



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Northland Polytechnic

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 2 November 2017

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Final Report

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 (NorthTec)
Type:	ITP (Institute of Technology and Polytechnic)
First registered:	31 May 2004
Location:	Main Campus: 51 Raumanga Valley Road, Whangārei
Delivery sites:	NorthTec has the following main delivery sites with over 50 community-based delivery points from Coatesville in rural Rodney to Ngātaki in the Far North: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 135 Hone Heke Road, Kerikeri• 26 Nimmo Street, Rāwene• 6 Oxford Street, Kaitaia• 4 Station Road, Kaikohe• ASB Leisure Centre, 97 Western Hills Drive, Kensington, Whangārei• Northland Region Corrections Facilities at Ngawha• Future Trades Campus, 19 Dyer Street, Whangārei• 33 Normanby Street, Dargaville• Auckland Learning Centre, 155 Queen Street, Auckland Central• 136 Broadway, Newmarket, Auckland (this

campus closed on 30 June 2017).

Courses currently delivered:	Refer: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/course-accreditations.do?providerId=601290001&delSiteInd=0
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	<p>Domestic: 3,269 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) (headcount 7,882 students)</p> <p>Students are located throughout Te Tai Tokerau, Auckland and other regional sites in New Zealand. Most of the learners live in the Whangārei district, with 12 per cent in Auckland, almost 5 per cent in the Far North, 8 per cent in the Mid-North, and a number of regional community sites.</p> <p>Ethnicity – Māori 35 per cent; Pasifika 4 per cent; New Zealand European 56 per cent; Other European 5 per cent; Asian 14 per cent; Other 2 per cent (some students identify as more than one ethnicity)</p> <p>International: 671 EFTS (headcount 932)</p>
Number of staff:	416 staff including 298 full-time and 118 part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	Refer: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=601290001
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>NorthTec is the only institute of technology and polytechnic – and the largest tertiary provider – in Te Tai Tokerau delivering education at foundation, certificate, diploma and degree levels. Since 1978, NorthTec has provided practical, quality education to Te Tai Tokerau communities. Northland is New Zealand’s least urbanised region, with 168,000 residents spread across 13,789 square kilometres, and only half of the population living in urban centres.</p> <p>Around 34 per cent of Te Tai Tokerau identify as Māori.¹ Nationally, Northland has the highest percentage of youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) in New Zealand, with 20.3 per cent in 2014 compared with 11.4 per cent nationally.</p>

¹ Economic Impact Assessment for NorthTec. (November, 2016). Infometrics.

NorthTec has continued to grow international student numbers since 2015, exceeding the organisation's overall targets for participation of international students. In 2016, 932 international students enrolled (671 EFTS) compared with 687 students (526 EFTS) in 2015.

Recent significant changes:

The chief executive resigned in May 2016. The previous director of trades and primary industries was appointed acting chief executive in September 2016 and chief executive permanently in May 2017.

The NorthTec Council has undergone a number of changes and is currently composed of two longstanding members and six members who have joined within the last two years. A new chair of Council was appointed in April 2017.

The NZQA Targeted Review of Qualifications has resulted in the development, application, accreditation and approval of 53 new programmes of study in the past two years.

In late 2016, NorthTec was advised of the loss of a significant amount of funding due to learner outcomes not meeting TEC² requirements. This resulted in a major review of the organisation, and a comprehensive consultation document was presented to staff in December 2017 based on three principles:

- 'That the needs of the students and communities are paramount in the consideration of submissions on proposals within the context of sustainability,
- That decisions and decision-making is transparent and detailed, and
- That staff are offered support to find alternative employment and/or deal with the challenges they are facing.'

The loss of funding has affected staffing levels and the structure of the organisation. Staff have been kept informed of the changes and key dates for the new

² Tertiary Education Commission

structure.

The Council is developing a new strategic plan for NorthTec in consultation with staff.

Previous quality assurance history:

At the last external evaluation and review (EER) in 2013, NZQA was Confident in the educational performance of Northland Polytechnic, and Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Northland Polytechnic.

Degree monitoring for all undergraduate degree programmes and the level 7 diploma have met NZQA requirements.

Moderation outcomes include:

- NZQA external moderation required an action plan for 2016 and 2017 – there are some outstanding requirements.
- NZQA consistency reviews demonstrate that NorthTec has met requirements.
- The Nursing Council of New Zealand and the Social Workers Registration Board monitoring requirements have been met. The nursing monitor has recommended to NZQA that the nursing degree be self-monitored.

Other:

NorthTec has relationships with iwi Ngāti wai, Ngapuhi, Ngāti Hine and with the Te Matarau Education Trust.

NorthTec is a member of the Tertiary Accord of New Zealand (TANZ) and participates in the delivery of programmes through TANZ e-Campus.

Through its programmes, NorthTec has professional affiliations with:

- Nursing Council of New Zealand
- Social Workers Registration Board
- MotorTrain
- Motor Trade Association
- Institute of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ)

- Industry Training Association Building (ITAB)
- New Zealand Board for Engineering Diplomas
- City and Guilds, United Kingdom
- New Zealand Institute of Building
- Flexible Learning Association of New Zealand
- Open Education Research Foundation
- Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa.

In September 2017, NZQA conducted a risk investigation related to English entry proficiency and the delivery of the New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) (Level 4). The investigation report confirms that the issues identified are largely historic, are being effectively managed by NorthTec and do not reflect current practice in this programme.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus areas for this EER were chosen in consultation with NorthTec management. They represent a range of programmes from certificates to degrees, from different discipline areas and delivery locations, and include international and domestic students, including Māori and Pasifika. Overall, the programmes represent a significant proportion of the organisation's students.

The following focus areas were included in the EER:

1 International students: support and wellbeing

This is a mandatory area. There has been significant recent growth in international student numbers (2014 – 98 EFTS; 2015 – 188 EFTS and 687 students; 2016 – 671 EFTS and 932 students). The growth is mostly in the business qualifications delivered in Auckland.

2 Māori Student Achievement

Approximately 35 per cent of NorthTec's students identify as New Zealand Māori. Support for and achievement by Māori students is of particular interest to NZQA, the TEC and government. Focus area programmes include some with a relatively high representation of Māori students. NorthTec has partnerships with Ngāti Hine

and Ngāti wai, Te Matarau Education Trust³ and E tu Whānau to support Māori student achievement.

3 Bachelor of Nursing (Level 7)

This programme has 257 EFTS including 24 international EFTS. It features consistently high performance: course completions of 95 per cent exceed the NorthTec target of 81 per cent; similarly, qualification completions of 102 per cent are well above the target of 72 per cent. This is the largest programme at NorthTec, so has the biggest impact on Northland, with good employment outcomes and good participation rates for Māori and under-25-year-olds. NorthTec views this programme as a model of good self-assessment practice. Since the last EER, the Bachelor of Nursing has increased online learning opportunities and introduced Vocational Pathways for school students (new programme being piloted). The programme aims to get more Māori into healthcare and professional roles.

4 Bachelor of Applied Management and Graduate Diplomas

The degree programme had 118 domestic EFTS and 47 international EFTS in 2016. The graduate diplomas have 85 domestic EFTS and 49 international EFTS. Performance includes course completions of 84 per cent, exceeding the NorthTec target of 81 per cent; however, qualification completions at 57 per cent are below the target of 72 per cent. Māori participation is at 22 per cent which is below the NorthTec Māori participation rate of 35 per cent. Delivery is at Raumanga and Auckland and there are some online delivery components. The programme is a collaboration with other ITPs. The EER team visited the Queen Street, Auckland campus to evaluate the programme, international student support and wellbeing, and management of a remote campus.

5 New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Civil) (Level 6)

This programme has a large number of part-time students (70 per cent) who are employed in industry, and school leavers (30 per cent). Course completions of 69 per cent are below the target of 81 per cent; qualification completions at 22 per cent are well below the target of 72 per cent. The programme is part of the STEM⁴ initiative at NorthTec and has strong industry connections with innovative industry and stakeholder collaboration and involvement in teaching. This is an important future strategic area for NorthTec.

