



# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Wellington Institute of Technology  
(WelTec)

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 20 September 2011

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# Purpose of this Report

*The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.*

## Introduction

### 1. TEO in context

Location:	Kensington Avenue, Petone
Type:	Institute of Technology and Polytechnics (ITP)
First registered:	2001 (formed from an amalgamation of Central Institute of Technology and Hutt Valley Polytechnic)
Number of students:	Domestic: 4,465 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) (2009) International: 328 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) (2009)
Number of staff:	186 full-time equivalent (FTE) academic staff (2009)
Sites:	In addition to its main campus, Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec) offers selected programmes at premises in Church Street, Wellington; Wakefield Street, Auckland; and until the Canterbury earthquakes at <i>Science Alive</i> , Moorhouse Avenue, Christchurch. Currently, Christchurch programmes are delivered at Nova Lodge, Newtons Road, Templeton, Christchurch.
Distinctive characteristics:	WelTec complements its traditional offering in trades education and training by more recent developments in professional programmes in information technology, engineering, hospitality, creative arts, and health and well-being. It offers certificates at levels 1-7, diplomas at levels 5-7, and undergraduate degrees to meet the identified needs of industries and the requirements of professions.
Recent significant changes:	WelTec is a member of the Metro Group, a consortium of institutes of technology and polytechnics, which

assists in its development of new qualifications, in enhancing its research capacity and capability, and in recruitment of international students. Initiatives to support Māori and Pasifika students and the introduction of a “trades academy” to accelerate vocational learning by school students complement the further strengthening of links with local industries and workplaces.

There has been significant restructuring at senior levels at WelTec, the result of which is expected to be a strengthening in the management of assets, in flexible learning opportunities, and in information technology services to students and staff.

Previous quality assurance history:

An ITP Quality Report of the 12 ITP academic quality standards was conducted in March 2007, resulting in WelTec receiving Quality Assured status for a further four years. The final ITP Quality Report of May 2007 provided ten recommendations and identified seven areas of good practice. This was confirmed in the Mid-Term Quality Report conducted in May 2009, which endorsed the Quality Assured status, expressing confidence in WelTec’s capability to undertake effective self-assessment.

Other:

WelTec has built strong relationships with relevant industry training organisations, with other ITPs, particularly Whitireia Community Polytechnic and the Open Polytechnic, and, most recently, with Le Cordon Bleu international cookery school.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

### Criteria for programme focus areas

Programmes chosen were drawn from a number of levels, from certificates to degrees, being representative of the institute’s faculties and schools and retention and completion characteristics (see Table 1).

In addition, programmes offered at the Church Street premises in Wellington were included in the scope. Because of the effects of the February 2011 Christchurch earthquake, no programme offered in Christchurch was considered as a focus area.

The selected programmes together represent about a quarter of the polytechnic’s students and EFTS. Ethnic, age, and level of study comparisons between the sampled programmes taken together, and for the institute overall, are given in Table 2.

Faculty	Programme	Code	NZQA level	2010 data		
				No. of EFTS	Retention %	Course completion %
Faculty of Health, Business and Service Industries	Certificate in Food Preparation and Culinary Arts	HV4441	4	212.4	70	85
	Certificate in Hairdressing and Beauty Services <sup>1</sup>	HV4452	3	55.2	Not offered 2009	77
	Certificate in Exercise Science	HV4304	5	43.16	58	85
Faculty of Trades and Technology	Certificate in Electrical and Electronic Industry Skills <sup>2</sup>	HV4177	2	47.5	67	74
	Certificate in Automotive Engineering	HV4420	4	119	51	78
	Certificate in Design (Skills and Technologies) <sup>3,4</sup>	HV4454	3	47.5	Not offered 2009	78
	Certificate in Design (Skills and Technologies) <sup>3,4</sup>	HV4455	4	38.25		73
Bachelor of Creative Technologies <sup>3,4</sup>	HV4399	7	132.68	71	85	
Rimutaka Prison cluster of programmes	Certificate in Automotive Engineering (Intermediate)	HV4293	3	25.43	15	54
	Certificate in Building, Construction and Allied Trades	NC1368	2	14.70	82	73
	Certificate in Brick and Block Laying	HV4428	3	8.00	50	81
	Certificate in Pre-Trade Painting	HV4342	2	16.79	67	79

<sup>1</sup>Church Street, Wellington campus  
<sup>2</sup>This programme was central to the ETITO initiative with Te Puni Kokiri and local iwi to enhance participation by Māori students in this industry  
<sup>3</sup>About 50 per cent of students enrolled in these programmes transfer to the Creative Technologies degree  
<sup>4</sup>These programmes were evaluated as a cluster, i.e. as one focus area.

