



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Northland Polytechnic trading as
NorthTec

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 3 July 2013

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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

Name of TEO:	Northland Polytechnic trading as NorthTec
Type:	Institute of technology
Location:	55 Raumanga Valley Road, Whangarei
First registered:	2004, with earlier origins as Northland Community College
Number of students:	Domestic: 3156 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) (in 2011) ¹ International: 65 equivalent full-time students (in 2011)
Number of staff:	326 full-time equivalents ¹
Sites:	Whangarei Campus: Raumanga; Future Trades Campus, Dyer Street; ASB Leisure Centre, Kensington; Bay of Islands Campus: Kerikeri; Kaitaia Learning Centre; Rawene Learning Centre; Kaikohe Learning Centre; courses are also offered at various sites throughout Northland, including Mangonui, Auckland and in the Rodney District.
Distinctive characteristics:	Because it offers programmes at NZQF levels 1-7 throughout the region, NorthTec is the most significant tertiary education provider in Northland.
Recent significant changes:	After a long period of financial difficulties, NorthTec achieved an acceptable surplus in 2011 ² and has

¹ NorthTec 2011 Annual Report, p. 26

² NorthTec 2011 Annual Report, p. 41

reduced the level of its Crown loan, and is thereby able to develop a longer-term strategic focus to its activities. Student numbers have stabilised at around 3,000 EFTS.

Previous quality assurance history:

NorthTec's Quality Assured Status for a further two years was endorsed following a mid-term quality review conducted by ITP Quality on 5 May 2010, noting that, 'Northland Polytechnic is using effective self-assessment, internal audit and review processes to help maintain quality consistent with its Quality Assured Status'.

NorthTec has external moderation arrangements for many of its programmes, of which NZQA-managed moderation is a small component. A report received in 2012 noted that in order to maintain national moderation requirements for the NZQA-managed unit standards offered by NorthTec, two standards required modification, two required significant action, and no action was required on six.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Programmes were selected from all levels of NorthTec’s provision, from certificate to degrees, across the subject areas, and including programmes offered away from Whangarei, or by flexible delivery (Table 1).

Table 1. Focus areas for EER, by programme area and NZQF level				
NZQF level	Levels 1-2	Levels 3-4	Levels 5-6	Level 7
Directorate	Programmes selected as focus areas			
Heath and Environment	National Certificate in Horticulture (Level 3)		Certificate in Sport and Recreation (Level 5)	Bachelor of Nursing
Commerce	Certificate in Tourism and Hospitality Skills (Level 2)			
Trade and Technology Innovation	Certificate in Foundation Forestry Skills (Level 2)	National Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4)		
Creative Industries and Humanities		Te Pokairua Ngapuhi-Nui-Tonu Te Raranga (Level 6)		Bachelor of Applied Social Service

NorthTec has assessed programme capability in self-assessment, based on the assessment of its programme reports against NZQA rubrics within focus areas by the Directorate. A grid of the educational performance (using course completions as a proxy) versus a grid for capability in self-assessment was made available at the scoping visit (see Figure 1) and was of assistance in selecting the programme focus areas.

Capability in self-assessment inferred by NorthTec	Course completion %		
	85%-100%	75%-84%	0%-74%
Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor of Nursing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate of Sport and Outdoor Recreation 	
Good-Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor of Applied Social Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Certificate in Horticulture (Level 2) Certificate in Academic Studies (Level 4) (included insofar as it is a pathway to the Bachelor of Nursing and the Bachelor of Applied Social Service) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4) Certificate in Tourism and Hospitality Skills (Level 2) Certificate in Foundation Forestry Skills (Level 2)
Adequate-Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Te Pokairua Ngapuhi-Nui-Tonu Te Raranga (Māori Arts) 		

Figure 1. Focus areas for EER, by course completions and capability in self-assessment.

Capability in self-assessment inferred by NorthTec	Course completion %			
	85%-100%	75%-84%	0%-74%	All
Excellent	1 of 5 (20%)	1 of 3 (33%)	0 of 2	2 of 10 (20%)
Good-Adequate	1 of 11 (9%)	1 of 14 (7%)	3 of 16 (19%)	6 of 41 (15%)
Adequate-Poor	1 of 3 (33%)	0 of 3	0 of 3	1 of 9 (11%)
All	3 of 19 (9%)	2 of 20 (10%)	3 of 21 (14%)	8 of 60 (13%)

Figure 2. Number of focus areas compared with number of programmes, by course completions and capability in self-assessment. Percentages in parentheses are the ratios of the number of focus areas to number of programmes in that part of the grid expressed as a percentage.

In addition, the scope of the EER included the mandatory focus areas of governance, management, and strategy, and the achievement and 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 web 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 TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

The external evaluation review of NorthTec was conducted over a five-day period (11-15 June 2012) by a four-person evaluation team. Based at the Raumanga campus at Whangarei, sub-teams of evaluators met with managers, teaching staff, students, and external stakeholders at that site as well as at the Future Trades site and at Kensington Stadium (ASB Leisure Centre). Evaluations were also carried out on selected programmes offered in Kaitaia, Kerikeri, and Mangonui.

The governance, management, and strategy focus area was addressed through meetings with the chief executive and Directorate, the academic board, and the chair and members of Council. There were also evaluative conversations with programme managers/leaders. The focus area of achievement and support of international students was addressed through the programme focus areas, and particularly through discussions with the relevant staff who have responsibility for enrolment, student support, and ensuring that NorthTec meets its responsibilities under the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **NorthTec**.

NorthTec is strongly focused on educational performance, with four of its five strategies³ directed to that end. That focus is at least in part driven by the institute's desire to meet the educational objectives in its investment plan and its Crown loan agreement, negotiated with and agreed by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

The evaluation team is confident in the educational performance of NorthTec because virtually all targets have been met or exceeded, course and qualification completions have increased over time, and rankings relative to other institutes of technology have increased. This is particularly noteworthy given that NorthTec is highly rated on the TEC's 'at risk index' in 2010, determined from NorthTec's high proportions of all of the following: Māori and Pasifika students, students over 35 years of age, students with no previous record of formal qualifications, students who have been unemployed or a beneficiary, and students with a disability.