³ The Te Matarau Education Trust is a Te Tai Tokerau hapū-iwi collective made up of Te Uri o Hau, Ngātiwai, Ngāti Hau, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Rangī and Te Aupouri, which has teamed up with NorthTec to provide trades training for Māori and Pasifika learners. Te Matarau expanded its involvement with NorthTec in 2015, providing support for pastoral care and employment for more than 100 learners throughout Te Tai Tokerau.

⁴ Science, technology, engineering and mathematics

6 Diploma and Certificate in Conservation and Environmental Management

This programme provides a pathway to the Unitec degree (Bachelor of Applied Science) which is delivered on site by NorthTec tutors. The diploma has 14 EFTS, with two of them international EFTS; and for the certificate 22 EFTS with three international EFTS. Course completions for the diploma are 86 per cent, exceeding the NorthTec target of 81 per cent, and for the certificate are 72 per cent which is below the target. Qualification completions for the diploma are at 104 per cent, well above the target of 72 per cent; and for the certificate, 88 per cent, also well above the 72 per cent target. The diploma programme has a strong research focus with innovative stakeholder engagement and off-site projects for students.

7 Certificate in Painting (Trade) (Level 2) and National Certificate in Painting and Decorating (Level 4)

This programme has a declining number of EFTS – level 2 was 84 in 2016 and 59 in 2017; level 4 was 45 in 2016 and 30 in 2017 with one international EFTS. Delivery is at multiple sites and the programmes are supported by Te Matarau Education Trust. Community projects are being piloted in Kaikohe and there is some innovative delivery through the Northland Corrections Facility at Ngawha. Following the outcomes of the Targeted Review of Qualifications, a New Zealand qualification will be developed in 2018.

8 National Certificate in Motor Industry (Vehicle Servicing) (Level 3)

This programme will be replaced with the New Zealand qualification in 2018. EFTS are increasing – 69 in 2016 and 77 in 2017 including high numbers of under-25s and Māori students. Course completions at 74 per cent are below the target of 81 per cent. Qualification completions at 42 per cent are well below the target of 72 per cent. The programme is delivered from multiple sites throughout the region and uses community projects to give on-job work experience to students and to avoid competing with prospective employers.

9 New Zealand Certificates in Cookery (Level 3 and 4)

NorthTec introduced this cookery programme in 2016. The programme has strong relationships with industry. There are increasing numbers of international students and clear pathways to progress from level 3 to level 4, and from there to the level 5 diploma. Course completions are variable – 77 per cent for level 3 and 49 per cent for level 4, both of which are below the target of 81 per cent. Qualification completions at 75 per cent for level 3 are above the target of 72 per cent, and level 4 qualification completions at 66 per cent are below the target.

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 evaluators met with programme managers, tutors, students, graduates and external stakeholders, mostly in Whangārei. They also visited the Northland Region Corrections Facility at Ngawha, the Rāwene campus and the Kaikohe campus. The evaluators visited the Queen Street, Auckland campus to meet with staff and students for the Bachelor of Applied Management and graduate diplomas, and to discuss campus management and support for international students.

Māori Achievement was a focus area and the evaluators met with local iwi and other stakeholders involved with Māori. The evaluators met with NorthTec Council, management, the academic board, student registry and other staff.

Documentation and further information provided by NorthTec was reviewed before, during and after the visit.

Following the EER, the chief executive implemented an internal audit of the student files in the International Directorate. The internal report, completed on 19 July 2017 did not identify any issues of direct non-compliance. However, it has resulted in a number of recommendations to improve file management practices.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Northland Polytechnic**.

- Governance and management have a clear sense of purpose to align a new structure to better meet the strategic direction of the organisation to ensure a sustainable future. Significant changes over the past year have been well planned and consultative; staff are positive about the leadership changes and appreciate the increased visibility and communication from management.
- Graduate outcomes are strong, with good progression to higher-level qualifications and relevant employment outcomes across the programme focus areas. The value and relevance of qualifications to stakeholders is achieved through strong and purposeful industry and community engagement to inform programme planning and industry alignments. Programme staff are using innovative ways to engage with local employers and communities and provide work-based learning to ensure graduates have the right skills and capabilities for their chosen industry or profession.
- Overall achievement at NorthTec is good. Outcomes vary across the organisation with excellent outcomes in some programmes, favourable trends in others, and others identifying ways to improve with some early indications of success. There are persistent gaps between Māori and non-Māori achievement in a number of programmes, but also instances of this gap being closed where targeted strategies and interventions, improvements and support have been put in place.
- International student achievement is strong, and this student group recognises the value of studying at NorthTec. NorthTec uses appropriate practices to support the success of international students and to manage growth in this area. The monitoring of the Code of Practice is well managed. There is an opportunity to review the accuracy and consistency of practices across campuses to provide management with greater confidence in campus operations.
- A key strength is the deliberate focus on project management methodologies to strengthen capability across the key performance improvement initiatives (Māori learner achievement, lead-indicator data, assessment and moderation). This is to ensure that changes of focus and improvements are based on evidence from both reliable data and consultation with relevant stakeholders. Through the collaboration and partnerships developing through these projects, expertise is being shared across the organisation to better understand successful initiatives and identify barriers to lift performance. NorthTec may find it valuable to review

the project's cultural responsiveness to strengthen the Māori learner achievement project.

- Strengthening relationships with iwi, community and business in the region at all levels of the organisation is a priority development. NorthTec clearly understands that Māori students, staff, whānau and iwi/hapū are significant stakeholders in the organisation's future success. These priority groups are eagerly waiting to see how effectively and meaningfully NorthTec will relate to and mobilise Māori success at all levels across its region of influence.
- Highly qualified, industry-experienced teaching staff build strong learning relationships with their students to support achievement. Programmes and qualifications are clearly future-focused and strongly aligned to produce graduates who can transition seamlessly into the workplace and meet the standards required by industry. NorthTec uses innovative delivery to build the key skills and capabilities that align with workplace requirements. Students have access to a range of real-world opportunities which complement their study, including partnering with staff on research projects, entering competitions, supporting community events, industry projects, internships and work placements.
- Central support services are appreciated by the students who value the careful attention to their academic needs to ensure their progress and success. Student satisfaction surveys rate many of these services very highly. Staff in these areas place a high priority on ensuring students are well supported and directed to the right support.

NorthTec is moving forward with multiple priorities to review and refresh practice and processes to ensure these are sufficiently robust to support a sustainable, culturally appropriate, long-term future for NorthTec, with strong and relevant outcomes for all students. With good evidence of planning and evidence-based decision-making, NZQA is confident in the educational performance of NorthTec and its continued ability to strengthen the organisation into the future.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

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

- NorthTec is strongly committed to embedding a culture of self-assessment and reflection across all programmes, activities and campuses. Formal and informal processes review and evaluate the value and relevance of the programmes to students, community and employers, and verify high levels of satisfaction with the outcomes achieved. These processes include the use of key performance targets, benchmarking within the ITP sector, feedback from students, annual self-assessment reports, monitoring and moderation, organisational performance improvement projects and other evidence to track progress and performance. The introduction of more accurate and extensive information

management is providing access to relevant metrics to inform evidence-based decisions.

- Individual student achievement is well understood and monitored. All students, including priority groups, have the same performance targets to ensure parity of outcomes. While there is some variability across programmes, in general the organisation takes responsibility for providing relevant guidance and support to ensure good outcomes for all students. Approaches include regular staff discussions to reflect on individual progress, share delivery strategies and discuss how well their programmes are performing. Formal and informal feedback is sought from current students, graduates, key employers and industry partners to provide an overview of how well the organisation is meeting the needs of these groups.
- Council and senior managers are constantly evaluating the organisation's needs to meet the current environment. The new communication strategy, with more sharing of information, is creating an environment where innovation and ideas are encouraged from staff and stakeholders to support improved performance. External reviews provide expert advice and feedback in relevant areas. Internal evaluations are conducted by an external contractor to provide an independent review. There is a need to review the consistency of performance and practices, particularly in the use of policies and processes, to assure management of their quality and effectiveness across the organisation.
- The comprehensive and robust self-assessment process – which began with an organisation-wide evaluation against an excellence framework – is maturing and providing opportunities for collaboration within programme areas and across the organisation. The continuous focus on improving outcomes for all students is informed by increasingly robust data and information in an organisation with effective teaching and learning, solid educational performance indicators, and good evidence of valued outcomes for graduates.