	Participant characteristics			Programme level, by EFTS			
	Under 25	Māori	Pacific	L1-L2	L3-L4	L5-6	L7-L8
Sampled programmes	61%	21%	8%	10%	67%	5.6%	17%
Institute overall <sup>1</sup>	59%	16%	9%	11%	41%	31%	17%

<sup>1</sup>From Educational Performance Indicators 2009.

### **Institute-wide focus area**

The institute's connection to industry and community and its research activities through its entity WelTec Connect were identified as an across-institute focus area.

### **Mandatory focus areas:**

These were pre-determined as: governance, management, and strategy; and achievement and academic support of international students.

## **3. Conduct of external evaluation and review**

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>*

The external evaluation and review was conducted by a lead evaluator and three external evaluators over five days. Several evaluative conversations were observed by the principal evaluation advisor (NZQA), and the synthesis activity and associated deliberations of the external evaluation team were supported by the principal evaluation advisor and the ITP manager (ITP Sector Relationship Team, Quality Assurance Division, NZQA). The evaluation was conducted principally on the Petone campus of WelTec, with visits to the Church Street premises.

Evaluative conversations were held with the WelTec executive management team, representatives of WelTec Council, senior managers and staff of relevant service areas, programme leaders, teaching staff, and students. These conversations were complemented by discussions with members of advisory committees and employers of graduates in the focus areas.

The evaluation of each focus area was conducted by sub-teams of two evaluators. The synthesis process towards the end of the EER visit facilitated the discussion by the whole team of the ratings allocated by the sub-teams.

WelTec has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and submissions have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec)**.

In 2009, WelTec's qualification completion rate was 57 per cent, exceeding the ITP sector median of 51 per cent. However, its course completion rate in 2009 was 67 per cent (marginally below the sector median of 70 per cent). WelTec worked proactively to raise these completion measures in 2010, attaining an 8 per cent increase in course completion measures (to 75 per cent, just above the 2010 sector median of 74 per cent) and a 7 per cent increase in qualification completions (to 64 per cent, significantly above the 2010 ITP sector median of 43 per cent). This improved performance was achieved by focussing on improvement across all programmes and by paying particular attention to the most poorly performing programmes and closing, restructuring, or revamping them.

WelTec's vision includes working with Māori and Pasifika people to meet their economic and social development aspirations. As an institute, WelTec operates what it refers to as the Tamaiti Whangai Academy. This is an initiative that has its roots in an undertaking by te Runanganui o Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika a Maui. WelTec works collaboratively with the Runanga to extend a Tamaiti Whangai type of approach to the support of all Māori students studying at WelTec.

After identifying low participation in the electrical industry by Māori, an initiative was developed between iwi, Te Puni Kokiri, the ElectroTechnology Industry Training Organisation (ETITO), and WelTec utilising the institute's Tamaiti Whangai approach to the holistic support of Māori students. This initiative included developing scholarships, targeted learning support, and pastoral care involving whānau, complemented by re-arrangement of some material in the programme to encourage its completion. The educational performance of Māori participants in this stream of the programme has increased markedly, with course completions in the electrical programme (75 per cent) comparable to those achieved by all participants (74 per cent). In other programmes within the initiative, the course completion rate for Māori students is on average 3 per cent above that of all participants, whereas for programmes at similar levels outside the initiative, the completion rate for Māori students is on average 14 per cent below that of all participants. The clear success of this initiative in raising Māori achievement and performance has led to the initiative being applied to other programmes and a similar approach being developed for Pasifika students.

In their discussions with the evaluation team, industry representatives generally spoke highly of the knowledge, skills, and work-readiness of WelTec graduates. These views are supported by an independent survey of employers conducted for WelTec which indicated that 80 per cent are satisfied with the quality of graduates, and were confirmed in many cases by conversations with students and graduates. Staff members at WelTec are well connected to industry by a variety of means, including through work placements of students, their involvement in competitions, and through technology transfer projects. There is a

developing research culture at WelTec, demonstrated by recent growth in the number of peer-reviewed research outputs, the increased extent of supervision of student research projects, and the number of staff appointed to key bodies.

WelTec works to increase levels of literacy and numeracy and thereby boost worker self-confidence in workplaces and other organisations. A particular example is their success in preparing professional rugby players for “life after rugby”. WelTec has also fostered the development of cadetships and internships, which not only provide additional workplace experience for students but also increase the opportunities for businesses to recruit highly competent students and graduates from WelTec.

These efforts to ensure a supportive learning environment are evident in WelTec itself. Students reported being well supported in their learning by staff, and it was clear that staff were being encouraged continually to seek ways of improving their teaching, both informally and through professional development.