That confidence is bolstered by the strong relationships that NorthTec staff have with community and industry stakeholders. Members of Council and the directorate are well connected to key bodies and organisations in the region, and become aware of and have the ability to influence new economic developments projected for Northland and to secure NorthTec's role in training that such developments might indicate. Programme staff are also involved continually with their respective industries as practitioners, business owners, or members of professional organisations. Such involvement ensures that staff become aware of the changing needs of industry and is reflected in changes to courses and programmes. The involvement is also highlighted when NorthTec students are successful in industry competitions and gain industry recognition for their achievements. NorthTec's qualifications aim to make students work-ready, and the high proportion of graduates that gain employment is a further measure of NorthTec's good educational performance.

NorthTec offers programmes from foundation to degrees to students who have a wide range of educational backgrounds, learning needs, and pastoral care requirements, and diverse aspirations for life after study. There is a high level of educational success, whether measured by the educational performance indicators and employment outcomes, or as indicated by anecdotes about increased self-esteem, enhanced literacy or computer skills, work-readiness, and the confidence

³ The strategies are: 1. To deliver best practice and innovative vocational education; 2. To deliver inspirational performance; 3. To become a sought-after tertiary educator for Iwi/Māori of Te Tai Tokerau; 4. To secure financial sustainability; 5. To ensure the region's vocational tertiary education needs are met.

and willingness to be involved in community projects. This attests to NorthTec's programmes matching and meeting the needs of learners. Employer surveys similarly attest to the primary needs of industry – that of a competent trained workforce – being matched through NorthTec's programmes.

Teaching and support services are highly rated by the students, and the quality of these services, enhanced by self-assessment activities, contribute significantly to NorthTec's educational performance.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **NorthTec**.

The evaluation team has confidence in NorthTec's capability in self-assessment based on the effectiveness of its annual evaluation of programmes, complemented by strengths in data analysis and commitment to external benchmarking.

Self-assessment of programmes at NorthTec is undertaken on an annual basis, as per the cycle shown in Figure 3. The cornerstone is a systematic data-based discussion leading to action plans for improvement monitored by the academic board. The evaluation team was able to see from action plans that many suggestions made for improvement were implemented, and the plans also indicated whether the improvement was beneficial to teaching, support for student learning, or student achievement, and thus, that the model of self-assessment for programmes is authentic and effective.

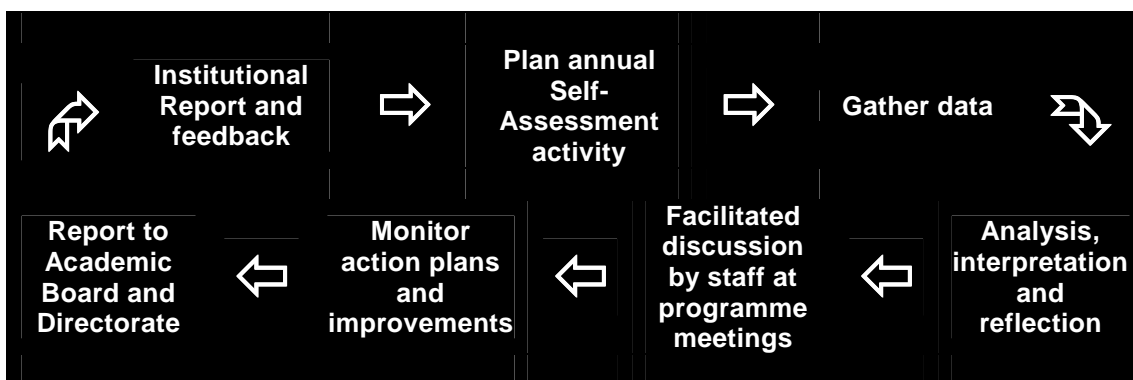


Figure 3. Annual self-assessment cycle

In 2011, some programmes included ratings of educational performance and/or self-assessment, but this was not universal practice across the focus areas evaluated or the institute.

The gathering and analysis of data are particularly important components of the self-assessment processes at NorthTec. The institute has a good understanding of the demography of the region it serves, and uses this, in conjunction with its own performance data, to establish the types and locations of student groups to which its learner support students can be targeted more effectively. NorthTec has identified the lesser performing programmes with the largest number of Māori students and is targeting these programmes for attention under its Māori

Responsiveness Plan. This pragmatic approach is expected to raise the course completion rates for Māori students. Also, when programmes are redeveloped to better meet projected industry requirements, there is clear evidence of robust gathering of information from the industry concerned and other providers of similar programmes, as well as research into national and international practice and trends. A measure of the effectiveness of NorthTec's self-assessment processes in respect of its programmes is the sustained increases in qualifications and courses (Table 2), improvements in which are identified as a strategic aim.⁴ In particular, NorthTec recognises the value of external benchmarking to its strategy. It aims to be in the upper quartile of institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) with respect to the TEC's educational performance indicators.

In addition, NorthTec benchmarks itself with selected other providers for particular programmes (e.g. social work). NorthTec has developed certificate and diploma programmes that not only feed to degrees that 'belong' to other providers (e.g. sport and recreation, applied science), but are given full credit transfer into those degrees. This external recognition of these certificates and diplomas is a strong signal of the quality of these programmes, and is further validated by the degree providers allowing NorthTec staff to teach the final year of their degrees in sport and recreation and applied science in Whangarei.

NorthTec has participated in the i-Barometer for comparing the quality of support services for international students. It has also participated in an inter-institutional comparison of the support for Māori nursing students⁵ (in which NorthTec was first-ranked), and in a collaborative project with other polytechnics and universities that identified success factors for Māori students.⁶ These activities contribute to maintaining strong educational performance and are also an important component of self-assessment.

Responsibility for self-assessment is organisation-wide and involves all staff. Self-assessment processes are embedded in academic and non-academic areas, including strategic and business planning. All staff are informed of achievements within NorthTec and this in turn influences organisational decision-making, including planning, setting priorities, and actions. Because self-assessment is a pervasive organisation-wide practice, this predisposes a cyclic approach to analysis, review, and effecting improvements – as is implied for the academic areas (see Figure 3) – rather than a continuous one. Notwithstanding, improvements are made at a local level, particularly in courses and programmes, as a more immediate response to concerns and needs that arise.

⁴ NorthTec 2011 Annual Report, pp. 6, 12.

⁵ Nga Manukura o Apopo. The performance of New Zealand's schools of nursing. Responsiveness to Māori Nursing Students Scorecard 2011.