Findings⁵

1.1 How well do students 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**.

Table 1. NorthTec achievement for all students

	2014	2015	2016
Course completions	%	%	%
All	81	80	78
Māori	75	73	70
Non-Māori	88	87	83
Pasifika	78	74	76
Non-Pasifika	81	81	78
Under-25	77	77	77
Over-25	83	83	79
International students	94	89	89
Domestic	80	79	76
Qualification completions	%	%	%
All	61	58	59
All - cohort based	62	64	63
Māori	59	55	51
Non-Māori	63	61	64
Pasifika	54	52	51
Non-Pasifika	61	58	59
Under-25	50	46	53
Over-25	68	67	63
International students	54	54	91
Domestic	61	59	52
Retention	36	37	30
Progression	36	37	30

⁵ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

Table 1 shows that students at NorthTec achieve well overall. This reflects NorthTec's commitment to successful outcomes for students. Course completion targets apply to all students, including priority groups, and are set at a minimum level: 82 per cent in 2016 and 2017. Achievement is just below this target. However, NorthTec is performing close to sector benchmarks using the TEC's educational performance indicator data. Cohort qualification completions of 63 per cent in 2016 are above the sector median of 55 per cent. Students at NorthTec complete their qualifications over a longer period when compared with other ITPs. Retention is strong and ranges from 62 per cent at level 2 to 89 per cent at level 7. Progression at level 2 is 47 per cent, and at levels 5-6, 31 per cent. There is a dip in progression from levels 3-4 at 23 per cent. However, NorthTec has identified this as an area for improvement, particularly in lifting the expectations of students to achieve higher-level qualifications.

The persistent achievement gap between Māori and non-Māori hovers around 13-14 percentage points. NorthTec is committed to raising its performance for Māori students to achieve parity of participation, parity of achievement and increased progression to higher levels of study. A project team has been established with an initial priority on early intervention to prevent withdrawals and no-shows.

Across the focus areas, students are gaining a range of professional, technical and work-ready skills at the standard required for employment and further study. Core skills and capabilities being achieved by students include self-confidence, time management, and an ability to work in teams with a range of complementary skills and abilities such as problem-solving and positive attitudes. A 'soft skills' survey captures the achievement and importance of these skills to particular programme areas. Some programme areas are successfully piloting a Māori mentoring initiative. However, this is an emerging strategy and the value and benefits have not yet been evaluated.

The organisation has a good understanding of the consistency of its performance across the programme areas, year-on-year and by location. There is a clear emphasis on evidence-based actions and improvements using accurate and timely data. The shift from 'lag to lead' data is a priority so that student attendance and progress can be monitored daily. While this is not yet consistently applied across the organisation, where programme leaders and staff have accessed and engaged with data and information they have found it valuable for identifying at-risk students. Early identification of student progress can then be managed to support student achievement. Staff are developing their understanding in using the data powerfully to analyse performance.

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

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**.

Students value the positive, responsive and industry-aligned learning environment which provides opportunities for students to achieve new skills and knowledge. NorthTec has recently implemented a range of approaches to gather reliable information and obtain formal feedback from stakeholders to inform areas for improvement. Surveys have been conducted to provide an additional independent comparison with internal programme information. These include:

- Programme-level graduate destinations reports. These reports indicate that in 2016, 30 per cent of graduates returned to study, 32 per cent were in employment, 10 per cent indicated that they were not in employment or further study. Outcomes were unknown for 27 per cent of these graduates. The quality of data entered and analysis of this data are improvements in place to increase the value of these outcomes reports.
- Student Outcome Surveys⁶ (conducted by external agency). While employment outcomes are variable depending on employment opportunities within the region, the survey indicated that 77 per cent of respondents were currently employed, with 76 per cent recognising their current job position as relevant to their programme of study. The NPS⁷ for NorthTec as a place to study or upskill was very strong at +41.9 per cent.
- Employer Satisfaction Survey⁸ (conducted by an external agency). Overall, 83 per cent of employers were satisfied with the knowledge and skills of the NorthTec students. The most important attributes for employers were 'capacity for co-operation and teamwork' at 4.79 (on a 1-5 scale with 5 being the upper score), followed by 'interpersonal skills with colleagues and clients' at 4.73, and 'capacity to learn new skills' at 4.72.
- Student Satisfaction Survey 2016 (2,810 respondents). There were high levels of satisfaction with the teaching, workload, content and learning, with 96 per cent of respondents indicating they would 'recommend their programme of study to someone else'.

⁶ NorthTec 2016/17 Student Outcome Survey (Course level 1 included), prepared by SIL Research, February 2017.

⁷ Net Promoter Score is used to measure customer satisfaction, specifically how likely the customer is to recommend the service provided to others. The higher the score, the better the result.

⁸ NorthTec 2017 Employer Satisfaction Survey, prepared by SIL Research, March 2017.

- First Impressions Surveys.⁹ This provides useful analysis of areas working well and those requiring improvement. The most cited useful support was the tutors who were 'friendly, helpful, supportive and great'.
- Internal evaluation and reviews were conducted in 2015 and 2016. An area for improvement from the 2015 review has resulted in a pilot to collect information about professional skills gained by level 2 students with the aim of showing the 'distance travelled' from start to end of the programme. Early results indicate an increase in self-rated soft skills.

NorthTec produces graduates with relevant capabilities to undertake roles in employment and careers within their specific profession or industry. At programme level, a range of strategies are used to maintain and enhance relationships with industry and community stakeholders. These include involvement in conferences, regular meetings with professional bodies, joint research projects, industry experts as guest speakers, field trips to broaden perspectives and enhance career opportunities, and liaison work to maintain the integrity of clinical placements (nursing) and work placements.

The need to strengthen relationships with iwi/hapū, industry and community at the organisational level has been identified as an urgent priority at both Council and senior leadership levels, including the appointment of a new director Māori. In particular, connections with iwi/hapū stakeholders have become fragmented, and there is now a willingness to renew and reconnect. NorthTec is developing strategic relationships, with iwi now being included in a range of management decisions such as interview panels for senior staff. An increased visibility and genuine willingness to rebuild relationships has been evident during the last few months. These key stakeholder groups are looking forward to authentic and meaningful consultation and involvement to build effective partnerships to support educational achievement for all student groups.

Students and stakeholders value the quality of teaching at NorthTec and attribute their success to the commitment and dedication of the staff. The positive learning environment, strong relationships between staff and students, the high level of industry-specific experience, and willingness to support students in their studies are key contributing factors which engage students and lead to increased interest, enjoyment and success. Tutors are highly regarded by students and seen as very personable, approachable and easy to contact. Another positive outcome for students is the ability to stay and study in Northland which reduces personal study costs and possible community decline that comes with forced shifts to study.

⁹ NorthTec First Impressions Survey, prepared by SIL Research, May 2017.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

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**.

NorthTec regularly reviews its programmes and activities to ensure that different stakeholder needs are being met. The NZQA Targeted Review of Qualifications at levels 1-6 has resulted in 53 programmes of study being approved for delivery over the past two years. This has provided an opportunity for NorthTec to ensure that programmes are industry-relevant, use flexible delivery strategies, are student-centred and use appropriate digital technology. All programmes will be required to include internships, work experience and other real-world learning opportunities. Facilitators support programme staff to complete an annual self-assessment report to provide a summary of performance and an improvement plan for the following year. The improvement plans become part of the institutional improvement plan which clearly identifies responsibility and timeframes for implementation of the improvement and how effectiveness will be monitored.

A joint research project on barriers and access to learning was completed by Te Matarau Education Trust in partnership with Ako Aotearoa and NorthTec. The project identified a range of challenges facing students in Te Tai Tokerau. Study needs for people to participate in tertiary study within the region included additional literacy and numeracy skills and competencies, access to transport, a culturally appropriate and relevant learning environment, qualifications that are recognised in the workplace, and excellent teaching for a range of learning styles and preferences. An action plan with five key priorities¹⁰ for rollout in 2017 is in place and progress is being made to implement strategies and monitor against measurable indicators.