Although WelTec provides English language courses to international students, its niche market is mid-level vocational specialist courses. In these programmes, educational achievement in terms of programme completions frequently exceeds that of domestic students. Students commented favourably on the supportive environment for study provided by both tutors and WelTec International and on the effectiveness of Learnzone (WelTec’s online learning facility) and other information technology services.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Wellington Institute of Technology**.

WelTec chose to align its existing annual programme reporting arrangements with NZQA’s self-assessment methodology. As a result, the reports are compiled by addressing the NZQA key evaluation questions. As expected, there is some variability between WelTec’s programme reports, and while there is clear evidence of self-assessment of the current year’s activities, it is not always consistently linked to action plans for improvement. Those responsible for implementing self-assessment recognise this and have facilitated evaluation workshops, whose purpose has been to reduce variability in self-assessment and to extend organisational reach, including to non-academic areas. In addition, self-assessment workshops at academic board level would also assist in building further capability across the organisation. Needs assessment of students and of external stakeholders is a universally applied aspect of the self-assessment process at WelTec, and is clearly evident in the programme reports.

The Tamaiti Whangai initiative is an impressive example of self-assessment of an academic programme and the related learning and pastoral support issues and has achieved significant increases in students’ educational performance and significant gains in their self-confidence, attitudes to learning, and work-readiness. The project has been an effective model for application more widely across the institute.

Self-assessment has also been adopted in non-academic areas. While it is too soon to gauge the effectiveness of the approach, an example of its application has been the review of the

role of programme advisory committees in providing advice for course and programme development and their subsequent reconstitution as wider industry-facing bodies. There remains a need to more systematically collect and use graduate destination data to inform changes to programmes and ensure continued student work-readiness and to ensure that the programme is able to adapt nimbly in areas of rapid change (e.g. in creative technologies).

There is a clear recognition that qualitative self-assessment needs to be complemented by robust data. In addition to WelTec's existing student management system, an i-graduate survey for international students provides information about the effectiveness of teaching and the support of learners. Measures of the effectiveness of engagement with industry include the results of surveys of employers, record-keeping related to the production of research outputs, supervision of research, student cadetship, student internships, and industry partnerships.

WelTec is well aware of its role in providing applied and vocational tertiary education in its immediate vicinity of the Hutt Valley and, more widely, in the Wellington region. Self-assessment of its current and future capabilities has enabled WelTec to develop a relationship with Le Cordon Bleu international cookery school to establish joint premises in Wellington city, and also to work cooperatively with Whitireia Community Polytechnic to maintain a complementarity of programmes.

## TEO response

Wellington Institute of Technology wishes to state its disagreement with the ratings given in Focus Areas, specifically the comparative rates of 2.3 and 2.4, and believes that these ratings are not reflective of the evidence presented at the time of review.

In other respects, Wellington Institute of Technology has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

WelTec made significant improvements in its educational performance in 2010. Overall, its course completions increased from 67 per cent in 2009 to 75 per cent in 2010, and its qualifications completions increased from 57 per cent to 64 per cent. These increases (+8 per cent and +7 per cent respectively) are particularly strong when compared with changes in the corresponding indicators for the sector overall, being +4 per cent and -8 per cent respectively. WelTec's significant improvement in performance was the consequence of a determined effort to improve course completion rates across the institute, coupled with a review of the 20 lowest-performing programmes which resulted in a combination of closures and managed interventions.

An initiative, initially developed by the ElectroTechnology Industry Training Organisation (ETITO), Te Puni Kokiri, iwi, and WelTec for Māori students in electrical industry programmes, has been successful in substantially raising the educational achievement of Māori students, utilising the institute's Tamaiti Whangai approach to the holistic support of Māori students. Moreover, national electrical registration – an external learning outcome of the electrical industry programmes – is 54 per cent for WelTec graduates. This is double the pass rate achieved by other providers of this training. The course completion rate for Māori learners rose from 75 per cent in 2009 to 83 per cent in 2010. For comparison, the course completion rate for all participants was 51 per cent in 2009 and 74 per cent in 2010. The success of this initiative has been attributed to a combination of financial support, academic mentoring, and a whānau environment, and the outcomes have not only been in educational performance but also in the self-confidence, personal development, and work-readiness attitudes of the students. The Tamaiti Whangai model is being extended to other programmes. Programmes that participated in this scheme achieved, on average, the raising of course completion rates of Māori learners to those of all learners – an excellent result.

Across WelTec, a number of programmes showed significant improvement in performance. However, this is the first year of performance at this level. Should this improvement be maintained, the educational performance would be considered excellent.

These improvements result from self-assessment activity which has resulted in a number of interventions and strategies to improve the less-than-satisfactory educational performance of identified programmes, or to consolidate the performance of well-performing programmes. Although it is clear that many students' learning leads to employment

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<sup>1</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

(sometimes even if the qualification is not completed), WelTec recognises that it needs better information on employment outcomes as a complementary measure of learner achievement.

