Report of External Evaluation and Review

Southern Institute of Technology

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 14 March 2018

Contents

MoE Number: 6015

NZQA Reference: C24761

Date of EER visit: 30-31 August, 1 and 6-8 September 2017

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:	Southern Institute of Technology (SIT)
Type:	Polytechnic/Institute of Technology
Location:	133 Tay St, Invercargill
Delivery sites:	• Invercargill Campus, 133 Tay St, Invercargill
	• Gore Campus, 70 Kakapo St, Gore
	• Christchurch Campus, 60 Waterloo Rd, Hornby, Christchurch
	• Queenstown Campus, Level 2, Dart House, Remarkables Park Town Centre, Hawthorne Drive, Queenstown and 57 Shotover St, Queenstown
	• Auckland Campus, Level 10, 238 Queen St, Auckland
	• Offshore Delivery, Hubei University of Education, 1 Nanhuan Rd, Wuhan East Lake High-Tech Zone, Hubei Province, China
Courses currently delivered:	Please use the following link: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/course-accreditations.do?providerId=601558001&delSiteInd=0
Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 4,229 EFTS – 13,462 students in 2016 (New Zealand European 78 per cent; Māori 16 per cent; Pasifika 3 per cent; Asian 6 per cent)
	International: 1,084 EFTS (equivalent full-time students)

Number of staff:	Full-time: 253; part-time: 68 (salaried staff only)
Scope of active accreditation:	Please use the following link:
	http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=601558001
Distinctive characteristics:	• SIT has strong community and regional ties which are evident in the way it has a pivotal role in the educational, social, economic and cultural development of the area.
	• SIT has a strong profile in providing regional leadership through its role in the development of the 2016 Southland Regional Development Strategy.
	• SIT has a growing international student population. Many of these students subsequently seek to stay in New Zealand.
	• SIT has established the Southland Secondary Tertiary Partnership Programme to meet the needs of local secondary school students.
	• There are strong relationships with local Māori.
	• The 'zero fees' scheme was initiated in 2001, made possible through contributions from the community and local organisations.
	• The SIT2LRN faculty makes SIT the second-largest provider of flexible distance delivery in New Zealand's ITP sector.
Recent significant changes:	There have been several changes in senior management in recent years, including the establishment of the position of manager of academic operations. New appointments since the previous EER (external evaluation and review) include heads of faculty for New Media, Arts and Business, and Trades and Technology; chief financial officer; and international department and marketing manager positions.
	There have been a number of approvals of programmes. Significantly, these include three Bachelor's degree programmes and three Master's degrees and associated programmes. Fifty-two new programmes at levels 2-6 have been approved to be delivered at SIT as a result of the Targeted Review of Qualifications.

There have been various upgrades of facilities across the campuses, including the building of student accommodation in Invercargill.

In 2016, SIT took part in student satisfaction survey benchmarking, allowing for comparisons with other ITPs.

| Previous quality assurance history: | The previous EER visit by NZQA was in July 2012. The outcome was that NZQA was Confident in the educational performance of Southern Institute of Technology and Confident in the ITP's capability in self-assessment. |

During this EER visit the evaluators looked at moderation reports from various standard-setting bodies in relation to the subject areas of the selected focus areas. Among the moderation reports scrutinised were those from NZQA, Service IQ, the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation, and the Nursing Council of New Zealand. These external moderation results were generally good, and any areas that required improvement were dealt with appropriately in most cases. The reports to the Nursing Council of New Zealand showed no concerns and a student satisfaction rating of 100 per cent in each case.

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) report of 2016 did not highlight any major concerns.

The self-commissioned Deloitte report of August 2015 identified some compliance issues around the suite of programmes being supplied by Te Wānanga o Aotearoa at SIT. These issues were answered in relation to that report and according to Deloitte methodology.

In August 2016, Immigration New Zealand determined that SIT had an unacceptable visa decline rate of 58 per cent for its students from India. A target was set that by the end of 2017 this must be reduced to a maximum decline rate of 40 per cent. SIT has met the targets that were set by Immigration New Zealand in achieving this reduction.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

For this EER the following focus areas were selected by the lead evaluator in consultation with the senior management of SIT. The reasons for the selections are included.