Across the focus areas, some programmes have been reviewed to include relevant Māori worldview approaches to content and context. These have been included in programmes to provide culturally inclusive learning environments. However, this is not consistent practice across the organisation. While the performance improvement project for Māori achievement is intended to address this, there is a need for more proactive capability-building in programme areas. While there is variability of practice across the organisation, some programmes are having increasing success with their Māori students through implementing strategies to address inclusive delivery. Examples of delivery strategies providing successful outcomes for Māori students include: the vehicle servicing programme operating in an automotive garage, relevant clinical placements in the Bachelor of Nursing,

¹⁰ Action plan priorities include partnerships and stakeholder engagement, leadership, learners and graduates, staff capability, and inclusive environments.

community projects in painting and decorating, and part-time study while employed in civil engineering businesses.

The assessment and moderation capability improvement project was set up to address gaps and under-performance in post-moderation activity. Significant gains were made over 2016/early 2017 to reduce outstanding moderation by 43 per cent. A complete review of the assessment and moderation process, guidelines and templates has been completed to ensure these support materials are fit for purpose in 2017. The improvements made are contributing to greater consistency of practice across the organisation, and the project will concentrate on quality outcomes and capability training throughout 2017.

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

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**.

Across NorthTec, students receive individual support from lecturers and other staff daily to discuss progress, to respond to queries, and to encourage skill and capability development.

Comprehensive course information and expectations are provided to all students through interviews prior to starting the course of study, on the website and via the online learning platform (Moodle). Orientation provides opportunities for students to meet other students, and to value the diversity of the student cohort.

International students are provided with a programme which is tailored to their individual needs as well as the campus context. NorthTec is well aware of its responsibilities to support international students' safety and wellbeing in areas such as accommodation, attendance, family and study issues. Key staff have clear responsibilities to provide this personal support to the students when this is required. Students indicated that staff were readily available to provide assistance and support in a wide range of areas such as health services including counselling.

A strongly reflective culture is embedded in the centralised support services, particularly the student success team and the library. Students speak highly of the exemplary service provided. Highly skilled staff who are strongly student-centred in their practice are providing quality support to learners to achieve well in their courses.

Effective personal support is provided to ensure students attend and are engaged and achieving. Attendance is monitored closely and programme and/or support staff are in regular contact with any student who is absent. Students understand attendance requirements and the availability of support. The recent introduction of attendance monitoring through the lead-indicator dashboard is enabling at-risk

students to be quickly identified and steps taken to resolve any issues. Flexible solutions are provided to unexpected personal issues to ensure continuity of learning. Students feel they are well supported by their tutors and centralised support staff, and value the access to staff to resolve issues quickly. Student surveys, class representatives and the student co-ordinator are useful ways to ensure students have opportunities to provide feedback. Examples of improvements following feedback from students include a delay of one month for international students to work in the café until their understanding of New Zealand food enables them to understand the work; improved access to computer resources and WiFi across the campus; and longer opening hours in Auckland to enable students to complete their assignments with access to the appropriate resources.

The outcomes of student surveys to evaluate satisfaction with the learning show that all key measures exceed the internal target of 95 per cent satisfaction, with 99 per cent satisfaction with tutors' overall performance.

1.5 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**.

NorthTec's clearly articulated mission and vision is unchanged from the previous EER. However, the organisation is facing significant challenges following key events of the last 18 months. These include the resignation of its previous chief executive in May 2016, major changes to the composition of the Council with a new chair appointed in April 2017, and loss of levels 1 and 2 TEC-funded provision as a result of lower outcomes. At the time of this EER, the new chief executive had recently been appointed and an organisational restructure was in progress.

Council is undertaking a strategic rethink to blend the educational and business performance strategies. Priorities include reviewing terms of reference of committees and membership to ensure the core governance role is well understood, developing a Council workplan, and building resilience. Staff participated in a Council-led strategic think-day to discuss strategic goals and transformation of the organisation. Further consultation with external stakeholders is taking place to rebuild iwi relationships, engage with community and business organisations, and reconnect with stakeholders.

To strengthen the organisation, the leadership has identified key areas for improvement as well as relevant strategies to ensure that improvement projects achieve the desired outcomes. Organisational self-assessment in 2016 identified key areas for improvement and these have been formalised into an educational performance improvement programme to review and monitor progress. It is intended that 'the programme will focus on the short to medium term requirements

whilst building capability and implementing and embedding sustainable process improvements for the long term future of NorthTec'.¹¹ For example, in the information management and reporting project, programme staff across the organisation are beginning to use the lead-indicator dashboard to check on student numbers, attendance and progress – which are available daily – and are commenting on the value of obtaining an early indication of at-risk students.

There is a renewed priority for improving Māori achievement. Staff are aware of the Māori quality improvement project and are engaging in the consultation phase. While there is a strong desire to improve Māori achievement, in most programmes there is inconsistent evidence that Māori participation and achievement are reviewed and analysed as part of ongoing evaluation of student progress and in the annual self-assessment reports. The professional development workshops for building capability in assessment and moderation were commented on favourably by staff who value the opportunity to identify areas for improvement in their teaching practice. In the first six months of the project, there has been a reduction of 43 per cent in outstanding internal moderation, and the report to the academic board¹² for this period indicates the NorthTec now has:

- '- better organisational understanding of moderation practice and activity
- increased engagement by Directors and Programme Leaders with the concept of assessment and moderation
- policy procedures and guidelines that are achievable, and will maintain a consistent approach to pre and post moderation
- an improved post-moderation planning tool'.

An intentional emphasis on improving communication between staff and senior management has received many favourable comments from staff and students. The introduction of regular formal communications and open discussions, and the visibility of the chief executive and senior managers at student-led activities within programmes and at community events has been highly valued.

Management effectively supports the separate campuses and learning centres through regular visits and meetings, shared resources, and clear roles and responsibilities for programme leaders. In some discipline areas, staff from different locations are strongly connected to ensure consistency of practice and robust communication and collaborative decision-making. There is some variability in this practice, particularly between the Auckland campus and the main campus. However, this is known to management and is being addressed. Student services have identified gaps in the provision of student support at the remote campuses.

¹¹ NorthTec Educational Performance Improvement programme highlight report, 19 May 2017.

¹² Refer AB April 2017 Assessment and Moderation project progress report.

The recent appointment of regional administrators has led to an increase in regular and accessible support for students at these campuses.

The organisation clearly understands its responsibility for the progress and welfare of international students and is structuring its support strategies to meet the predicted and intentional growth in this area. There is good cooperation between the central services and programme areas to share knowledge and expertise in dealing with the range of requirements. For example, an international student advisor provides specialised support for the health programmes.

Organisational self-assessment processes are comprehensive, robust and well-embedded into operational activities. Continuous improvement is clearly demonstrated in the quality of the self-assessment reports for programmes from 2015 to 2016. Internal evaluation reviews are conducted annually to provide an external view on the effectiveness of self-assessment practice at NorthTec.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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**.

Council, management and staff ensure that NorthTec manages its compliance accountabilities and responsibilities effectively. The audit and risk committee – a sub-committee of Council – uses an annual plan to ensure that reporting meets both internal and external legislative requirements. Monitoring and tracking of major compliance areas include annual checks of relevant legislative changes and internal audits to manage risk.

New software is being trialled to improve the monitoring process with more interactive and timely feedback. This improvement has clear action plans, timelines and responsibilities to monitor a range of legislative compliance including health and safety. The Council has also approved the NorthTec health and safety strategy and action plan with its organisational risk profile identifying the 10 highest-priority risks, each with its own monitoring plan. The contracts register is maintained to ensure that contracts are current with clear renewal timeframes. A review schedule is used to ensure policies in the quality management system are updated regularly and comply with the relevant academic board approval processes.

Programme development and review processes conform to the requirements of the NZQA rules covering the organisation's responsibilities for approval and accreditation. Robust internal approval processes are in place to ensure that programme documentation accurately reflects the programme structure, regulations and stakeholder consultation to meet the quality requirements of the academic board. NorthTec has a strong track record of having approval and accreditation

applications approved by NZQA, which demonstrates the quality and robustness of their documentation.

