Qualification Title: New Zealand Certificate in Avalanche Risk Management (Level 5)

Qualification number: 3490

Date of review: 24 February 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 establish sufficiency with the graduate profile was determined as evidence that within their scope of practice, graduates of this qualification will be able to:

- Identify and communicate potential avalanche hazards by applying knowledge of snowpack, weather, terrain and avalanche phenomena
- Mitigate risk to self by selecting and applying appropriate control methods while operating in avalanche terrain and
- Participate as part of a small party rescue by applying appropriate avalanche search and rescue skills while mitigating risk.

Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

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

MOE Number	Education Organisation	Final rating
6013	Otago Polytechnic	Sufficient
6024	Tai Poutini Polytechnic	Sufficient

Introduction

This qualification will provide the outdoor snow sector with graduates who have the knowledge and skills to manage personal risk from avalanche hazards while carrying out activities in dynamic outdoor contexts.

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 presented to demonstrate the robustness of the programme and its alignment with the graduate profile outcomes (GPO) of the qualification. Graduate and employer feedback were sought, and although response rates were low, the feedback gained provided valuable insights into the achievement of the GPO. Destination data confirmed that the majority of graduates who responded had gained employment in related fields.

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?

The robustness of the programmes and its alignment to the qualification were well evidenced, with one TEO providing mapping of both the programme learning outcomes and the assessments to the graduate profile outcomes. Both TEOs had ensured that moderation had occurred and the outcomes used to strengthen the programme.

Both programmes had field-based components which provided students with the opportunity to apply their learning and demonstrate competence. These aspects could be strengthened in terms of providing evidence of achievement of the graduate profile.

Gaining employer feedback had proven difficult, and this aspect needs consideration to seek more effective ways of interacting with employers for the purpose of gaining feedback on the achievement of graduate outcomes. Both TEOs could take greater advantage of their close connections to industry to seek and document industry feedback on the programme and its graduates.

Graduate views on their confidence in and ability to apply the GPOs was gained with one organisation asking for examples to strengthen the evidence provided.

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)

There was no special focus within this programme.

Examples of good practice

In seeking employer feedback both TEOs had focused on the effectiveness of the institutes in teaching the GPOs. This made it clear that it was not a pseudo performance review for the graduate, but consideration of the institutes' competence in ensuring graduates had the required skills, knowledge and competence.

Issues and concerns

When it was clear that questionnaires sent to employers were not achieving the desired level of response, neither organisation attempted to gain feedback through other means. Both TEOs have close relationships with industry with tutors in the main still involved in some way. This provides the opportunity to elicit rich feedback, even when this is gained informally.

The practical application components of the programme could be used to greater advantage in demonstrating the achievement of the GPOs. Although at the time they are students, it is, in one case, one week prior to graduating so would provide valid information and insights into the achievement of the GPOS.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

Wide ranging discussion took place relating to levels, industry expectations and requirements. No recommendations were given at this time. It was requested that the entry requirement 'Learners must be able to demonstrate evidence of ability to use avalanche transceivers, shovels and probes' become an exit/graduating requirement.