⁶ Aika, L-H.; Greenwood, J. (2009). Hei Tauria – Teaching and Learning Success for Māori in Tertiary Settings. Wellington: Ako Aotearoa

TEO response

NorthTec considers that the rating of Confident in educational performance is inappropriate and should instead be Highly Confident. NorthTec considers that the report contains errors of judgment, specifically regarding the ratings for educational performance in two focus areas (the Bachelor of Social Services and the National Certificate in Carpentry), which have adversely impacted the overall rating for educational performance. NorthTec also has concerns with the process by which the report, and its conclusions, were finalised.

Findings⁷

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**.

In the programme focus areas, evidence was provided to the evaluation team of improvements in the self-esteem, confidence, and work-readiness of students which, coupled with the skills and knowledge gained in the programme of study often leads to employment. While employment is a major expectation of the vocational education NorthTec offers, the evaluation team was aware that in economically disadvantaged sub-regions of Northland there may be few opportunities for employment. In such circumstances, the achievements consequent on tertiary education can equally be the gaining of knowledge and skills either to become a self-employed contractor or to contribute to the well-being of whānau and communities in a volunteer or marginally paid capacity. The evaluation team was provided with many anecdotal examples of such achievements by students and former students, and staff and community representatives confirmed that these achievements were occurring and attested to their value.

The criteria used by NorthTec to measure and compare its overall educational performance with other ITPs include the TEC data (educational performance indicators). In addition, NorthTec measures the extent to which its performance is aligned to its Investment Plan 2011-2013 and its Crown Loan Agreement.

The TEC educational performance data for NorthTec over the three years 2009-2011 are given in Table 2.

	2009		2010		2011	
	EPI	Rank	EPI	Rank	EPI	Rank
Course completions	72%	9	77%	7	79%	6
Qualification completions	44%	16	56%	11	60%	7
Retention	46%	11	52%	8	53%	12
Progression	34%	6	27%	12	27%	13

Both course and qualification completions have increased with time, as has the ranking of NorthTec relative to other institutes of technology. NorthTec attributes the increase in qualification completions to 'the focus and attention to this area and

⁷ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

including pastoral care initiatives'.⁸ The evaluation team considers that the implementation of the Work Ready youth initiative and the Māori responsiveness plan, which are targeted responses to the high number of disengaged youth in the region and to Māori, are likely to have contributed to these trends. More particularly, the likely success of these initiatives is apparent in the notably higher participation of Māori and youth at NorthTec compared with other ITPs and wānanga, together with the higher course completion rates for Māori and youth at NorthTec, also compared with other ITPs and wānanga (Table 3).

	Participation 2010			Course completions 2010		
	ITP sector	NorthTec	Wānanga	ITP sector	NorthTec	Wānanga
Students under 25	48%	36%	16%	73%	74%	67%
Māori	21%	43%	59%	66%	74%	72%

The data shown in Table 3 is consistent with the achievement of academic performance indicators related to the institute's investment plan⁹ and the NorthTec Crown Loan Agreement.¹⁰

NorthTec has a clear understanding of the demographics of its region. By analysis of education performance information segmented by region, the institute has been able to target learning support and assistance to particular demographic groups (see also section 1.5). Tables 2 and 3 in this section give a clear indication of the success of that self-assessment in driving educational 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 **Good**.

NorthTec identifies five key stakeholders: students, communities, Māori, employers, and the Government. The value of outcomes for students is the opportunity their study provides to gain knowledge and skills that lead to employment, work-readiness, and enhanced ability to contribute to the whānau and communities to which they belong. Examples of valued outcomes for communities include the

⁸ Annual Report 2011, p. 39. The report also notes that 'student progression is still a key target area'.

⁹ Annual Report 2011, pp. 35-39. Four objectives, six targets overall, four of which were exceeded.

¹⁰ Annual Report 2011, pp. 40-42. Of nine objectives, six are directly related to academic performance, each with one target, all of which were achieved.

assistance provided by horticultural students in dune-sand replanting, the development of marae and community gardens, and involvement in school gardens through OSCAR¹¹ programmes. Teaching staff are well aware of the value of these activities, but have signalled a renewed emphasis on student projects that are commercial or semi-commercial in order to link experience within the programmes more clearly with the world of work. Another example of value to the community, of which NorthTec is well aware, is the stimulus provided by the Ngapuhi Nui-Tonu te Raranga programme to the revival of the art of raranga in Northland, through projects that support the restoration and preservation of taonga Māori on marae, and which have also resulted in a gift of two large tapapa (mats) which were woven and then gifted to NorthTec for use in its wharenuī.¹² Success in this programme has also led to business opportunities.¹³

The value of outcomes for employers is an appropriately skilled and knowledgeable workforce suitable for the current and future needs of Northland. Again, examples abound from the programme focus areas evaluated. The sports and recreation programmes, for example, provide valued outcomes for the sports 'industry' in Northland, through students being part-time and volunteer workers for school sports-team coaching and being involved in tasks related to the organisation and delivery of regional sporting events. In addition, graduates of the programmes (particularly of the degree) are retained in Northland to contribute in a variety of sports and managerial roles, including with Sport Northland. More generally, surveys of employers make clear that NorthTec graduates are recognised as adding value to the Northland workforce. Staff at NorthTec are aware of these graduate destinations through their connectedness with the relevant industries and communities.

Finally, the value of outcomes for Government is a fiscally responsible and prudently managed tertiary education institute. This is amply demonstrated by NorthTec's 2011 Annual Report. NorthTec aims to be in the upper quartile of institutes of technology, and while this self-identified objective has not yet been achieved, virtually all of the measures associated with the TEC's objectives in the NorthTec Investment Plan and the NorthTec Crown Loan Agreement have been met or exceeded.

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

¹¹ Out of School Care and Recreation (<http://www.oscar.org.nz/>)

¹² Newly created taonga adorn NorthTec wharenuī (October 2010) (<http://www.thebigidea.co.nz/grow/tips-tools/2010/oct/76205-newly-created-taonga-adorn-northtec-wharenui>).

¹³ An example of this is a home-based enterprise making woven items to order, developed by a former NorthTec student in the weaving programme. (<http://www.spasifikmag.com/publiceducationpage/4aprmaoriweaving/>)

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**.