There is a high awareness of the risks associated with not meeting contractual requirements regarding programme delivery hours. A recent internal audit identified some areas for improvement, and a project plan is in place to ensure that the required changes are approved through the academic board. For example, in the Certificate in Painting (Trade) and National Certificate in Painting and Decorating, management is proactively monitoring delivery hours and some minor changes have been made following the audit of this programme.

Systems and processes to maintain compliance with the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice are effective. In 2016 and 2017 NorthTec reviewed its practices against the code which resulted in a number of improvements including reducing the number of agents, renewal and monitoring of agent contracts, and increased communication with homestay families. The sample of student records viewed by the evaluators confirmed that student enrolment and course information was underpinned by clear processes. However, NorthTec needs to ensure that all aspects of international student enrolment requirements are clearly and accurately recorded in student files.

A complaints register is maintained with regular reports to Council to monitor the status of complaints. This register is being transferred to an online database to strengthen the monitoring and review of complaints.

There is good evidence that NorthTec has effective compliance management processes with risk plans, risk frameworks, roles and responsibilities clearly defined and integrated into the operations of the organisation.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Māori achievement

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

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

Māori students are 49 per cent of domestic students at NorthTec, and account for 56 per cent of domestic EFTS.

Overall, Māori achievement at NorthTec has consistently been below that of all students for the last three years, with the gap of around 13-14 percentage points. However, within the focus areas sampled during this EER, there have been exceptions to this trend, as demonstrated by the Bachelor of Applied Management reducing the gap to 2 percentage points in 2016. Similarly, course completions for Māori in automotive programmes also show a smaller gap in achievement between Māori and that of all students. The Bachelor of Nursing has a gap in achievement of 10 percentage points for 2016 (however, Māori students' achievement still exceeds the NorthTec target for level 7 programmes). Māori achievement in the level 4 certificate in cookery of 92 per cent exceeded the achievement of their non-Māori peers of 84 per cent. These focus areas – varied in level and subject area – demonstrate the potential for reducing the achievement gap between Māori and others at NorthTec.

Table 2. Māori/Non-Māori course completions, 2014-2016

	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %
All	81	81	78
Non-Māori	88	87	83
Māori	75	73	70
Difference	13	14	13

In addition to Māori graduates achieving useful skills and gaining employment, some programmes are demonstrating highly valued outcomes for stakeholders. These include the community projects completed by the painting and decorating programme, the increase in the Māori nurse workforce to reflect the regional demographic, cookery graduates in local cafes and restaurants, and industry projects in the Bachelor of Applied Management which also result in research that benefits communities. NorthTec set up programmes with a local high school that led to increased involvement of Māori students in a science fair – where they had never been visible before. The conservation and environmental management students also

work within the community on environmental improvement projects with local conservation groups.

A key organisational project (Māori quality improvement) for improving Māori learner achievement was implemented late 2016. Positive progress toward raised achievement has included:

- Kaupapa Māori (Tautoko Mai) mentoring of cohorts with lower achievement than their peers as successfully demonstrated by the Bachelor of Applied Management, Bachelor of Nursing and the cookery programmes.
- Tuakana-teina model for students in hairdressing and horticulture where more advanced learners support their peers.
- Training for staff capability including the upcoming Māori pedagogies training for all staff, and induction and orientation for all staff including Te Whakaputanga or Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Māori history of NorthTec – including of its name Taitokerau Wānanga – and the value of the marae to underpin tikanga.
- A retention strategy rollout containing strategies to prevent DNAs (did not attend), and monitoring of students at risk of failure as demonstrated by the provision of support by Te Matarau Education Trust. The trust has already provided effective pastoral care, negotiated individual learning plans, and awarded scholarships to support Māori achievement.

Iwi and hapū leaders are redeveloping their trust and confidence in NorthTec as part of the change in leadership. There is growing confidence in the Council and chief executive. As a result, stakeholders saw value in developing purposeful relationships that would result in measurable outcomes for Māori. NorthTec has implemented a range of initiatives that are contributing to this confidence. These include:

- Involvement in community projects, and tripartite relationships such as with Ngāti wai and the hospitality industry
- Proposed working partnership with iwi, hapū, and whānau to deliver te reo ake o Ngāpuhi
- Inclusion of Māori/iwi representation on appointment panels for senior staff as part of the organisational restructure
- Discussions about future programme portfolio possibilities and the deliberate decision to change the composition of Council where Māori now make up 50 per cent of the members.

Representatives of Ngāti wai, Ngāti Hine, Ngāpuhi Runanga, the Runanga of Te Hiku and Te Matarau Education Trust interviewed by the evaluation team affirmed their confidence in the new structure.

Overall Māori achievement is still inconsistent at NorthTec. Attention to, analysis of, and use of Māori lead-indicator data and information to increase the expectations of Māori students have become more apparent but have yet to gain traction across the organisation.

2.2 Focus area: International Students: Support and Wellbeing

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

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

International students at NorthTec are very satisfied with their study experience whether in Auckland or in Whangārei. There has been significant growth in international student numbers, increasing three-fold from 2014 to 2016. The achievement of international students is well above the NorthTec target of 82 per cent for course completions, and steadily increasing for qualification completions from 53 per cent in 2014 to 91 per cent in 2016.

Table 3. International student achievement at NorthTec, 2014-2016

	2014			2015			2016		
	All	Akld*	Whng**	All	Akld	Whng	All	Akld	Whng
Headcount	327	136	191	757	423	334	1007	631	376
EFTS	166	73	93	520	335	185	666	453	213
Course success %	94	97	92	89	92	83	89	92	83
Qualification completion %	53	41	63	54	42	76	91	94	85

*Akld – Auckland campus; **Whng – Whangārei campuses

Achievement and attendance are monitored regularly with clear processes to immediately follow up any concerns. Some variability was noted in the attendance-level requirements across the two main campuses. A contract or plan is negotiated with students at risk to ensure they understand the need to meet all course requirements to be successful in their study. The international support team at both campuses is highly experienced, knowledgeable and works collaboratively to ensure students have access to appropriate support when the need arises. Effective communication within the team has been built through shared meetings, collegiality in terms of sharing ideas for improvement, and a sound understanding of the requirements of the Code of Practice.

The majority of international students (63 per cent) are in Auckland at either Newmarket or Queen Street. Planning is underway to consolidate delivery at the Queen Street campus from July 2017 to provide consistent orientation, support and delivery to meet the needs of these students. The appointment of an academic manager to the campus is imminent; this has been identified by management as an

important strategy to support the delivery of programmes in Auckland to ensure consistency of outcomes, and will complement the work of the campus principal.

A comprehensive orientation programme is provided at each campus to meet the needs of the locality, the number of students, and timeframes. For example, in Whangārei a week-long orientation is provided with a range of group activities, visits, speakers, workshops and social activities. In Auckland, the orientation is much shorter, for smaller numbers with an essential visit to open a bank account; and these students have daily conversations with support staff. There is a need to ensure that all international students at the Whangārei campus are involved in orientation activities to ensure consistent practice across the programme areas. Other workshops support students with information about careers and working in New Zealand, support and guidance for preparation of CVs, and additional English language support.

The revised Code of Practice came into effect from July 2016, requiring NorthTec to conduct a self-assessment against the 10 outcomes. This self-review was completed, but it is unclear whether the outcomes were shared across the wider group of international support staff. A number of improvements were identified in the self-review. However, there is no evidence of an improvement plan being used to monitor changes. A review of student files gave confidence that NorthTec fully complies with passport and study visa requirements. However, the documentation for other aspects of the enrolment process, such as meeting entry requirements, was not as visible. With the growth in international student numbers, it is important to ensure a consistent and shared understanding of the study visa, the Code of Practice and other entry requirements across academic areas and central support services. There is a need to review and monitor admission and enrolment documentation for accuracy and completeness to strengthen these systems and to provide management with confidence that both NZQA and Immigration New Zealand requirements are being fully complied with.