1.	International student support	Mandatory where international students are present.
2.	Bachelor of Fashion (Level 7)	These focus areas were chosen to cover the range of programmes, levels and disciplines being delivered across the various sites. The number of students and the rate of student achievement in the programme are also factors in the selection. Three sites were visited. Two programmes were selected to provide an insight into the distance learning programme, SIT2LRN, and Trades Academy was selected as it is a transitional programme from secondary to tertiary education.
3.	Postgraduate Diploma in Health Science (Level 8)	
4.	New Zealand Certificate in Animal Care (Level 3) (SIT2LRN)	
5	New Zealand Certificate in Cookery (Level 3)	
6.	Trades Academy	
7.	Certificate in Construction (Level 3)	
8.	New Zealand Certificate in Project Management suite of programmes (SIT2LRN)	

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 lead evaluator travelled to Invercargill in July 2017 to discuss with senior management the EER scope areas and visit procedures. The evaluation team comprised four evaluators, who visited SIT for five and a half days over two weeks from 30 August 2017 to 8 September 2017. The team held interviews with the chief executive, senior management, the Council and the academic board. Discussions were also held with international student management and support staff, and the evaluators were shown the general student support facilities. For the programme-

based focus areas, the team spilt up into groups of two evaluators to cover the different areas. During this time, a sub-team of evaluators met with programme leaders, teaching staff, students, and members of advisory committees and other external stakeholders, principally at Invercargill but also at Gore and Christchurch for the focus areas. In addition, the evaluation team perused an extensive range of corporate documents, programme reviews relevant to the focus areas, and information relevant to student support and international students, including that related to the implementation of the Education (for the Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud[1]*

- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*

Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.

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[1] NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of Southern Institute of Technology.

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

The NZQA evaluators found that SIT has a good level of educational performance and self-assessment overall. Some areas have a high standard, countered by areas where improvements could be made. The evaluators determined that, based on performance since the previous EER in 2012, they have formed a positive view of the functions of SIT. Thus there is confidence is for educational performance and capability in self-assessment to continue with good effect into the future. This opinion is supported by the following:

- SIT has very solid relationships with the local community and region.

- SIT takes an active part in the development of the regional strategy, and contributes to the local economy.

- Generally good rates of achievement in SAC-funded programmes lead to valuable outcomes such as pathways to employment and/or further studies.

- There is an effective collection of feedback from students, graduates and employers, which is collated, and mostly analysed and used for development and advancement.

- The international students are well supported and achieve well academically. There is good 'internationalisation' of the campus.

- There is effective work being done to improve the transition of secondary students to tertiary education or employment, as seen in the Trades Academy.

- There are appropriate facilities and resources for student support on campus.

- There are systems of integrated support for Māori students, taking a for-Māori/by-Māori approach to the provision of Māori studies and pastoral care.

- On-campus delivery is strong, with up-to-date resources and well-qualified, experienced teaching staff who show commitment in their work, and a proactive academic support unit.

- There is a thorough system of student management.

- There is effective gathering of achievement data, but there are inconsistencies in the way this data is analysed and used by different systems/areas of the institution. Deeper analysis of some data to understand areas that need improvement would be useful. Consistency of practice and more direct communication, particularly between campuses and within faculties and programmes of the same discipline, is lacking.

- Inconsistent moderation practices were found in some areas, with some requiring well-defined accountabilities and recording methodology to maintain the provider's responsibility that assessment should be fair, consistent, sufficient and authentic.

- The academic procedures for SIT2LRN need more focus on improving student motivation, retention and, ultimately, achievement. Closer monitoring would help improve this area.

- Overall Pasifika student satisfaction rates are good, although some students feel that relationships with local Pasifika organisations could be strengthened.

- In a few of the programmes, it is difficult to see how the credit value corresponds to the hours of learning. In some of these cases, SIT does not deliver the courses but administers the students.

Findings[2]

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.**

Generally, students at SIT achieve well. From the data presented for the scoping of the EER, the EFTS-weighted course completion rate for SAC[3] (all students) funded programmes gives a good representation of the relative course completions in the programmes that lead to qualifications. Many of the programmes have course completion rates of 70 per cent or higher, and there is a small cluster of six programmes that lie below 50 per cent as students opt to transfer to the New Zealand qualifications.

Table 1 shows that the targeted student groups such as Māori, Pasifika and the under-25 age group performed consistently in the period 2013-2016, with Māori and Pasifika course completion rates being slightly lower overall. The completion rates for international students jumped to 91 per cent in 2016.

Table 1. SIT course completion rates 2013-2016 (of target interest groups)[4]

Course completions	Sum of EFTS-weighted successful course completion rate (%)			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
All students (SAC)	77	79	78	75
Under-25 years (SAC)	77	80	79	77
Māori (SAC)	66	74	73	69
Pasifika (SAC)	67	65	70	65
International	86	79	78	91
Youth Guarantee Scheme	75	78	84	82

Figures sourced from SIT assessment summary document, June 2017.

SIT developed strategic outlines for these target groups in 2015, and the course completion results have been consistently high. There is more evidence of support

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

[3] Student Achievement Component

[4] Figures supplied by SIT in their self-assessment summary for this EER.

