



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD  
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## Guidelines for monitoring programmes leading to diplomas, degrees and related qualifications at levels 7 to 10

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# Introduction

This document provides guidance to NZQA monitors and tertiary institutions, other than universities, on the requirements for the monitoring of programmes of study leading to diplomas, degrees and post graduate qualifications at levels 7 to 10.

Institutions include:

- Institutes of Technology or Polytechnics (ITPs)
- Wānanga
- Private Training Establishments (PTEs)
- Industry Training Organisations.

## Statutory basis

NZQA has the authority to make rules under part 20 of the Education Act 1989. NZQA's rules set out what institutions have to do to meet NZQA's quality standards and comply with NZQA processes. They indicate what actions and information are required from institutions. All NZQA Rules are listed on the NZQA website.

The [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#) (the Rules) require institutions to participate in monitoring as one of a number of requirements to maintain their accreditation to provide an approved programme.

## The purpose of monitoring

The purpose of monitoring programmes of study that lead to diplomas, degrees and related qualifications at levels 7-10 is to provide assurance to NZQA and stakeholders that a programme and its delivery consistently meet the criteria for ongoing approval.

Monitoring reports must provide evidence that:

- the programme is being managed, planned and implemented as it was approved
- consideration has been given to any recommendations made during the programme approval and accreditation process
- any minor modifications and enhancements made by the institution are consistent with the intent of the approved programme and the ongoing development of a quality programme, and in line with a type 1 change
- there is independent, external academic input during reviews and consideration of significant programme enhancements (i.e. type 2 changes)
- NZQA is made aware of issues affecting the satisfactory provision of the programme
- the quantity and quality of staff research outputs are consistent with the development and maintenance of an ongoing research culture in support of the programme.

Monitoring by NZQA is not intended to replace the actions taken by institutions to monitor, review and regularly improve the quality of the programmes they are responsible for.

# Section 1 The monitoring process

Under Rules 12.1 and 12.2 of the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#), an institution is required to participate in monitoring to continue to maintain accreditation to provide an approved programme or part of an approved programme at levels 7-10.

NZQA will appoint a monitor who will produce an annual monitoring report following an on-site visit to the institution.

## Appointment of monitors

NZQA will appoint monitors with expert knowledge of the discipline area of the programme and experience in academic processes.

Also, in the Mātauranga Māori context, monitors will be fluent in te reo Māori and tikanga Māori protocols and will understand the methodology of Te Hono o Te Kahurangi.

Monitors will:

- have an independent and neutral perspective on the programme and the institution
- be appointed by NZQA in consultation with the institution
- have an NZQA contract for service which includes a conflict of interest and a confidentiality clause.

Regular rotation of monitors will ensure the effectiveness and impartiality of the monitoring process.

## Role of NZQA representative

An NZQA representative may accompany the monitor for the first monitoring visit.

The role of the NZQA representative, if accompanying the monitor, is to:

- inform the monitor of NZQA's expectations and processes
- provide neutral, experienced and, where applicable, culturally robust management of the monitoring visit
- when necessary, provide a link between the approval and/or accreditation of the programme.

The involvement of the NZQA representative on future visits will be determined by NZQA following discussion with the monitor and the institution. An institution may request the ongoing participation of the NZQA representative.

## Monitoring in conjunction with regulatory bodies

Where professional registration is a prerequisite for practising in a particular field or occupation, professional registration bodies will be involved in the content and quality of education being delivered.

Written formal agreements between registration bodies and NZQA detail the relevant processes and requirements, including shared responsibilities for the monitoring of programmes.

## Monitoring of programmes delivered offshore

Programmes delivered offshore that lead to the award of New Zealand qualifications are subject to the same monitoring requirements as programmes delivered within New Zealand.

The monitoring process may be extended to meet the requirements of any relevant overseas accreditation body.

Also, where programmes are delivered in conjunction with an overseas institution, the monitoring process must include a formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the collaborative arrangement.

### Collaborative delivery

If a programme is being delivered collaboratively, the monitor will need to examine this arrangement and may need to visit other associated sites.