2.3 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**.

Prior to and since the previous EER, the Bachelor of Nursing overall course completions have been very high, consistently above 90 per cent (Table 4). This includes the priority groups: Māori, Pasifika and under 25-year-olds. Table 4 shows the high achievement of the programme.

Table 4. Bachelor of Nursing course completions by all students and by ethnicity/group, 2014-2016

	2014		2015		2016	
	Course completions %	EFTS	Course completions %	EFTS	Course completions %	EFTS
Overall course completion	96	228	97	246	95	249
New Zealand European	94	124	96	145	96	148
Māori	95	72	96	77	92	86
Pasifika	100	9	84	11	97	11
Under-25	94	76	94	77	94	75

Māori qualification completions are high at 83 per cent, and are continuing to exceed the NorthTec qualification completions target. However, they are not on a par with their New Zealand European peers. In 2016 the gap increased to 10 percentage points from 6 percentage points in 2015. Through self-assessment, staff identified that Māori students take slightly longer to complete the qualification. This is being addressed through improvements to delivery, with some initial success. In semester one in the first year, these students study two papers instead of four to settle into the programme, and then they make steady progress. Similarly, staff noted that international students and students with English as a second language were having difficulty passing the state final examinations. NorthTec has strengthened entry requirements to include a challenge test of language and clinical skills and has delayed clinical placement until students are more confident. This is meeting the needs of these students who might not otherwise have completed courses let alone the qualification.

Along with achieving their NorthTec nursing qualification, graduates sit the state final examinations where a pass rate enables registration as a nurse. NorthTec has a 100 per cent pass rate with these national results. Students gain clinical, technical and interpersonal skills that align to clinical standards and critical thinking, resulting in reflective practitioners.

Eight-five per cent of graduates have gained employment as registered nurses. Sixty-five per cent of these also progressed to higher level study and 9 per cent of destinations were unknown. However, staff identified that six months after graduating, every graduate who wanted employment gained employment. Employment related to study includes roles with district health boards, and primary and aged care.

The programme has highly valued outcomes. The community and the health sector gain an increased, well-qualified nurse workforce with priority groups also achieving well. This enables district health boards and other employers to better match staff with community demographics. Of additional value to the graduates, they are

required to undertake postgraduate study either through the nurse entry to practice programme or the nurse entry to specialty practice. Families benefit from students improving health literacy in the whānau, including access to health care.

In addition to the support strategies in place for Māori and international students, other excellent processes contribute to valued outcomes and high achievement. These include:

- Study groups for Māori students on the marae which resulted from a very successful initiative trialled by Māori students and now practised by staff
- Ensuring equitable employment outcomes by providing Māori students with additional mock interviews to build confidence when applying for employment
- Strengthened communication between student and clinical placement to ensure the clinical placement is well prepared to welcome the students
- The tuakana-teina initiative of pairing experienced nurses with graduates provides additional post-training support which is appreciated by the new graduates.

These targeted and intentional support processes are a result of the high level of reflective practice of a well-qualified and highly experienced staff who respond effectively to the needs of their students.

The Bachelor of Nursing has excellent results over time. Student achievement and destination outcomes are regularly and effectively tracked by year, by cohort and for the different priority groups. Clear actions and appropriate solutions are devised to respond where improvement is required. The external monitor represents both NZQA and the Nursing Council of New Zealand and has recommended self-monitoring which demonstrates confidence in the school and the quality assurance of this degree programme. These are key indicators of coherent and comprehensive self-assessment which is being used effectively to contribute to valued outcomes and ongoing quality improvement.

2.4 Focus area: Bachelor of Applied Management (Level 7)

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 Bachelor of Applied Management is delivered across two campuses: the main campus at Raumanga with a mix of mostly domestic students and some international students, and NorthTec's Queen Street, Auckland campus with only international students. While the Raumanga campus has been delivering this programme for some time, the Auckland delivery began in 2014.

Student achievement is mixed across the two campuses and across groups of students. Overall course completions are good, averaging 87 per cent over the past three years. This is just below the NorthTec target for level 7 programmes of 91 per cent. Prior to 2016 there was a significant gap of 11 percentage points in Māori course completions when measured against non-Māori students, but in 2016 this gap had reduced to 2 percentage points. This improvement is attributed to the introduction of a mentoring programme for Māori students. International student achievement is high – course completions over 2014-2016 ranged from 95 per cent to 89 per cent, with a three-year average of 92 per cent. Qualification completion rates for this programme have ranged between 60 per cent and 100 per cent over 2014-2016 for New Zealand European students, but were lower for Māori (55 per cent in 2014, 58 per cent in 2015, and 16 per cent in 2016). International student qualification completion rates were 72 per cent in 2015 and 95 per cent in 2016 – well above the NorthTec target.

Students and stakeholders interviewed during the EER visit expressed satisfaction in the Bachelor of Applied Management programme and graduates have been successful in gaining employment. The graduate destination survey indicates that in 2016, 79 per cent of the 96 graduates surveyed were in work. Active local advisory committees are in place for each of the delivery sites. The Raumanga campus contacts graduates and records outcomes as a way of tracking graduate destinations. This practice also occurs at the Auckland campus but is not as well advanced.

The programme delivery models are different for each of the two delivery sites, and two separate teaching teams provide learning environments that are relevant to the different needs of the students. For example, the Auckland delivery is intensive, with five eight-week terms with no breaks, and Raumanga uses two 16-week semesters. Since 2014, the two campuses have operated separately, the two teaching teams have not met regularly and it has been difficult to share resources, moderate each other's assessments and contribute to reviews of the programme. Recruitment is underway to fill the current vacancy in the programme leader role, and an academic manager appointment is imminent for the Auckland campus. It is expected that this will strengthen the management and leadership of this programme. At the same time, initiatives have been put in place to partner staff teaching the same courses. Paper leaders have been introduced in 2017 to support better consistency of delivery and assessment standards across campuses. The effectiveness of this intervention is yet to be assessed.

Moderation practice has improved in 2016/2017 as a result of the assessment and moderation project run across the organisation. Industry projects and work placements are used constructively to build industry engagement, and many projects have become embedded in staff research programmes. Tutors are research active and research activity has been used to support and inform delivery, particularly at the Raumanga campus. Developing students' understanding of

academic integrity is supported through academic skills workshops, embedded learning support and use of Turnitin for the submission of assessments.

Small class sizes enable student attendance and performance to be closely monitored. Students are well supported with tailored assistance put in place where needed. Employers in Whangārei commented they would like to see support available to assist with co-ordinating and managing student work.

Management support for the programmes is evident through the initiatives underway to strengthen programme leadership and ensure appropriate resourcing for delivery. However, industry stakeholders raised some concerns regarding staffing stability and the potential impact this may have on the quality of the outcomes.

2.5 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Civil) (Level 6)

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

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

Educational achievement has been uneven over the last three years, mainly due to the profile of the student group. School leavers make up 30 per cent of students and the remaining 70 per cent are employed in civil engineering, study part-time and typically take four years to complete the qualification. Course completions provide stronger evidence of educational performance, but these are below the NorthTec target of 82 per cent.

Table 5. New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Civil) (Level 6) course completions, 2014-2016

	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %
All	68	56	67
Non-Māori	69	53	75
Māori	63	69	51
Pasifika	13	13	0
International	na	na	72

This data shows a significant gap between Māori and non-Māori achievement for 2016, and staff were unaware of these differences in educational performance. The programme leader monitors and understands programme performance through close tracking of course completion results. As more international students enrol in the programme, it is important that staff are made aware of any additional support that may be required to meet the language requirements of the programme.