## 1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

Recognising that the most important outcome for most learners is employment, WelTec has established and maintained strong and productive relationships with business and industry in Wellington and the Hutt Valley. In several programmes, employers indicated that they preferred WelTec graduates over those who had studied elsewhere. Following an assessment of the effectiveness of industry advisory committees, WelTec has recently strengthened and broadened these committees to make them industry-wide rather than programme-specific. This recognises that in many industries, graduates need a wider skill-set than was once the case and, accordingly, that programmes increasingly need to prepare students for a wide variety of occupations. While there was broad acceptance by advisory committees of the potential benefits of this approach, it is too early to determine its effectiveness in further enhancing engagement with industry.

An independently conducted survey indicated that 80 per cent of employers were satisfied with the in-work performance of WelTec graduates, and high satisfaction levels were affirmed at interviews with employers. Discussions between teaching staff and advisory committees ensure that the knowledge and skills that must be mastered in the programme and the work-readiness of graduates are appropriate for employer-stakeholders. There are regular visits to learners in the workplace by teaching staff and this provides opportunities for gaining input from employers about current workplace practice. While at the programme level such information is not systematically collected, it is used anecdotally in self-assessment activities.

Research, technology transfer, and workplace learning are other activities involving business and industry stakeholders that WelTec has started to develop through its subsidiary WelTec Connect, a brokering service between WelTec and external clients and industry partners. The accreditation of WelTec for the Government's Technology Transfer Voucher scheme, WelTec's making facilities available for some technology developments, and its cadetships and numeracy/literacy arrangements with local businesses attest to the value of the knowledge, expertise, and equipment that WelTec has available and is able to share. In addition, the evaluation team interviewed a number of students who had secured cadetships and internships which led to employment because the cadets and interns could demonstrate skills and knowledge to their prospective employers.

Partnerships established with local iwi provide valued outcomes for students, iwi, industry, and WelTec. As an example, the excellent outcomes achieved by students in the Tamaiti Whangai initiative provide the basis of a successful model for other programmes.

### 1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

WelTec's programmes are initiated on the basis of meeting employment needs, either those specifically identified by an industry, as for example by ETITO in respect of electrical trade training and workplace literacy/numeracy courses, or to meet a wider need identified by WelTec for training in areas as diverse as information technology, creative arts, and health. It is clearly apparent that needs assessment is a major driver of WelTec's strategic development. Programme development following initial needs assessment may also involve other education providers, as in the development of engineering programmes with the Metro Group of ITPs. Moreover, it informs capital development, as in the redevelopment of cookery teaching facilities in association with Le Cordon Bleu international cookery school.

Through workplace visits to students, through the discussions at advisory committees, and through a range of other activities involving external stakeholders, staff gain information on how well the programmes they teach continue to meet the needs of industry and business and provide students with the skills and knowledge they need. This information is clearly used informally as the programme progresses, but is specifically evaluated as part of the self-assessment process.

WelTec's commitment to meeting the needs of its learners begins at enrolment, with programme education plan discussions to identify students' needs. Training is frequently customised to meet the needs of individuals and groups and their different learning styles. Successful teaching and learning practices used to good effect in the Tamaiti Whangai initiative for Māori learners are being incorporated by tutors into mainstream delivery of learning.

### 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Numerous examples of effective and innovative teaching practices were demonstrated to the evaluation team, with good evidence of staff and programme managers implementing strategies to address and improve learner achievement. Some examples include tutors taking a particular group of students as a cohort from enrolment right through to completion of a programme. This enables better identification of at-risk students and more timely intervention should students need help in theory and practice relating to the programmes or in literacy and numeracy. Students liked this "home tutor" approach, commenting on its enhancement of the whānau/family atmosphere. Staff members in many programmes use WelTec's Learnzone software system for course notes, self-directed study, and self-

assessment to enhance or reinforce teaching, the usefulness of which was affirmed by students. Staff members have completed programmes or qualifications that inform teaching practice (e.g. embedded literacy and numeracy).

Students interviewed were impressed by the knowledge and teaching ability of staff. By a variety of means, including peer observation and the use of student journals to obtain feedback, staff members are aware of the ways in which their teaching can be continually improved. Self-assessment tends to be informal but continual. The industry-connectedness of most staff members means that work placements are suitable and appropriate and also give opportunities for some students to be involved in cadetships and research projects.

The programme reports attest to internal and external moderation procedures being conducted as approved and required, with positive comments for the latter being reported by the relevant industry training organisations.