Evidence in the self-assessment reports, particularly relating to employment outcomes and relationships with communities and industries, and triangulated with discussions with students, confirmed that the programmes in which they were enrolled matched their needs. This was particularly the case for students enrolled in programmes in rural areas, where needs relating to programme outcomes were often associated as much with the students' community and whānau as with their own potential employability or employment. The horticulture and carpentry programmes, in particular, met this category of need in that the skills and knowledge acquired by students could be applied beyond employment. Similarly, the raranga students gained knowledge in weaving techniques that matched their needs for applying this knowledge to conservation projects on their own and other marae.

Several programmes evaluated were designed as pathways to programmes at higher levels. Typically about a third of those completing the level 2 programmes progressed to other programmes, not necessarily in the same area of study. For example, some students in the carpentry programme were considering following this with a horticulture programme, partly because they considered that the combination might enhance their rural employment prospects, especially when employment prospects in carpentry are limited, as is the case currently. With that in mind, the recent addition of more generic skills to specialist programmes (e.g. adding building/construction skills to horticulture programmes) reflects the realities of Northland's employment situation. Those students who had progressed to another programme considered that the knowledge and skills gained in the previous course had met their needs in the sense of being able to undertake the current programme.

Successful study is invariably predicated on appropriate standards of literacy and numeracy. Pre- and post-course assessment of literacy has demonstrated that embedding of literacy and numeracy in courses at and below level 4 is effective in increasing literacy. Such embedding is inferred to have contributed to the 80 per cent completion rate for students enrolled in trades courses at levels 4 and above in 2011.

Practical components of the courses, whether clinical placements (by nursing students), barista work at NorthTec's Dyer Street café (by hospitality students), building a house (by carpentry students), or coaching school teams and helping to organise tournaments (by sport and recreation students) match the need for training that replicates the work experience as far as is possible, given the extent of the students' knowledge and skills at the time. The value of such practical work in ensuring work-ready graduates was commented on frequently by members of local advisory committees and employer representatives.

Most programmes have active local advisory committees comprising employers and others active in the industry. These groups advise the programme leaders on

recent trends in their industry so that programmes can be continually updated to meet the changing needs of employers and businesses. Where appropriate, in order to match a programme's need to be competitive either nationally or internationally, local industry input from these committees and networks is augmented with information from other New Zealand sources or by researching global trends.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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**.

NorthTec conducts annual teaching quality and student experience surveys, the results of which are summarised in Table 4. These high levels of satisfaction with teaching and the student experience cascade to the segmented results for the programmes focus areas, reflections on which are reported in the facilitated discussions.

Table 4. Quality of teaching and satisfaction with student experience at NorthTec, 2011*					
Quality of teaching	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	
	70%	23%	6%	1%	
Satisfaction with NorthTec experience	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Mostly satisfied	Mostly dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
	40%	34%	22%	4%	1%
*NorthTec 2011 Teaching Surveys. Number of participants is 2,352; the percentage of students sampled is 30%. Surveys are typically conducted in class by an independent person and almost all students surveyed respond.					

Such surveys of teaching are complemented by opportunities provided within programmes to share ideas about good practice. Consistent with current emphasis on the centrality of the learner to education, 'a learner observation' project has been initiated and is being trialled in selected programmes, which is expected to inform self-assessment of educational quality.

Effectiveness of teaching is also demonstrated by success in competitions involving students. As examples of this in 2011, 15 medals were won by hospitality students at the National Culinary Fare, and two gold medals were won in the premier student culinary competition, Toque d'Or; three applied arts students were selected as finalists for the Ranamok Glass Art Prize; three fashion and design students received top placings at the Bernina Fashion Awards; an applied information systems graduate received two industry awards; and a carpentry student was selected to compete in the National ITaB Apprentice Challenge. A particularly strong indicator of effectiveness is the agreements with other degree providers for NorthTec to teach the final year of their degrees. Such agreements have been

made with Auckland University of Technology in respect of the AUT Bachelor of Sport and Recreation, and with Unitec in respect of the Unitec Bachelor of Applied Science (Biodiversity Management). The 100 per cent pass rate of NorthTec's nursing students presented for the State Finals Examinations in 2011 is another example of an external affirmation of teaching quality. Effective teaching in the polytechnic context can also be demonstrated by employment outcomes for students. As previously mentioned, these are generally high from programmes at NorthTec.

Self-assessment of teaching practice and expected learning outcomes also contributes to the quality of teaching. While improvements occur during programme delivery as a consequence of self-reflection, this occurs formally through the annual facilitated discussion and quality improvement plan processes, and through moderation. Other processes that inform self-assessment of effective teaching are professional accreditations, national benchmarking (as occurs in nursing), and benchmarking with selected providers of similar programmes (as occurs with the Bachelor of Applied Social Service). Less frequently, major programme reviews are undertaken. As an example, the recent five-yearly revision required for NorthTec's Bachelor of Applied Social Service provided such an opportunity. Research into international practice for the training of social workers and extensive consultation within the profession and employers resulted in a revamped programme using 'enquiry action learning', which is being introduced this year.

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**.

Students are guided and supported in their learning by course teachers and the central Student Support Services team, the latter of which includes learning advisors, counsellors, disability support staff, student advisors, and career guidance services, provided by Careers New Zealand. Learning support staff are also located at the Kerikeri campus and the Rawene and Kaitaia Learning Centres. In parts of Northland that are a considerable distance from NorthTec's Whangarei campus, learning support and pastoral care tends to be provided by tutors, in addition to their teaching roles. Students in these localities appreciated the high level of concern for their well-being that underpinned tutors' teaching practice. That said, similar sentiments were expressed about teaching staff in other programmes as well.

NorthTec uses the literacy and numeracy tool to identify groups for targeted assistance, examples of which are shown in Table 4A.

Table 4A. Example of identification of targeted groups for literacy and numeracy support from diagnostic test administered at beginning of programme			
	Step 4 and above (N _{>4})	Step 3 and below (N _{<3})	% at or below Step 3 (N _{<3})*100/(N _{>4} +N _{<3})
Māori reading	25	32	56%
Non-Māori reading	63	15	19%
Māori numeracy	37	20	35%
Non-Māori literacy	65	13	17%

Results of individual learners and class reports are shared with the tutors by the literacy advisors. Tutors are then supported by the literacy advisors in using teaching strategies for all learners. Because many students have a background of poor achievement in school, a high level of support both from tutors and specialist advisers continues to be needed. In recognition of this and the economic circumstances of students, which can inhibit self-directed learning, NorthTec continually develops structures and processes with the objective of increasing completion and progression rates. Examples include monitoring the attendance of students and implementing a system that alerts student support staff to students who tutors identify as having learning issues.