## Section 2 The on-site monitoring process

Under Rules 12.1 b and 12.2 e (i) of the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#), monitoring consists of ‘annual visits to the institution by the NZQA appointed monitor, reports by the monitor on the implementation of the programme, and reviews of the first graduating years of programmes by the institution’.

### Organising the visit

The first on-site monitoring visit will typically be made at the beginning of the second year of the delivery of the programme and take into account the availability of staff and learners. The visits will take place annually following the initial visit.

The monitor, NZQA representative where relevant, and the institution will determine a mutually agreeable date for the monitoring visit to occur. Dates should be determined at least two months before the visit to allow sufficient time to make arrangements.

If an NZQA representative is not involved in the monitoring process on-site, NZQA should still be kept informed of the agreed date.

At least one month before the visit, the institution is expected to provide the monitor with information, including but not limited to:

- enrolment information
- learner retention and achievement
- graduate destination information
- internal and external moderation activities
- feedback from learners, teaching staff and external stakeholders
- consultation with external stakeholders
- how the institution has addressed any recommendations from:
  - o the initial evaluation report and/or
  - o the most recent monitor's report
- changes to the programme and/or its delivery since the last report
- staffing changes since the last report
- current resources to maintain delivery of the programme
- staff professional development activities
- research activities of staff
- significant issues and challenges
- collaborative and/or sub-contracting arrangements.

### Conducting the on-site monitoring process

Monitoring will generally take place over one day and will include meetings with:

- senior management
- programme manager(s)
- lecturers/teaching staff
- resource managers (e.g. librarians, learner support)
- learners.

The monitor may also ask to speak with:

- external advisory committee members
- external moderators
- other stakeholders.

## **Fees**

The total costs of the monitoring process, including fees, travel, accommodation, and NZQA costs, are the responsibility of the institution.

## **Responsibilities of the monitor, the institution and NZQA**

On their appointment by NZQA, monitors are provided with a contract, the Guidelines and the monitoring report template.

The monitor is responsible for:

- coordinating the timing of the visit with the institution at least two months before the proposed date
- preparation for visit, i.e. reading all relevant documentation in advance of visit
- conducting the monitoring process with the institution
- completing a draft monitoring report, no later than ten working days after the visit, in accordance with the Guidelines
- seeking confirmation of the factual accuracy of the draft monitoring report from the institution
- providing the draft monitoring report (in an editable electronic format) to NZQA within ten days of receipt of the confirmed factual accuracy from the institution
- raising any issues with NZQA which may have an impact on the monitoring process or outcome.

The institution is responsible for:

- coordinating, at least two months before, the date of the visit with the monitor
- coordinating any requirements relating to the monitoring visit with the monitor
- providing appropriate documentation to the monitor at least one month before the visit
- confirming or correcting the factual accuracy of the draft monitoring report with the monitor, within ten working days of receipt of the report
- raising any issues with NZQA which may have an impact on the monitoring process or outcome.

NZQA is responsible for:

- appointing monitor(s)
- providing the institution with the final version of the monitoring report within ten working days of receipt of the draft report from the monitor
- addressing any issues brought to its attention by the monitor, institution or other relevant party which may have an impact on the monitoring process, and
- granting the institution the ability to self-monitor.

## **Following the on-site visit**

The main outcome of any monitoring visit is a monitoring report. This is produced by the monitor(s) and considered by NZQA, and details the monitor's professional opinion on the quality of the institution's delivery of the programme.

### **The monitoring report**

The monitoring report will inform NZQA of the outcomes of the monitor's visit. The report will contain evidence and analysis confirming that the programme continues to meet the programme approval and accreditation criteria.

NZQA will provide the final monitoring report to the institution and the monitor. If there are any major concerns raised by the report, NZQA may request that the institution takes appropriate steps to address the concerns.

If NZQA continues to have serious or ongoing concerns about the quality and/or stability of a programme or its delivery, it may initiate the procedure to withdraw an institution's accreditation to deliver the programme.

### **Timelines**

The monitor is expected to send the draft monitoring report to the institution within ten working days of the monitoring visit.

The institution is expected to confirm factual accuracy of the report within ten working days of receiving the draft monitoring report from the monitor.

The monitor is expected to send the monitoring report to NZQA within ten working days of it being finalised.