Although the automotive workshops in G-Block (Petone campus) and the creative technologies workshop at the Church Street premises were identified as inadequate and overcrowded, and the team considered that effectiveness of teaching could be compromised in such facilities, the institute is aware of these issues and has plans in place to address them. Redeveloped parts of the Petone campus provide particularly effective and welcoming student spaces and are indicative of WelTec's aspirations for its facilities.

## 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Considerable effort is made before students enrol to ensure they are aware of the requirements of the programme and its expectations of them, and also of any specific requirements for employment in the industry (e.g. dress codes and shift work in cookery). In many programmes, students are interviewed as part of the enrolment process, and diagnostic testing of literacy and numeracy may be undertaken at this stage or early in the programme. Personal education plans are a mechanism by which learning needs are both identified and addressed in many programmes.

Students report favourably on the support and encouragement given by teaching staff, which is complemented by centralised learning support and pastoral care services and the services of WelTec International where appropriate.

At programme level, self-assessment of the effectiveness of the guidance and support provided for students appears to be informal in some programmes while comprehensively reported on in others. The Tamaiti Whangai initiative, which provided holistic guidance and support to students in selected programmes by involving iwi, industry and WelTec – and achieved excellent results – provides a strong model for self-assessment which could be applied more widely.

## 1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The executive team has a strong focus on WelTec's educational achievements, seeking continuous improvement across the programme portfolio, while at the same time defining and closely managing a process of reviews of course completion rates in under-performing programmes and implementing appropriate changes. The outcomes of this process were reported to the academic board and thence to the WelTec Council. The implementation of changes resulting from this process, as well as continual improvement in many other programmes, has resulted in a significant shift in WelTec's educational performance relative to other ITPs in 2010 from its position in 2009. Some of these changes were structural but should also lead to an improved focus on teaching and learning.

While some programmes were closed as a result of this process, the overall intention was to reinvigorate the programmes where possible, and this has largely been achieved. Programmes in hairdressing and exercise science are examples of significant improvements in educational achievement. Less spectacular improvements were reported to the evaluation team as having occurred in programmes not included as focus areas (e.g. in computing and the NZ Diploma in Business). Overall, educational performance measures showed an improvement between 2009 and 2010, with particular improvements for Māori and Pasifika students. WelTec Council was kept fully informed of the intention to improve educational performance measures, its implementation, and its results.

Senior management has used self-assessment effectively in monitoring the educational performance of the institute's programmes, and in managing under-performing programmes. This has been complemented by informal and continuous self-assessment at the programme level.

A strong partnership with iwi through te Runanganui oTaranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika a Maui, which has led to the introduction of financial and learning support for Māori students, has also enhanced performance. There is also a strong institutional focus on linking learners to employers and in forming partnerships that foster effective work experience, workplace learning, and research and development. This is particularly evident in the institute's determination in restructuring advisory committees to have an industry focus rather than a programme-specific focus, and also in the applied research and development activities of WelTec Connect. The latter yields scholarships, work placements, and internships for students, as well as providing opportunities for WelTec staff to be involved with industry in new and enhanced technologies.

There has been significant investment in teacher professional development. The institute has a clear commitment to the incorporation of self-assessment practices throughout the organisation, and most teaching staff have already participated in training in self-assessment of the quality and outcomes of programmes. Teaching staff report being well supported by management and comment favourably on the professional development

opportunities provided and the encouragement to remain up to date in their specialist knowledge through research, competitions, and involvement with the relevant industry.

WelTec Council has a clear work programme and is focused on ensuring that both capital assets and service delivery are optimised for the benefit of learners. Appropriate reporting and management systems are in place. Council actively reflects on the mix of educational provision in relation to other providers in the region, and the institute uses industry-based rather than programme-based advisory committees to assist in this reflection. There is also a strong commitment to the council and management of WelTec to work with the council and management of Whitireia Community Polytechnic to maintain and develop programmes that are complementary and appropriate to the demographic and employment characteristics of their respective parts of the Wellington region.

# Focus Areas

*This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.*

## 2.1 Focus area: Certificate in Automotive Technology (Level 4)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

In 2010, this programme achieved an EFTS-weighted course completion rate of 78 per cent, with similar outcomes for under-25-year-old and Māori learners. The course completion rate for Pasifika students was higher at 84 per cent. The overall qualification completion rate was 78 per cent, increasing from 63 per cent in 2009.

A full review of the programme and its staffing was conducted, in which independent sector experts assisted. The review process and the implementation of changes are well documented. The changes include the development and delivery of new teaching resources, improved liaison with employers and students, improved monitoring of distance learning, and the introduction of literacy techniques in the programme consequent on tutors' undertaking the National Certificate in Adult Literacy Education (NCALE), all of which constitute a good basis for effective, ongoing self-assessment.

