Qualification Title: New Zealand Diploma in Information Technology Technical Support (Level 5)

Qualification number: 2596

Date of review: 27-29 May 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 with a broad understanding of the core concepts and practical skills in information technology with a technical support focus who are prepared for further study or employment such as computer technicians, service desk or technical support and who are able to:

- Select, install and configure IT hardware and systems software to meet organisational requirements,
- Apply a broad operational knowledge of networking, and associated services and technologies to meet typical organisational requirements,
- Configure and administer systems and applications to meet typical organisational IT support requirements,
- Apply a broad operational knowledge of database administration to meet typical organisational data storage and retrieval requirements,
- Troubleshoot and resolve a range of common system problems using appropriate tools and procedures,
- Identify common issues related to IT security and apply a range of solutions,
- Demonstrate an operational knowledge and understanding of IT service management to meet typical organisational customer service requirements,
- Apply the fundamentals of information systems concepts and practice to support and enhance organisational processes and systems,
- Apply the fundamentals of interaction design concepts and practice to enhance interface design,
- Apply the principles of software development to create simple working applications.
- Apply professional, legal, and ethical principles and practices in a socially responsible manner as an emerging IT professional,
- Apply communication, personal and interpersonal skills to enhance effectiveness in an IT role, and
- Use problem-solving and decision making techniques to provide innovative and timely Information Technology outcomes.

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
Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT)	Sufficient
Waikato Institute of Technology (WinTec)	Sufficient
People Potential	Sufficient
Abacus Institute of Studies	Sufficient
Western Institute of Technology Taranaki (WITT)	Sufficient
Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology	Sufficient
International College of Auckland Limited	Sufficient
New Zealand Skills and Education Ltd, trading as NZ School of Education	Sufficient
AGI Education Limited	Sufficient
Newton College of Business and Technology	Sufficient
EmployNZ	Sufficient
Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP)	Sufficient
Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT)	Sufficient
Universal College of Learning (UCOL)	Sufficient
Southern Institute of Technology (SIT)	Sufficient
Whitecliffe Enterprises Limited	Sufficient

Introduction

The purpose of this Level 5, 120 credit Diploma, is to provide New Zealand with people who have attained a broad understanding of the core concepts and practical skills in Information Technology (IT), with a technical support focus.

Graduates will have an awareness of the IT environment, appreciate the needs of users, and be able to provide IT technical support. They will also be able to operate within the applicable professional standards and practice, as part of a team, or independently with a broad level of supervision.

The qualification is designed to prepare people for employment in entry-level roles such as computer technician, service desk or technical support, or prepare them for further study in Level 6 specialist IT qualifications, or undergraduate degrees.

This qualification was developed by the Institute of IT Professionals New Zealand (IITP) and NZQA, and was first approved in April 2015. The qualification review was about to be initiated at the time of this Consistency Review.

The Consistency Review covered the period from approval up to the 31 December 2019. During this period there were 1196 graduates, from 23 Tertiary Education organisations across New Zealand. This qualification has had the highest usage and number of graduates of the

thirteen qualifications in the suite of computing qualifications developed as the outcome of the Mandatory Review of Qualifications.

The Consistency Review took place over three days and was led by two reviewers. Representatives of the 23 educational organisations with graduates, a representative from NZQA on behalf of the qualification developers, and an observer from a provider with an approved programme participated in the review meeting.

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 for the review varied between education organisations and included evidence that the programmes were designed and delivered to develop the graduate profile outcomes in the students, and that assessment was appropriate and at the correct level.

External evidence provided included graduate destination data (employment and further study), feedback from employers and tutors in next-level programmes and the graduates.

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

There was considerable variability in the quality of the self-assessment of the evidence provided by the education organisations.

Generally, programme evidence was the strongest source of evidence provided, with all organisations being able to demonstrate how their programmes, learning outcomes and assessments were mapped to the graduate profile outcomes. However, moderation evidence was more variable, with some education organisations evidencing robust processes and results which contributed to confidence in the graduate profile outcomes being appropriately assessed and assessed at the correct level. A few organisations were not able to demonstrate this, or they had gaps in their moderation practices, particularly in relation to external moderation activity. In these cases this had an impact on the sufficiency of the submissions.

Destination evidence identified a trend in the use of this qualification, and that it is being increasingly used as a pathway to further study. The providers reported that this was due to recent changes to immigration regulations relating to acceptable qualifications for applying for post-study work visas, and the IT industry's preference for employing graduates with degrees upon graduation. For those organisations who had most of their graduates progress to further study, evidence from next-level tutor's had a greater importance and was required to be stronger to demonstrate consistency.

Some organisation had relied on reporting graduate success in future study (pass rates in the first few courses) as an indicator of graduate profile outcomes having been met. Whilst this evidence implies that graduates have gained useful skills and knowledge from the Diploma, it does not adequately demonstrate that they match the particular graduate profile outcomes of this qualification. For example, graduate success may be due to improved study skills and maturity rather than the ability to demonstrate each of the graduate outcomes.

A small number of graduates moved into employment in entry-level IT roles, and there was some evidence from their employers and the graduates themselves on perceptions of their ability to apply their learning in the workplace, and how this demonstrated they had met the graduate profile outcomes of the qualification. A few organisations had not followed up with employers, or currently do not have effective processes in place to gather robust evidence from employers.

Feedback from graduates was not strong, with the timing of administration of surveys being problematic and having a negative impact on the value of the results. A number of the organisations had surveyed their students in the last few weeks of their course, meaning that the survey may have included students who do not graduate, and more importantly the results could not reflect the graduate experience of applying their skills and knowledge in either employment or further study. This is an area that needs to be strengthened.

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

None

Examples of good practice

One educational organisation had a very strong submission with highly effective self-assessment based on a good range of qualitative and quantative evidence. The Reviewers were impressed with the design of the Graduate Self-Review which included questions and sought feedback from graduates on what they can BE, DO and KNOW as a graduate of this qualification. The responses provided rich information, and when triangulated with employer's responses strongly supported claims that graduates had met GPOs. They were also planning to validate destination outcomes in 'real time' (exit interviews) as well as at 'points of time', over the graduates journey. It was evident that the organisation has embedded consistency of graduate outcomes into its business as usual, and is using the information gained to inform changes for improvement and maintaining relevance with industry.

Issues and concerns

Two educational organisations involved in this Consistency Review are no longer delivering this qualification.

The Reviewers and the Qualification Developer noted other sources of valid evidence future consistency reviews might consider including; contribution graduates made to their whanau and communities through the IT technical support they offered, and that alignment of programmes with external industry certifications and encouraging graduates to complete

these within appropriate timeframes would provide additional evidence to support claims that graduates had met GPOs.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

The Qualification Developer participated in the review and gathered feedback from the educational organisations to provide input in the upcoming review.