NZQA is expected to send the final version of the monitoring report to the institution within ten working days of receipt of the report from the monitor.

## **Graduating year review and special reviews**

### **Graduating year review**

Under Rule 12.2 (e) (I), the review of the first graduating year of a programme leading to a degree or post-graduate qualification at levels 7-10 needs to occur as a part of the institution's annual programme evaluation, and the findings reported. These findings should be included in the information given to the monitor.

The review must include the following:

- a programme statement with a brief overview of the programme, the extent to which its original aims have been achieved and any changes that have occurred
- a description of the review process
- the outcomes of the review process, including the ongoing acceptability of the programme to stakeholders, assessment and learner performance, enrolment and completion data
- the outcomes of any external evaluations, for example by professional registration bodies or by NZQA external evaluation and review (EER)
- a statement of intention to continue or discontinue the programme and a rationale for that decision.

### **Special reviews**

Under Rule 19 of the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#), NZQA retains the right to undertake a special review of an approved programme and/or its delivery by an accredited institution.

NZQA may initiate a special review if it becomes aware of serious or ongoing concerns about the quality and/or stability of a programme or its delivery.

If NZQA has serious concerns about the delivery of a programme following a special review, it may initiate the procedure to withdraw an institution's accreditation to deliver the programme.

## Section 3 Self-monitoring

Under Rule 12.2 e (ii) of the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#), self-monitoring (in accordance with any conditions imposed by NZQA) can be considered for degrees or related qualifications at levels 7-10.

NZQA will also consider applications for institutions to self-monitor diplomas at level 7.

### When is self-monitoring considered?

This occurs when the NZQA monitor considers that a programme and its delivery are stable, and that all conditions for changing the institution's monitoring status are met. This could be after the first cohort has graduated.

It is expected that an institution will continue to use an external monitor as part of the self-monitoring process. Where NZQA approves self-monitoring, other registration bodies may continue to monitor the programme.

Self-monitoring involves the provision of an Annual Programme Evaluation Report (APER) to NZQA. This arrangement must be approved by NZQA.

If serious concerns regarding the programme(s) are identified, NZQA may revoke the institution's approval to self-monitor.

### Conditions for requesting self-monitoring

Conditions for the transfer to self-monitoring include confirmation from all parties that the institution is managing the programme appropriately and in particular that:

1. The programme is being implemented as planned and presented at the time of approval, subject to modifications and enhancements broadly consistent with the intent of the programme and the natural evolution of a quality programme.
2. Recommendations made during the programme approval and accreditation and by the monitor have been appropriately addressed.
3. Mechanisms are in place at an institutional level to ensure independent, external academic input during reviews and consideration of proposed programme enhancements.
4. That NZQA will gain sufficient awareness of any issues with the programme or its delivery from the APER.

### Request for self-monitoring

Institutions meeting the above conditions must request a transfer to self-monitoring status by formally writing to NZQA.

Approval for transferring the responsibility for monitoring to the institution will be granted by the Deputy Chief Executive, Quality Assurance Division.

### Monitoring by Annual Programme Evaluation Report (APER)

NZQA would expect the institution to appoint an external monitor. The external monitor's report should be included in and attached to the APER.

AN APER includes the following information:

- enrolment information
- learner retention and achievement
- graduate destination information
- internal and external moderation activities

- feedback from learners, teaching staff and external stakeholders
- consultation with external stakeholders
- how the institution has addressed any recommendations from:
  - the initial evaluation report and/or
  - the most recent monitor's report
- changes to the programme and/or its delivery since the last report
- staffing changes since the last report
- current resources to maintain delivery of the programme
- staff professional development activities
- research activities of staff
- significant issues and challenges and proposed actions.

### Report format

The institution is responsible for carrying out a review process each year and sending a copy of the APER to NZQA by 30 June.

The review will be carried out according to the institution's quality management system.

No specific report format is required.

The purpose of the report is to provide evidence that:

- the programme continues to be implemented as approved
- there has been ongoing consultation with stakeholders
- minor changes and developments have been approved by the institution's board.

It is important to clearly identify any issues or problems that may have arisen during the year, the way these matters have been or will be addressed, and the possible need to make an application for a major change (type 2 change) to a programme.