Students who complete the three-year qualification value the employment outcomes of being able to work in any workshop; students who leave during the programme were reported as having found employment in allied sectors (e.g. auto retail). While a variety of learning approaches (e.g. modular teaching and visual aids) are used in the programme, in the third year – when students are in employment – distance learning and block courses are offered.

Pre-enrolment advice to students is followed up after enrolment with diagnostic testing and personal education plans (to identify literacy and numeracy issues), mentoring, and the use of WelTec's centralised student support services. Students considered that they received good general guidance from their tutors and that they were well aware of other support services provided at WelTec. Tutors discussed teaching and learning matters at staff meetings, undertook peer observations of each other's teaching, and looked for trends at stages during the programme. Tutors felt they were supported by management and that their work was valued. However, management, staff, and students noted that some of the facilities were substandard and overcrowded, although plans for new premises are being progressed.

## 2.2 Focus area: Certificate in Food Preparation and Culinary Arts (Level 4)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

In 2010, this programme – offered in Petone and Rarotonga – had an overall EFTS-weighted course completion rate of 85 per cent, with lower completion rates for Māori (74 per cent), Pasifika (78 per cent), and under 25-year-old learners (81 per cent). The 74 per cent qualification completions rate achieved for the WelTec programme is complemented by the students' success in external City & Guilds examinations. All but one of 103 students on the certificate programme at Petone passed both the certificate and diploma levels of the City & Guilds examination, the majority with merit or distinction. All of the students on the Rarotonga programme passed the certificate and all but one the diploma. A student on the programme in Rarotonga was the top student globally in these examinations. WelTec teams at Petone and Rarotonga have been invited to compete in the Nestlé Toque d'Or competition, a strong indicator of the recognition of the quality of the programme by industry. Indeed, the WelTec brand is highly regarded by industry representatives interviewed in Wellington, which has prompted the staff to maintain exposure of the programme in the media and participate in visits to schools and other promotional activities.

This is a well-managed programme in which students are prepared for industry by enthusiastic and competent staff who provide strong support for student learning, while requiring students to maintain standards of dress, time management etc that are expected by the industry. Staff members are extremely supportive of their students, even escorting them to learning support or other services where appropriate. This high level of commitment to supporting learning was affirmed by the students, whose "reflective" journals provide weekly feedback to staff. Staff participate and judge in local and national competitions, and thereby model the pride and competitive behaviours characteristic of high performers in this industry. Staff members are encouraged to maintain currency of cooking skills through entering competitions and undertaking training to judge such events.

The head of school demonstrates passion for the area, provides strong leadership, and successfully applies to the executive team for resources where she is satisfied that the investment will improve learning outcomes for an already appropriately resourced programme. Self-assessment has been undertaken to address the causes of lower achievement. Examples include the re-allocation of classes to tutors at Petone, a rearrangement of delivery in Rarotonga, and an increased involvement with Te Whare Awhina staff, WelTec's support facility for Māori students and staff. Course completions increased from 76 per cent in 2009 to 85 per cent in 2010. More recent self-assessment has resulted in an action plan focused on further enhancing industry relationships, developing the tutorial stream, and exploring delivery and assessment tools using information technology.

### 2.3 Focus area: Certificate in Hairdressing and Beauty Services (Level 3)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

In 2010, this programme, which aligns well with Tertiary Education Strategy priorities, attracted significant numbers of under-25-year-old students, and for this group an 84 per cent weighted course completion was achieved. The overall course completion rate was 77 per cent, and the qualification completion rate was 68 per cent. The programme is the first year of a three-year pathway to employment, or a precursor to further study with WelTec, other providers, Hairdressing Industry Training Organisation off-job training, or apprenticeships. Tutors observe or hear from students' families that personal growth and life skills may be more important than the actual qualification. Notwithstanding that, and the high attrition rate, there was a significant improvement in course completions between 2009 and 2010. This improvement has resulted from a rigorous self-assessment process triggered at executive level, which motivated staff to focus on strategies to enhance completions, including the influence of whānau and monitoring student motivation during the programme. Students speak well of the staff in terms of their knowledge, skills, learning support, and pastoral care, as confirmed by the hairdressing team gaining a WelTec Staff Excellence Award.

There are strong connections between staff members and industry, which results in opportunities for students to participate in events and competitions (e.g. World of Wearable Art). Teaching staff are well supported in their roles by programme management, with opportunities for professional development such as undertaking the National Certificate in Adult Literacy Education (NCALE) and keeping current with industry practice by attending expos and continuing work in salons.

