

Qualification Title: New Zealand Certificate in Business (Small Business) (Level 4)

Qualification number: 2457

Date of review: 10-11 June 2019

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

Final decision on consistency of the qualification: National consistency is not yet confirmed

Threshold:

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

Graduates will be able to apply business skills and knowledge¹ to manage a small business in a bi- and multi-cultural environment. The graduate's level of skill and knowledge is noted to be at Level 4² on the New Zealand Qualification Framework.

Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

The final decision on the sufficiency of an education organisation evidence, will be updated as other organisations show sufficient evidence.

Education Organisation	Final rating
Universal College of Learning	Sufficient
Southern Institute of Technology	Sufficient
Open Polytechnic	Sufficient
Cornerstone Education Limited	Sufficient

Introduction

The purpose of this 60-credit qualification is to provide New Zealand with owner/operators who have improved capability to establish, operate, grow, and sustain a small business. NZQA is the qualification developer and a representative attended the consistency meeting. The qualification conditions note that "Programme design and delivery, and all assessment will be conducted in and for the context of a real or realistic small business." Seven education organisations having graduates reported in the review period, participated in the consistency review process. Their programmes were delivered part-time and/or full-time, online and face to face.

¹ As fully articulated in the twelve graduate profile outcomes.

² www.nzqa.govt.nz

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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

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?

All seven organisations provided good evidence of learning outcomes and assessments mapped against the graduate profile outcomes. The quality of the moderation evidence, the coverage of the assessment activity and assessors, the moderation results and details about actions to improve assessment practice varied considerably across the organisations. This was a serious gap for some organisations. All organisations had collected feedback from their graduates. The design of the graduate survey tool was of variable quality impacting on the reliability of the evidence. The range of survey response rate of the graduates also impacted on how well the findings represented the views of the overall graduate cohort. The destination related evidence included some clear data of students progressing onto related higher-level training, but some submissions did not include adequate details. Similarly, some details about the business the graduate was operating was required and sometimes absent.

The analysis of the evidence including identifying key findings and judging how convincingly the evidence demonstrated graduates' capability was often limited and of moderate quality. A few of the organisations clearly identified the significance of their weaknesses and the actions taken to address these matters. Finally, the triangulating of the different evidence to justify the key claim that the criteria of sufficiency had been met was one of the weaker areas.

A submission is expected to 'justify' or make a convincing case that the graduates have demonstrated the threshold. That is, make a reasoned argument that the criteria for 'sufficiency' has been met. A sound argument would include rating the quality of the evidence, link the evidence to the key claims being made, identify that 'all reasonable steps' were taken and that any 'weaknesses were not serious' and 'being effectively managed or improved'. Organisations often had just elements of this argumentation in their submission and this supplemented in their oral and data presentation and in their responses to the reviewer's questioning. This typically is the most challenging aspect of the review and was the weakest element of these submissions.

Overall, the self-assessment and supporting evidence supplied, by a few organisations met the criteria for being 'sufficient', and in doing so demonstrated that these graduates had since matched the graduate outcomes at the identified threshold.

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

None

Examples of good practice

One organisation asked the graduates to rate their capability early in the programme and after the completion of the programme. This clearly showed how the capability of the graduates had improved. This approach introduced students early to the higher-level capability which this programme was intending them to acquire.

A few organisations engaged external expertise to design survey tools that were generally high-quality.

Issues and concerns

There were no significant concerns identified through this review. It was noted however that in the future that organisations will probably be reporting graduates from the current qualification version and the likely new version due to be listed in 2020.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

The key issue that emerged was the importance of ensuring that threshold statement matched the Level 4 descriptors. This issue arose as the graduate profile outcomes statements would be similar for a graduate of a Masters-level business programme.