances of graduates being able to apply their knowledge in a work context.

A number of the providers belong to PIPTA, a group of organisations that meet annually to undertake peer moderation. This external moderation also acts as a benchmarking activity.

One institute had graduates who were self-employed and so the graduates/next users were one and the same. The graduates provided insight into their levels of achievement, and employer feedback was replaced with feedback from graduates' customer base. This provided robust evidence of graduates applying the GPOs in a real-world context.

Issues and concerns

The lack of evidence relating to graduate and employer feedback was of considerable concern. Even though in many cases electronic questionnaires were not gaining sufficient response, some organisations continued to generate these. Organisations need to understand that cohorts and industries differ in their response to requests for feedback, and that a 'one size fits all' approach does not work. It is also not appropriate to accept that a particular method is not gaining the required feedback, and not try another approach. It would appear that some education organisations view seeking feedback from graduates and employers as a task to be ticked off, rather than a process that provides them with rich data and information to inform self-assessment and decision-making.

Asking graduates and employers for their assessments of degrees of confidence they have in the application of the GPOs is somewhat meaningless. Being 'confident' does not equate to being effective. Education organisations need to construct questions that relate to on-job or in-class performance, are easy to translate and that provide them with credible evidence. Requesting examples of application is far more robust and likely to gain responses that are useful to the education organisation.

While many education organisations provided a summary of the data, most still do not consider the 'so what'. What did the data tell them about the graduate? This aspect of self-assessment needs strengthening for this exercise to have real value for the programme and the organisation.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

While a number of areas were raised for discussion, there was no clear consensus regarding any recommendations for the qualification developer.