Overall, the evaluation team considers that student guidance and support is effective and appropriate for the programmes NorthTec offers.

As part of its self-assessment of student support services, NorthTec has segmented its course completion data by region, ethnicity, age, qualification, and previous activity. From this analysis, Māori students (especially those in Whangarei), those under 25 years (and especially those under 18), students in programmes at NZQF levels 2 and 3, and students who come to NorthTec directly from secondary school or who were previously unemployed have been identified as less likely to succeed, and these groups are expected to be the focus of assistance to be provided from a reoriented Student Support Services team. The evaluation team considered that this data interrogation represents an effective step in determining the type and location of support services that would be most effective in the future.

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**.

As a result of the restructuring of Council, a significant change in organisational culture was initiated, driven by a new strategic plan, with an institution-wide focus on outcomes and performance that is relevant to students, employers, and the

community.¹⁴ As a result, key performance indicators have been established to measure progress against the strategic plan, and these drive down into performance measures and expectations for senior managers. Council and the directorate are strongly committed to enhancing educational opportunities and employment prospects throughout the region. The development of strategies for achieving these commitments is informed by analysis of external demographic data, and preliminary success is indicated by subsets of NorthTec's educational performance data.¹⁵

The management and governance of NorthTec have strong links with the local community and industry, which complement those of programme staff. Members of Council and the senior management hold leadership roles with peak bodies in the region, which positions NorthTec to meet the educational opportunities that are anticipated to accompany envisaged expansion of industries such as petroleum refining and aquaculture, and in the creative industries.¹⁶ Prudent resource management has enabled the development of new trade training facilities at Dyer Street, and an art gallery and new teaching spaces at the Raumanga campus.

The annual cycle of self-assessment of programmes at NorthTec has been previously described and shown in Figure 3. Similar cycles, requiring the collection of supporting evidence and its analysis are undertaken in respect of student surveys and applications for changes to programmes.

The directorate demonstrates its commitment to evaluation through its involvement in Australian evaluation projects (e.g. working with the Closing the Gap indigenous group), its carrying out of an external evaluation and review for PULSE (youth services in Whangarei), by the attendance of senior staff of the institute at the conferences of the Australasian Evaluation Society in 2011 and 2012, and its steps towards self-assessment of its own performance.¹⁷

¹⁴ Progress towards these outcomes is demonstrated in NorthTec's achievements against its Investment Plan objectives; see Annual Report 2010, pp. 34-39.

¹⁵ These relate to objectives in the Crown Loan Agreement; see Annual Report 2010, pp. 40-42.

¹⁶ Economic impact of the arts, culture and heritage sector – Proposal for the Cultural Heritage Arts Trust (CHART) North. Wellington/Auckland: Martin Jenkins.

¹⁷ Developing a leadership framework and values for the future. NorthTec

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Bachelor of Nursing

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

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

This programme is New Zealand's first blended mode nursing degree, specifically developed to take account of the dispersed demographic character of Northland, and the lack of mobility of many potential students.

Students in this programme indicated that they were well prepared for employment, with the clinical placements making a strong contribution to preparedness for work. Eighty per cent of 2011 graduates gained employment.

All students who sat the State Finals Examinations in 2011 passed. Course completions in 2011 were 96 per cent and qualification completions were 76 per cent, both showing an increase from the previous year. Although Māori achievement was lower (course completions, 94 per cent; qualification completions, 48 per cent¹⁸) the programme is, nevertheless, first-ranked in responsiveness to Māori students, benchmarked across all New Zealand schools of nursing.¹⁹ Within NorthTec, staff cite clinical placement of students and their attendance at tutorial wānanga as important indicators of likely student success.

The value of the outcome for students is clearly employment in the health sector, but in addition, students commented on the positive impact that successful students and graduates have on whānau and communities, in terms of being mentors and role models. The value of the outcome to the health sector is a supply of nurses who the advisory committee considers meet the expectations of employers and who satisfy the demand for qualified nurses projected by the Northland District Health Board. A currently recognised but unmatched need is for workers for the aged care sector.

Bridging courses to match the learning needs of less well-prepared students are considered by students to be an effective pathway to the nursing degree. In addition, pre-entry preparation and support is provided to meet the academic and pastoral care needs of the 30 per cent of students who identify as Māori.

¹⁸ The decrease in the qualification completion rate for Māori students from 75 per cent in 2010 to 48 per cent in 2011 was partly attributed to the longer completion times for part-time students.

¹⁹ Nga Manukura o Apopo. The performance of New Zealand's schools of nursing. Responsiveness to Māori Nursing Students Scorecard 2011.

Recognising the geographical spread of students' homes, some in areas without internet access, course materials that would normally be available online are provided on memory sticks. Students not using online facilities or with low results in assessment are identified and support offered, as are students at the mid-point of courses who have not achieved as well as expected. These intervention practices are based on long experience of supporting students. On the basis of opinion surveys, students are satisfied with the quality of programmes and facilities, but make extensive comments and suggestions for improvement, particularly in relation to the library and information technology services.

The staff are highly qualified, 92 per cent with a Master's degree or PhD. All are involved in professional development and most in research, for which evidence of proposed research projects and time required for their completion were supplied to the evaluation team. These factors and the team approach to teaching, which includes tutors, preceptors, and those involved in clinical placement and support, serve the programme well and contribute to its success. Regular self-assessment discussions have led to improvements, e.g. results improved after introduction of online formative assessments in bioscience courses, and after more consistency and continuity in the content and formatting of clinical workbooks.

The programme leader has a clear direction for the programme after its recent review. Staff consider they are well supported by management, and the programme is well resourced.

Overall, this is a highly performing programme with highly valued employment outcomes, with self-assessment processes leading to suggested improvements that have associated timelines and measures of success which are generally achieved.