Students value the ability to gain the diploma while continuing to work and benefit from employer support, the application of their learning, and being able to work, study and stay within the Northland region. Key external stakeholders indicated that NorthTec provides high-quality graduates who are work-ready with the relevant skills needed for industry. Industry engagement is strong and there is a shortage of skilled workers in the region. There is good practice in place for tracking students after graduation and for engaging with employers and industry. Because of the shortage of skilled workers, graduates enter into cadetships with local employers, and this supports their study as well as gaining significant professional experience by the time they graduate. The opportunity to provide degree-level staircasing is considered a valuable pathway for graduates and for those already in the industry. The quality and value of the programme was validated in March 2017 when NorthTec gained international accreditation under the Dublin Accord¹³ following a panel visit from the standards and accreditation board of IPENZ.¹⁴

The teaching staff are well qualified, have relevant industry experience and are approachable. Students value the excellent support from their tutors who are readily available to answer questions and discuss problems. The quality of the positive feedback on assessment and additional online maths tuition were noted as particularly helpful. Teaching staff attend annual national conferences provided by the New Zealand Board for Engineering Diplomas and attend meetings with local civil engineering firms and other professional organisations. The introduction of more laboratory-based learning and the use of video technology within the classroom have strengthened student engagement.

Management is supportive and collaborative and has recently provided resources to improve the equipment for the engineering laboratory. A tutor observation system is in place and is mostly being used. However, the follow-up and feedback loops of the observation system were inconsistent across staff within the programme. The organisation as a whole is exploring its tutor observation system with a view to enhancements, and some staff had received teaching observations and performance reviews. Self-assessment has gradually increased in quality and visibility. However, whole-team involvement in the analysis and implementation of improvements is uneven across staff.

¹³ The Dublin Accord is an agreement for the international recognition of engineering technician qualifications.

¹⁴ Institute of Professional Engineers New Zealand

2.6 Focus area: Diploma in Conservation and Environmental Management (Level 6) and Certificate in Conservation and Environmental Management (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 **Excellent**.

Graduates from these programmes highly value the relevance and value of the skills and capabilities gained from study at NorthTec, particularly the broadening of perspectives and enhanced career opportunities. There is a strong progression from the certificate to the diploma and then to the Unitec Bachelor of Applied Science with exit points which cater to the changing needs of students. Stakeholders commented on the excellence of the programme and the highly employable graduates who were well prepared for the high degree of independence required in fieldwork. Community organisations are constantly looking for ways to be involved in student projects and provide practicum and summer jobs so that those trained and qualified in Northland remain in Northland. This is having a direct impact on improving conservation and environmental management practice for both the region and its communities. There are further opportunities to explore and assess the needs of iwi, hapū or marae to foster these community needs.

Student achievement shows an upward trend for both certificate and diploma outcomes.

Table 6. Diploma in Conservation and Environmental Management (Level 6), 2014-2016

Course completions	Course completions %			Qualification completions		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
All	84	91	88	224	145	105
Māori	69	86	85	369	171	102
Non-Māori	89	96	90	173	119	107
Pasifika	na	na	na	0	0	0
Under-25	86	96	87	221	192	70
Over-25	81	87	88	228	107	131
International	na	na	71	na	na	na
Domestic	84	93	91	224	148	124

Table 7: Certificate in Conservation and Environmental Management (Level 5), 2014-2016

Course completions	Course completions %			Qualification completions		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
All	67	70	77	43	45	95
Māori	75	82	45	57	62	45
Non-Māori	61	64	94	32	35	122
Pasifika	75	80	100	0	0	100
Non-Pasifika	67	70	76	44	46	95
Under-25	56	71	72	38	51	79
Over-25	77	70	81	48	39	110
International	36	51	100	22	15	150
Domestic	79	78	74	51	68	89

Certificate course completions have increased by 10 percentage points from 2014 to 2016, and qualifications completions have improved significantly from 43 per cent in 2014 to 95 per cent for the same three-year period. In the diploma programme, both course and qualification completions are consistently high. Māori achievement data has varied over recent years – in 2014 and 2015 Māori achievement exceeded that of non-Māori, with a dip in 2016, although small numbers may be affecting the data. In the diploma, the gap between Māori and non-Māori has decreased from 20 percentage points in 2014 to 5 percentage points in 2016 as a result of greater conscious efforts by staff to be culturally inclusive, and the strong, practical application incorporated into teaching. Staff are engaged with the institutional Māori achievement project to assist with eliminating this achievement gap. A small number of international students are supported with additional tutorials, workshops with a lecturer of their own ethnicity, and student services and international pastoral care. These increased efforts have resulted in 100 per cent course completions for international students in 2016.

Programmes are delivered using authentic project-based learning that is applied and work-based and includes field trips and community projects which are an integral part of the learning environment. Teaching staff are highly experienced and knowledgeable in their specialist areas with diverse and extensive links with industry and research opportunities. Staff engage students as partners in research projects which provides valuable experience in real-world environmental research to prepare them for the workforce. Staff-to-student ratios are very effective and promote strong learning relationships and enable deeper learning to occur. Comprehensive written and verbal feedback is given to students on their assessments, and opportunities to follow up with the tutor individually are offered. Student responses to the student experience survey are strongly positive.

In preparation for delivery of the new diploma qualifications in 2018, review work is targeted towards aligning the benefits of the current programmes with the new qualifications to ensure that established pathways are available to students. For example, as there is no specific professional studies course in the new qualifications, the essential learning outcomes are being dispersed and embedded across relevant new courses.

Strong programme leadership ensures that self-assessment reports are collaboratively written and improvement plans are robust and well monitored to ensure improvements are effective. Data and other evidence is used widely to inform progress and achievement, monitor attendance, and enable analysis of outcomes. Staff are well informed on the impact of organisational change and are engaged in the teaching observations and increased professional development workshops, and in ensuring they are accountable for completing tertiary teacher training and development. The programme is well resourced and requests supported. For example, geographic information systems capable laptops are provided for the students, and information technology enhancements support programme management and staff by enabling students to access relevant and up-to-date data.

2.7 Focus area: Certificate in Painting (Trade) (Level 2) and National Certificate in Painting and Decorating (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**.

Stakeholders, including students, highly value the outcomes from this programme. Community-based projects are integrated into the teaching and learning, and this is supporting the needs of communities, including painting and renovating housing, town beautification and maintenance activities in low economic communities. The Ngawha Corrections students played an important role in a community project to provide new ablution blocks for the local town. As well as gaining valuable technical skills and capabilities, the students felt a strong sense of pride and were also able to see the value of gaining formal qualifications in a trade. The combination of learning the skills of a trade and positive affirmation of their achievements has created a strong sense of worth for each of these students. Graduates from these programmes obtain employment, undertake further study, become involved in community work, or move out of the area to undertake further opportunities elsewhere.

Course completions have been improving and reached 83 per cent in 2016. This is just above the NorthTec target for the level 2 programmes of 82 per cent. The level 4 programme achieved 81 per cent in 2016, just 1 percentage point below the target. While both programmes have shown improvement from 2015 to 2016, there remains a gap of 5 percentage points between Māori and non-Māori achievement, although

this difference is well below the institutional gap for Māori and non-Māori achievement. There are differences in educational achievement between delivery sites, and these are beginning to be analysed. Programme self-assessment reports are produced and improvements are managed through action plans. Opportunities for sharing best practice across all delivery sites are emerging.

The programme has a sound balance of theory and practice and provides learners with real-life experiences suitable for the industry. Tutors are skilled and highly regarded by both students and stakeholders because of their industry skill and authentic care for the success of the students. Students appreciated the many opportunities to apply their learning through the community projects. The programme is well resourced. Tutors have identified that the level 4 programme is too big a step from the level 2 course for some students, and it is proposed to provide a level 3 programme to better manage this progression. The support from the Te Matarau Education Trust and the student success team has reduced barriers and provided strong and relevant encouragement for students to complete their studies and join the workforce.

Tutors are required to have assessment training by completing the relevant unit standard. A number of staff have completed the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education. Some tutors have received performance reviews. Teaching observations are being used to inform improved teaching and assessment practice, although this is at the early stage of consistent implementation across all teaching staff.

Management is using lead-indicator data and is proactive in self-identifying most issues and addressing these speedily if and when they arise. Moderation issues have been identified and management is working to implement improvements. There is a need to ensure moderation consistency across sites. NorthTec has a project to further address assessment and moderation improvement across the whole of the organisation. Management is proactively monitoring delivery hours and some minor changes have been made following the audit of this programme.