### 2.4 Focus area: Certificate in Electrical and Electronic Industry Skills (Level 2)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

Course completions showed a marked improvement over previous years, rising from 51 per cent in 2009 to 74 per cent in 2010. This improvement is attributed to several factors, including scheduling the teaching of the embedded national certificate in the programme, and, particularly, through the involvement of a stream of Māori learners in the programme in the Tamaiti Whāngai initiative. This scheme was initiated by ETITO, Te Puni Kokiri, Te Rūnanganui o Taranaki Whānui, and WelTec and includes a range of support services. These range from initial enquiry to enrolment to participation in the programme, which involve whānau as well as learners, and includes financial assistance through scholarships. As a result, the course completion rate for Māori learners now exceeds the sector median. The qualification completion rate is 71 per cent. Moreover, WelTec's pass rate in national registration examinations is double the national pass rate. There are strong industry

networks that provide ongoing programme feedback, work experience, and employment opportunities for students and graduates. Industry employers appreciate the skilled and work-ready graduates from the programme, citing WelTec as a preferred provider of employees in this area.

Staff review the effects of the changes to the programme, particularly of Tamaiti Whāngai, incorporating elements of this stream into others as resources permit. Formal institute self-assessment processes are complemented by informal reflection, one result of which has seen positive strategies from the Tamaiti Whāngai initiative incorporated into other streams in the programme.

## 2.5 Focus area: Research/technology transfer/WelTec Connect

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

WelTec aims to foster an institute-wide research culture and intends to enter the Tertiary Education Commission's Performance Based Research Fund in 2010. The increasing commitment to research is demonstrated by an increase in peer-reviewed publications (books, chapters, and papers), from 19 in 2008 to 27 in 2010. Conference presentations doubled from 29 to 60 over the same period, and the number of reports to external bodies increased from four to eight. Over the same period, the number of appointments to external bodies increased from 19 to 32, which is indicative of the increasing esteem in which WelTec research is held. A measure of the increasing pervasiveness of research at WelTec is indicated by an increase in the number of student research projects being supervised, from five in 2008 to 33 in 2010.

WelTec's longstanding and more recent engagements with the development of innovative products and technology – through its Smart Product and Smart Business Centres – are currently manifest in its recent establishment of WelTec Connect, which provides a centralised contact and brokering service with industries and business. WelTec Connect employs staff to seek out new opportunities for applied collaborative research between industry and WelTec and for workforce development in businesses and industries, which will not only raise literacy and numeracy where needed but also prepare staff for roles in an increasingly technology-driven future. WelTec's success in becoming accredited for the Technology Transfer Voucher scheme is indicative of its ongoing assessment of ways in which it can be of greatest value to external stakeholders while still being able to provide real-life industry projects for students both on and off campus.

WelTec Connect has its own board and management and is constituted so that the educational benefits of the enterprise's activities remain a key focus. This corporate structure and its associated regular reporting regime foster continual self-assessment and monitor the potential financial, educational, and reputational risks of proposals and projects.

## 2.6 Focus area: Creative Technologies cluster

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Two certificate programmes (Certificate in Design (Skills and Technologies) (Level 3) and Certificate in Creative Technologies (Level 4)) contribute about half of the students to the Bachelor of Creative Technologies. All programmes have high course completion rates: for the level 3 certificate (78 per cent), the level 4 certificate (73 per cent), and the degree (85 per cent). The qualification completion rates for the level 3 and level 4 certificates are 76 per cent and 66 per cent respectively. In 2008, 2009, and 2010 the qualification completion rates for the degree were 55 per cent, 74 per cent, and 85 per cent respectively.

The degree has recently been restructured to give a practical, project-based approach which has been philosophically challenging to some staff, although the debates about this have been inclusive of all staff. Although staff members assert that the project-based approach aligns with real-world employment, there are diverse views on how well the degree meets industry requirements, including fundamental computer skills, literacy, appropriateness for the workplace of technology used in teaching, and general work readiness. The advisory committee is active and confirmed that WelTec values and acts on its feedback to improve content and delivery.

While students generally praise the knowledge and skills of teaching staff and the clear assessment information, aspects of the learning environment were criticised as being unplanned and disorganised. With the redesign of the degree completed and implemented, the challenge for management and staff is to self-assess current teaching and administrative arrangements and develop a robust plan for their improvement. Currently, the certificate programmes are taught at the Petone campus, with the degree being delivered at the Church Street premises, inhibiting potentially useful contact between the students enrolled in the certificates underpinning the degree and the degree students, especially since about half of the certificate students progress to the degree. The quality of teaching is not assisted by the low quality of the facilities accommodating the learning environment at both sites and the overall safety of workshop/creative space facilities at Church Street, of which the institute is well aware.