2.2 Focus area: Bachelor of Applied Social Service

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

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

The redevelopment of this programme was foreshadowed in the panel report of the Social Workers Registration Board in 2010.²⁰ In undertaking this redevelopment, programme staff reviewed international research into good practice in developing competence in social work²¹, and this led to the incorporation of 'enquiry action learning' (EAL), which staff consider prepares students well for real-world practice. Although a survey of non-achievement of learners in the previous version of the degree suggested that achievement would be improved under an EAL approach, this has not yet been demonstrated. Reaction to EAL's introduction from the small

²⁰ Letter from ITP Quality to NorthTec CE, dated 19 July 2010, with updated report of the Social Workers Registration Board attached.

²¹ Synthesis of the international research on teaching methods in social work. NorthTec.

number of students interviewed is rather more mixed than the conversations with staff implied.

Course completions are high and increasing in this programme (91 per cent in 2011), but the qualification completion rate is much lower (56 per cent). This is attributed to part-time students being distracted by employment and 'life', and so the programme is currently not offered in Kerikeri and Kaitaia, where enrolments were predominantly part-time, pending further self-assessment of the issue and possible solutions. The fact that there was little difference between the achievements of full-time students, whether in Whangarei or in the regions, justifies this interim response. The student cohort is 51 per cent Māori, for whom course completion is lower (85 per cent) and qualification completions much lower (26 per cent). However, this difference can be attributed to more Māori students studying part-time, and the above-mentioned recognition that part-time nursing study does not predispose educational achievement in this programme. This may improve if anecdotal evidence that EAL enhances achievement by Māori students, because of its whānau learning environment, is substantiated.

The principal value of the outcome – the completion of the degree – is employment for the graduates, and workforce readiness for the social work profession in Northland. Students preferred the opportunity for face-to-face degree study in Northland rather than distance or online study through Massey University.

The local advisory committee supports the redeveloped programme and the concept of NorthTec offering the opportunity for postgraduate study. NorthTec is planning to deliver a postgraduate diploma in supervision in 2013, which will support industry personnel supervising students in clinical placements.

Students were satisfied with the quality of teaching, and their feedback is used informally to improve teaching practice. Results of satisfaction surveys of teaching are included in the formal staff appraisal process and the associated identification of professional development needs. Staff meet weekly to share good teaching practice, details of which are retained in a diary for reference and as potential information for research into implementing EAL. External moderation occurs with Manukau Institute of Technology. Staff are also analysing the effectiveness of bridging programmes as preparation for the degree.

Research outputs are currently low (Table 5), but this is unsurprising given the staff time and effort that has been devoted to the redevelopment of the degree; they are considering a group research project focused on teaching with EAL, which clearly will inform their teaching activity.

Table 5. Research outputs of Bachelor of Applied Social Service staff, 2009-2011*			
	2009	2010	2011
Research outputs			
No. of research articles in journals	1	3	1
No. of conference presentations	2	2	1
No. of reports	0	1	0
Total no. of research outputs	3	6	2
No. of contributions to research environment	0	0	1
*As supplied by Programme Leader			

The programme also contributed to a project that highlighted Māori successes in tertiary education and that identified overarching themes that characterise a Māori approach to tertiary education.

In summary, this academically successful programme with good employment outcomes (of those graduating in 2011, 76 per cent obtained full-time and 19 per cent obtained part-time employment related to social work) has been redeveloped through a self-assessment process informed by international developments in the discipline, in which its implications for student learning and staff research has been considered. The programme is outward-facing, as demonstrated by benchmarking against Manukau Institute of Technology and by having participated in an inter-institutional evaluation of the factors that contribute to Māori success.²²

2.3 Focus area: National Certificate in Horticulture (Level 2)

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

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

This programme is designed as the first of a series of programmes at level 3 and level 4 related to horticulture, and is offered at several sites in Northland, of which the evaluation team visited those at Mangonui and Kerikeri. Students enter the programme with varying levels of literacy, numeracy, and computer skills, and the staff strive to reduce the barriers to learning these might bring, as well as fostering a knowledge of horticulture skills, life skills (confidence and self-esteem), and work-readiness attributes (e.g. punctuality of attendance, time management). For several students interviewed, their achievement in this programme was their first educational success.

²² Te Aika, L-H.; Greenwood, J. (2009). *Hei Tauria – Teaching and Learning for Success for Māori in Tertiary Settings*. Wellington: Ako Aotearoa,

For this programme in 2011, course completions were 84 per cent and qualification completions were 68 per cent, both of which were comparable to the ITP sector average for horticulture. Across all the sites at which this programme is offered, about a third of students progressed to other programmes, mostly horticulture, and about a quarter went into employment or self-employment. The availability of employment and the willingness of employers to take on graduates of the programmes varied throughout the region. A valued outcome from this programme is a group of students who not only have some horticultural skills, but also the motivation to contribute their skills and knowledge to their communities, either through employment or through volunteer work in marae, schools (e.g. involvement in the OSCAR programme) and community gardens²³, planting projects (e.g. sustainable rural development project at Taipa sand dunes). The addition of general skills (e.g., chainsaw use, driving tractors) to those horticultural skills already in the programme will further increase opportunities for rural work and, to this end, the local tutors have tended recently to favour projects that are more clearly linked to employment (e.g. pruning in orchards, building and planting of raised beds in semi-commercial gardens). These outcomes are significant when it is considered that the programme is delivered over a large geographic area, in which there are high levels of poverty, a lack of transport infrastructure, low adult literacy and numeracy, widespread drug- and alcohol-related issues, and a high proportion of Māori.

Students spoke highly of the programme's qualified and empathetic staff, and this was a motivating factor for progression by some students. Students had also developed a strong peer support network among themselves. From conversations with students it was clear that despite their remoteness from NorthTec's support services, they were well supported by tutorial staff, with appropriate interventions to test literacy and numeracy and provide support where the need was identified. Access to other NorthTec support staff, library services, etc was also available. The programme is resourced and accommodated appropriately.

The current self-assessment is pragmatic, in which the recently appointed programme leader intends a move away from ad hoc approaches that have historically been characteristic of the development of horticulture programmes at NorthTec. With the small number of staff distributed across several sites, issues that are recognised as needing attention include sharing good practice, providing opportunities for professional development, and maintaining consistency of teaching and assessment. The programme leader's immediate priority is to develop a more systematic approach to moderation; the evaluation team noted that on the basis of activity to date, implementation of this is likely to be achieved by the end of 2012. It should be noted that no major issues have been identified through external moderation by the New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation and the Primary Industry Polytechnic Tutors Association. Reviews of

²³ The level 4 programme to which this programme leads received local publicity in: MacLean, H. (2012, June 13). Growing good kai. Northern News; www.northernnews.co.nz

the currently open-entry criteria and curricula are also planned, as are the prospects for greater online computer access for students in the more remote locations where the programme is offered. Obviously, it is too early to know the effectiveness of the reviews and interventions, but to the evaluation team they seemed well informed by self-assessment and the programme leader's previous experience.