2.8 Focus area: National Certificate in Motor Industry (Vehicle Servicing) (Level 3)

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 delivered across a range of delivery sites including in Kaikohe, Moerewa, Ngawha, Whangārei and Kaitaia. Innovative practices are used in delivery to support holistic and culturally appropriate student engagement and authentic learning, and these have proven successful with students, particularly those studying in the regions. Students are encouraged to use work experience as a link to paid employment.

Course completions are consistent with institute benchmarks and have remained consistent across 2014-2016. Qualification completions dipped in 2016, but the causes for this have been clearly identified and addressed. While staff monitor and analyse student attendance and success data and follow up on students at risk of withdrawing or failing their study, there is a gap in analysing data by priority group (Māori, Pasifika and under-25s). This is not seen as significant given the high percentage of Māori learners in the programme and the relatively small gap in achievement (three-year course completion average is 71 per cent for Māori, and 76 per cent for non-Māori). There is good practice in place for monitoring graduate destinations and for staying in touch with industry and employers.

Employers and the community highly value the programme and the way it is embedded within a community development model, and uses relationship-based delivery pedagogy. Graduates develop a work ethic, professionalism, confidence and soft skills relevant to employment. The automotive workshops provide a real-world learning environment to ensure that students follow the required work standards such as safety clothing, hazard identification and safe practices.

Student satisfaction with teaching and their programme is high, with tutors receiving a student satisfaction rating between 4.4 and 4.8 (out of a possible 5). Literacy and numeracy testing identifies additional student learning needs, and additional support is put in place where needed. Staff often go the extra mile to ensure that students succeed by providing transport to class, additional tuition after class, and arranging additional work placements. Students at Kaikohe appreciated the improved facilities and equipment at the new campus, particularly the automotive workshop and dedicated classroom.

Staff have teaching qualifications, are highly experienced and undertake regular professional development. There is a strong culture of innovation, self-reflection and continuous improvement in the team, and this is facilitated by management. The regional delivery sites are regularly visited by programme leaders to co-ordinate consistent delivery practice and build communication across the various teams. Staff across all campuses also meet regularly to discuss progress and share practices. Students from the regions visit the workshops in Whangārei and are taken on industry visits to increase awareness of employment options. Motor Industry Training Organisation moderation is up-to-date and there have been no issues identified in recent years. The staff are well prepared to move to the delivery of the new qualification in 2018.

There is a strong health and safety ethos embedded in the programme delivery and students share responsibility with staff for managing a safe and healthy workspace. Staff are well supported by management and have the resources needed to successfully support students to succeed.

2.9 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Cookery (Level 3) and New Zealand Certificate in Cookery (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 **Excellent**.

These two programmes were offered for the first time in 2015. The level 4 achievement of 93 per cent for both course and qualification completion in that year was exceptional and well in excess of the NorthTec targets of 80 per cent and 72 per cent respectively. However, in 2016 both results dropped to 80 per cent and 69 per cent. NorthTec attributed the 2015 results to an exceptional cohort of students. The level 3 course completions fluctuated around the NorthTec targets, achieving 88 per cent in 2015, but dropping to 77 per cent in 2016, while qualification completions of 69 per cent in 2015 rose to 75 per cent in 2016 (Table 6).

Table 6. Course and qualification achievement for New Zealand Certificates in Cookery (Level 3 and 4), 2015-2016

Level 3									
		2015 %				2016 %			
	NorthTec target %	All	Māori	U25	Inter-national	All	Māori	U25	Inter-national
Course completions	80	88	60	79	92	77	60	82	93
Qualification completions	72	70	57	74	89	75	57	81	91

Level 4										
		2015 %				2016 %				
	NorthTec target %	All	Māori	U25	Inter-national	All	Māori	U25	Pasifika	Inter-national
Course completions	80	93	77	82	77	80	93	82	92	76
Qualification completions	72	93	60	47	43	69	49	76	0	70

The priority groups (Māori, under-25s and Pasifika) achieve comparably with all students, although Pasifika numbers are very small and enrolments were only in level 4 in 2016. The achievement gap between Māori students and all students exceeded the overall NorthTec gap of 14 percentage points, which is a concern. The exception was in 2016 for the level 4 certificate where course completion of Māori students exceeded the achievement of all students. Staff report the positive anomaly for 2016 as a change in motivation as Māori see this as a viable career and also because of the interventions they are trialling such as mentoring and the use of Māori businesses.

In addition to achieving qualifications, students gain industry-level and food safety skills in preparation, cooking and presentation of a range of dishes along with the necessary skills of teamwork, time management, costing and budgets to successfully run a kitchen. Employers appreciate and value these skills as well as the work-readiness ethos developed from the beginning of level 3 classes, requiring that students be on time, wear clean uniforms, work safely with food and have the right attitude. These are recognised as prerequisites for reaching the required industry standard and progression to the level 4 programme.

While 4 per cent of graduates from both the level 3 and 4 programmes gain employment, the majority progress to levels 4 and 5 (78 per cent and 77 per cent respectively). Employers find students' and graduates' knowledge and skills match current industry practice. The understanding of and adherence to food control plans is particularly relevant and valuable. The wide range of stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team were fulsome in their support of the staff and the programmes, providing many examples of the students demonstrating their skills in catering for different events.

Changes to the programmes have led to students caring more about their work. Healthy competition between students has lifted confidence and led to increased engagement with learning, leading to excellence as a desired outcome. Evidence was provided of students and graduates winning medals at regional competitions and going forward to national competitions within a range of categories and difficulty. Students and graduates said participation in competitions and external events provided excellent opportunities for involvement leading to increased confidence in their abilities.

Self-assessment is well-embedded into all aspects of this school. Staff discuss the implementation of an annual improvement plan, the outcomes of student feedback, and progress with solutions identified for any issues and the quality of delivery. To reduce the gap between Māori learners and their peers, a Māori mentor project, Tautoko Mai,¹⁵ is being piloted in areas with disparity. The pilot is working well in cookery, as seen from the strong performance in level 4 and the subsequent progress to level 5. The Te Matarau partnership for food and beverage, and manaaki marae provides pastoral care, negotiates individual learning plans, and awards scholarships. Ngāti wai iwi provides authentic workplace and learning support through their ownership of a local hotel. A range of work experience and employment opportunities have resulted from this partnership with NorthTec and local industry. NorthTec expects these support strategies and interventions to lead to improved achievement and is closely monitoring their effectiveness.

Another example of self-assessment addressed the lower achievement of international students. Indian students with a degree in a similar area of study were

¹⁵ Tautoko Mai – support

being accepted into the level 4 programme but they did not have the practical skills required. NorthTec is no longer using the Indian qualification to meet its entry requirements. Instead, all international students enrol in the level 3 certificate and progress to level 4. The level 3 results for these students are already very promising.

Moving from competency-based to achievement-based assessment, the teaching staff appreciate the more holistic assessment of working towards a menu, which involves serving customers rather than assessment in isolation. Students also appreciate the more meaningful assessments because they are better aligned with industry expectations. External moderation is strong and is further validated by City and Guilds audits and NZQA consistency reviews. The cooking school has piloted a number of improvements to assessment and moderation which have subsequently been implemented across the organisation. These include close monitoring of internal and external moderation plans, sharing of moderation outcomes, and groups of lecturers working together to create assessments which are conducted in the work environment.

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that NorthTec:

- Monitor the use of graduate destination data and information on employment, further study and community outcomes to inform and analyse how well graduate skills and capabilities are meeting employer expectations and needs in the workplace and in the community.
- Strengthen relationships with iwi, community and business in the region at all levels of the organisation; undertake an organisational review of NorthTec's cultural responsiveness to ensure that programmes are culturally inclusive and free from barriers to success for Māori students.
- Review the consistency of assessment and outcomes across campuses, particularly the Auckland and Raumanga campuses for the Bachelor of Applied Management.
- Monitor and strengthen the consistent application of policy and processes relating to outcomes and compliance requirements for international students.
- Explore the most effective way to provide staff performance reviews and teaching observations to inform improved teaching, assessment and moderation practice.
- Continue to build capability in self-assessment practice to support consistent monitoring, review and analysis of the effectiveness of improvements across the organisation.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes 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 External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013. 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).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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