## 2.7 Focus area: Certificate in Exercise Science (Level 5)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Qualification and course completion rates have increased markedly in this programme as a consequence of intervention. In 2010, the course completion rate was 85 per cent and the qualification completion rate 60 per cent, with a third of those who complete the programme progressing to the diploma. The programme was redesigned in 2009. In addition to competence in exercise science, the programme seeks to develop the business aspects of the industry and the social confidence required to work in the sector. Bridging programmes, pre-programme interviews, and personal education programmes have

improved student readiness for the programme. A pastoral care officer has been appointed by the school as part of the programme staff, and there are students in the programme who are also supported through their engagement with the Te Tamaiti Whangai initiative.

Staff members attend international conferences to enhance subject knowledge and participate in professional development, and are considering new technologies in the delivery of the learning. This is consistent with students' overall satisfaction with the programme and their observations that staff are both knowledgeable and committed. The programme has recently gained external accreditation with the Register of Exercise Professionals. The advisory committee is effective, and its membership is being extended beyond a focus on the fitness industry to meet broader and more diverse industry needs.

Self-assessment is reported to be relatively new for most staff in this programme. The challenge will be to build on the effective intervention of recent years to maintain completions and assess the prospect for, and implementation of, continual improvements.

## 2.8 Focus area: Prison courses cluster

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

WelTec provides courses towards certificates in four pre-trades areas at Rimutaka Prison. The arrangements with the Department of Corrections and Corrections Inmate Employment means that the expectation is that courses are offered that may lead to qualifications, but that not all the courses for the qualification are necessarily offered at the prison or are available to all potential students. Course completion rates in pre-trade painting are 77 per cent; in brick-laying and block-laying, 82 per cent; in building and construction, 73 per cent; and in automotive engineering, 54 per cent. Besides giving these students a taste of learning success, prison staff confirmed that the programmes often lead to behavioural improvements in students, an enhancement of their self-worth, and an aspiration for employment on release. Staff members change the delivery of practice and theory to better fit students' routines. Students report being well supported by WelTec staff in their learning on the courses. Tutors indicated that student feedback and awareness of the students' achievements are the main indicators of their teaching effectiveness. The programme is demanding of WelTec staff, and they appeared to welcome a mechanism whereby they could readily share ideas and experiences.

The programme is sustained by a good and developing relationship between WelTec and the Department of Corrections and Corrections Inmate Employment. Regular evaluation of the programme has already led to additional courses and may lead to block programmes and higher-level courses being offered. Both parties recognise the limits imposed by the characteristics of the learning environment.

## 2.9 Focus area: WelTec International

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Across many non-ESOL programmes at WelTec, the programme completion rate for international students exceeds that of domestic students. In particular, for the Certificate in Food Preparation and Culinary Arts, the qualification completion rate in 2010 for international students was 100 per cent, while for domestic students it was 85 per cent. For the Bachelor of Creative Technologies, the qualification completion rate for international students was 96 per cent, while for domestic students it was 85 per cent.

Leadership of WelTec International is strong and focused on implementing smooth orientation and enrolment processes for students and supporting them during their study, including by fostering effective relationships with secondary schools. The WelTec International team provides “end-to-end” service to its international students: recruiting overseas, activities on arrival, monitoring attendance and intervening where necessary, and working collaboratively with staff in schools to support students’ learning. WelTec provides additional English language classes where this is necessary for particular programmes in its niche market of mid-level vocational specialist programmes. Students spoke highly of the support provided by WelTec International and teaching staff, and commented favourably on Learnzone (WelTec’s online learning facility) and other information technology services.

WelTec International participates in benchmarking activities, including those provided by the i-graduate survey and Alan Olsen international education consultants, and uses the results of these activities to inform further improvements. Examples are events that profile international communities within WelTec and signage in international languages in the student hub area. WelTec International also consults with equivalent services in the Metro Group of ITPs, to compare marketing strategies and self-assesses its own processes. This has been effective, for example in leading to improvements in enrolment procedures and introducing a tracking system to monitor interventions for, and the use of services by, international students, enhancing WelTec’s ability to ensure that once students’ academic and pastoral care needs are identified, they are addressed.

A comprehensive approach to self-assessment is indicated in the 2010 WelTec International Business Unit Review, which analysed the needs of various stakeholders, assessed how well those needs were being met, and developed an action plan for 2011. This focused on improving the level of student support for international students, better communication with students utilising the web and social media, and scoping a customer relationship management system for WelTec International.

An internal audit of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students was undertaken in mid-2010, as recommended in the 2009 Mid-Term Quality Review Report by ITP Quality. The report noted a high level of compliance with the code, making six suggestions for improvement, and identifying three non-compliances. The 2010 business review document indicates the progress being made towards addressing these issues.

# Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review, other than those implied or expressed within the report.

# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.*

*In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.*

*NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.*

*The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

*External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.*

*External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website ([www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

*Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication *Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review*, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>*

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