2.4 Focus area: National Certificate in Carpentry (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**.

This is a similar programme to that of focus area 2.3, in that it offers basic trade skills that are needed and useful in the region where the students live, but because of the economic circumstances of the region will not necessarily lead to employment or apprenticeships within the region. Graduate destination data in 2011 showed that of 15 students who completed their study (course completions in 2011 were 89 per cent), three obtained employment, five enrolled in other NorthTec programmes (including horticulture, through which additional skills for rural work are acquired), and one gained an apprenticeship. Most students do not wish to leave the area, so a valued outcome of the programme is the enhanced resilience of the community through application of the carpentry skills gained by the students for local building works, including family housing and marae projects.

Feedback from student surveys indicates strong support for teaching staff, who foster a whānau environment. In the remote locations in which this programme is offered, tutors also provide pastoral care. Tutors reflect on their work in an informal manner, but also through their co-teaching discussions and at weekly 'toolbox meetings' with students and staff. Staff use of YouTube to help visual learners has been complemented by the students participating in building an entire house, described in the 2011 programme report as:

'For the first time in six years we built a 4 bedroom house away from the Kaitaia campus. The students performed their duties to the best of their ability and this showed with the outstanding job they had done. The standard of workmanship and the pride they had in achieving our goals was great. Overall it was the best teaching tool we could ever have. What was learnt in the classroom had meaning once the project started. Things didn't always go to plan and as a group/individual [we] were able solve problems or would know where to find solutions, i.e. textbook, Murray and I [tutors], site plans, etc. The importance of timekeeping, attendance, appearance (appropriate attire, safety boots, etc) was played out on site'.

These comments make clear the interaction between the acquisition of basic trade skills and students' attitudes to work, and is a good example of project-based learning and pragmatic self-assessment. At a more formal level, internal

moderation of this and other construction programmes indicates a high level of compliance.

2.5 Focus area: Certificate in Forestry (Forest Industries) (Level 2)

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

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

The programme is envisaged as a taster for employment in the forestry industry and a pathway to further study (Figure 4) or employment.

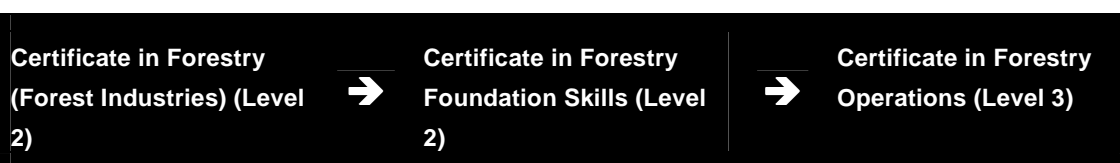


Figure 4. Pathways in forestry programmes at NorthTec

Course completions are steady at about 77 per cent, but the qualification completion rate has declined each year, to 49 per cent in 2011 (although higher than NorthTec and national medians). In addition, there has been a lack of standardisation of teaching (evident from the variability of moderation reports) across the various sites – where forests are ready for harvesting – at which the programme has been offered from year to year. The response to these achievement and quality issues has been to restructure the programme in 2012 under the guidance of a newly appointed programme leader. The redeveloped programme includes increased attention to life skills and strengthening literacy and numeracy, in the expectation of improving attitude and attendance, and thereby enhancing completion prospects. The quality improvement plan for 2012 includes a review of the pathway to higher-level programmes, and maintaining professional relationships with student support services to ensure students' learning needs are met. Although these activities seem to the evaluation team to be useful consequences of self-assessment, it is, of course, too early to assess their full effectiveness.

As with the previous two programmes, an important outcome – one that is highly valued by the regional stakeholders, viz. community groups (including hapu and iwi), community trusts, schools, Corrections Department NZ, and the Ministry of Social Development – is the enhancement of life skills and work-readiness, and the promotion of a drugs-free culture. Acquiring these attributes is vital for a hazardous industry such as forestry, which the revamped local advisory committee (which has extensive industry connections throughout Northland) considers is poised for significant growth. However, these attributes are also needed for rural parts of the region where employment opportunities are currently low (Table 6), and self-reliance and resilience are, therefore, important.

	Employment	Unemployed	Further study	Corrections Department NZ
No. of students	27	21	14	23
% of students	32%	24%	17%	27%

Students were appreciative of the efforts of the staff who not only teach the theoretical and practical aspects of forestry but also guide and mentor students to acquire life skills. Self-assessment by staff has identified ‘trigger points’ for support for individual students, generally related to attendance, attention in class, and early assessment results. In order to keep students focused on study, staff are planning a week-long marae visit, to lessen distracting influences.

2.6 Focus area: Certificate in Tourism and Hospitality (Level 2)

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

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

This programme provides valued outcomes: (i) to students, because it provides a linked series of programmes, which provides opportunities for students from second and third-generation beneficiary backgrounds to achieve success educationally²⁴ and – sometimes – gain recognition in competitions (e.g. nationally in Toque d’Or²⁵, regionally in Salon Culinaire); (ii) to graduates of this programme, in terms of work-readiness and a pathway to other programmes, such as at level 3 which includes an internationally recognised City and Guilds qualification; and (iii) to industry, for which it provides volunteer and paid workers-in-training for the local hospitality industry and events. The practical experiences offered in this programme – and others in the hospitality cluster – are designed to model typical work situations in the hospitality industry (including through work experience in NorthTec’s public café and training restaurant), reinforced by involvement in paid and volunteer activities. Staff work closely with the industry, with some working in the industry as well as teaching on the programme, and this close association with the hospitality industry is considered by staff to obviate the need for a formal local advisory committee.

. The programme was previously contracted to Mahurangi Technical Institute and all performance measures have improved markedly since NorthTec resumed

²⁴ Although notionally open-entry, potential students are interviewed to ensure they understand the expectations of the industry.

²⁵ NorthTec’s success in such competitions in which other ITPs compete is a benchmarking measure (see section 1.5).

responsibility for the programme in 2010. Course and qualification completion rates have improved in the past year; the programme attracts a significant proportion of Māori students, whose educational performance differs little from overall completions (72 per cent, compared with 74 per cent overall, in 2011), as well as qualification completions (63 per cent, compared with 64 per cent overall, in 2011). Fewer Māori students are retained (60 per cent in 2011 compared with 64 per cent overall), and notably fewer Māori students than overall (15 per cent compared with 32 per cent in 2011) progress to other qualifications. Staff note that attendance by Māori students tends to be erratic. That said, Māori students who do progress to higher-level programmes usually achieve well. The hospitality programmes have initiated a new system which monitors attendance and has the potential to address this issue.

Student surveys note a good level of satisfaction with the teaching. The self-assessment facilitated discussion report for the cluster noted, ‘As tutors we are constantly going into classrooms (when appropriate) to tap into each other’s knowledge and expertise and to observe – everyone is very aware of what is going on in each other’s class’. However, at the director’s instigation, the staff are participating in the organisation-wide ‘learner observation’ scheme (see section 1.4). The evaluation team considers that this might bring a more outward-focused view of learning and teaching to this cluster of programmes than currently is the case, which would complement their strong industry focus.

In the particular programme evaluated, learning support and pastoral care provided by tutors and the Student Support Services team are appropriate. However, the self-assessment facilitated discussion report for the cluster of programmes identified that numeracy and literacy improvement is needed beyond Level 3 and that teaching staff did not receive feedback from referrals to learning support or the attendance alert system.

2.7 Focus area: Certificate in Sport and Recreation (Level 5)

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

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

This certificate is one of two NorthTec qualifications embedded in the pathway to Auckland University of Technology’s Bachelor of Sport and Recreation (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Pathways from NorthTec qualifications to AUT’s degree in sport and recreation

It is a testament to the design and quality of delivery of this certificate, and of the succeeding pathway diploma at level 6, that full credit is given for these qualifications into AUT's degree. Moreover, NorthTec staff are mandated by AUT to teach the third year of the degree. This has the advantage that the entire degree can be taught at Whangarei, and students need not leave the region for degree-level education.²⁶ Not only is this a valued outcome for students and graduates who wish to remain in Northland, but it adds considerably to the coaching and the sport administrative and management infrastructure in Northland, specifically providing paid and volunteer services to schools, the community, and to the sports industry. In part because the programme is located at Kensington Stadium in Whangarei (the headquarters of Sport Northland), staff and students are highly visible to, and readily become connected with, the sports community, which is represented on a highly supportive local advisory committee.

There are high rates of qualification and course completions, particularly for Māori students (Table 7), and a high progression to the degree via the level 6 diploma (Table 8).

Educational performance:	All	Māori	Under 25
Number of EFTS	23	11	16
Course qualifications	81%	84%	89%
Qualification completions	80%	93%	103%
Retention	70%	71%	71%

Graduate outcomes:	Employment		Further study		Other
	Full-time	Part-time	Diploma (Level 6)	Degree study (AUT)	
Number	3	3*	13*	2	3
%	14%	14%	62%	10%	14%
*Three students are both studying and working part-time.					

²⁶ NorthTec has developed a similar arrangement for an applied science degree offered by Unitec.

The student survey rates the teaching and learning support highly. The complete degree programme – including both certificates – is moderated by AUT. This encourages a culture of self-assessment of the programme’s effectiveness by NorthTec staff, who also value the association with AUT for its professional development opportunities and the prospect of growing their research capability.

2.8 Focus area: Ngapuhi Nui-Tonu Te Raranga

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

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

This is a two-year, full-time diploma programme at levels 5 and 6, delivered through wānanga, principally on the Raumanga campus, but also at marae throughout Northland. A valued outcome of the programme is its stimulus to the revival of the art of raranga in Northland through projects that support the restoration and preservation of taonga Māori on marae in the region. There is also a close association with the He Muka Rerehau (Fibre in the Wind) weaving collective. The programme’s educational performance exceeds the NorthTec median on all measures, and students particularly value the knowledge and skills gained, including the sharing of intergenerational histories, and its instilling of work-readiness. On graduation, students can gain employment, sell their work, or deliver raranga lessons in their communities, while some progress to the Bachelor of Applied Arts at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa.

On entry, students’ learning needs are identified at an interview, and literacy and numeracy issues are addressed by the tutors. The 2012 Quality Improvement Plan identified embedding of literacy and numeracy as in need of strengthening. Tutors noted that some resources needed improvement and identified areas of their own professional development and knowledge that could be enhanced. Tutors were highly regarded by students, both for the quality of their teaching and for their pastoral care.

A demonstration of the support of NorthTec’s governance and management for this and related Māori arts programmes is the provision of an on-campus gallery to display student work, and new premises for these programmes (although they are located at some distance from Te Puna o Matauranga). The programme also provides an example of a successful linkage into its stakeholder community, thereby realising one of the objectives of NorthTec’s Māori Responsiveness Plan.

2.9 Focus area: Achievement and support of international students

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

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

The majority of the 120 international students studying at NorthTec are from China and India. The course completion rate for international students (87 per cent)

exceeds that of domestic students (79 per cent), with qualification completion rates exceeding 70 per cent in all 24 programmes in which they are enrolled. More than 70 per cent of international students are in part-time employment, and feedback suggests they selected NorthTec because of the cheaper living costs than at other New Zealand educational destinations.

NorthTec participated in the NZITP International Student Barometer in 2009.²⁷ The overall result was that:

‘Having received consistently positive results in 2008 and improved upon these results in most areas of international student satisfaction for 2009, NorthTec can be confident that Arrival, Learning, Living and Support Services provided to international students are indeed ‘world class’.

Notwithstanding this endorsement, some areas were identified in which improvements could be made, one of which was learning support. Management considers that the replacement of dispersed by centralised services for international students will be beneficial to student support and educational outcomes.

The international ‘area’ was restructured in 2011, with a new head and a new international pastoral care coordinator appointed. NorthTec is currently rebuilding relationships with international agents with a view to increasing the number of international students, particularly in niche markets such as digital media, which is expected to attract students from India; and business degrees, expected to attract students from China.

²⁷ NZITP International Student Barometer 2009. Results for NorthTec: International Student Satisfaction.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review.

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 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and 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).

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/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>

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