Final Report

to Māori than to Pasifika, which may be a consequence of the low numbers of Pasifika students enrolled (3 per cent of total student enrolments in 2016, compared with 16 per cent Māori). The slightly lower achievement rates for Māori and Pasifika students are worth studying to determine what factors contribute to this and what can be done to lift these achievement rates.

Qualification completion figures for SIT are good, with 68 per cent of students completing their qualification in 2016. This is lower than the median figure of 72 per cent for the ITP sector as a whole. In Youth Guarantee-funded programmes SIT has better course completion, at 82 per cent, and qualification completion at 71 per cent. At 21 per cent, SIT has the lowest Youth Guarantee rating for student progression to higher study of all ITPs.

International students are the standout performers at SIT with the jump in the course completion rate to 91 per cent in 2016, compared with 75 per cent for all SAC-funded students at SIT. International student support is a high priority at SIT, and it was apparent that these students are well supported in their studies.

The partnership programme is a Southland-wide initiative which includes 15 secondary schools throughout the region, resulting in Trades Academy programmes being set up to accommodate secondary school students travelling from the wider region to attend classes.

The aim of the programmes is to assist the transition of secondary school students to tertiary education and employment by giving them basic skills, involving them in project-based learning, exposing them to the workplace, keeping them engaged in the education system, and helping them to finish NCEA. The outcomes of these partnerships are measured differently because of the various ways that positive outcomes can be derived. Students go on to further studies or find employment, or go back to secondary school for higher studies. They pass unit standards, which give them a tertiary record of learning, and can add to their NCEA achievements. SIT has a good record of placing these students into employment.

In all, student achievement at SIT is good, with a few areas requiring more focus to build achievement levels. The collection of achievement data by SIT is comprehensive, and is collated and analysed. SIT knows the areas of lower performance, but improvement strategies are not working as well for the SIT2LRN programmes.

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 **Excellent.**

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

Overall, the evaluators found that SIT gives very good value with its programme outcomes. SIT is mindful of its relationship with local and regional communities, and this is shown by the close links with local industries and employers. This is also shown in the enrolling of international students who may wish to stay in Southland after their studies, thus boosting the skilled workforce in the region and helping the local economy. There are many strong links with the local city administration and various commercial and strategic organisations who are major players in the local economy.

In a joint survey conducted by SIT with three other ITPs, feedback from recent graduates evaluating the skills and knowledge of the learning and its relevance for their subsequent employment have been overwhelmingly positive. 94 per cent of those interviewed (47 per cent of all graduates contacted responded in 2016) were overall satisfied with the quality of their programme. This result compares favourably with that of the other three ITPs in the joint research study. SIT also gathers information from employers through annual surveys. These provide valuable information and the ability to measure employer opinions over time, thus allowing trends to be identified. These surveys ask about the graduates' ability to work in teams, their interpersonal skills, adaptability, and time management. Overall, in 2016, 89 per cent of employers stated that the graduates had the skills to do the job (from 52 employers).

SIT is a major regional player, responding to the needs of local industry and the community, and its contribution to local economies and regional development is significant. SIT leaders have featured prominently in the development of the 2016 Southland Regional Development Strategy, which focuses on growing Southland's population and creating a more diverse economy.

The industry advisory committees for the various faculties provide comprehensive feedback during formal committee discussions. There are 42 such industry advisory committees at SIT, with around 300 members in total, so they are an important source of industry input. The evaluators found that some areas of self-assessment could be improved by more intensive gathering of feedback from employers, and in some programmes like Cookery, more understanding of the value of the learning from graduates could be gained.

Secondary schools are another major stakeholder of SIT, and the evaluators learned of the value of the Trades Academy run by SIT in partnership with regional secondary schools and community organisations. Local secondary school

headmasters and police were clear about the value of the programmes which were designed to keep the students engaged in the education system and put them in contact with the world of employment.

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.**

SIT provides for the needs of the students and stakeholders in an effective way. The close ties with local organisations and industry allow for good feedback and close interaction. The engagement with increasing numbers of international students to help the local economy is a good example of how SIT is responding to local needs. The work being done in the transition of secondary school students to employment and/or tertiary study through the Trades Academy system is another example of how needs are being met in a comprehensive way.

The quality of the teaching is another important factor in meeting the needs of the students. Teaching quality is effectively monitored through staff performance agreements and formal observations of staff delivery. Teaching staff undergo a two-year induction. One of the requirements of employment at SIT is that teaching staff should have or acquire a qualification in adult learning, and some are required to obtain a qualification in adult literacy and numeracy education if they are teaching level 2-3 programmes.

Teachers are supported by the academic support unit to assist them in their practice. Moderation of assessment is standard practice at SIT, and their purpose is to ensure that the assessments are fit for purpose and marked fairly.

SIT offers delivery of many of its programmes in mixed-mode delivery to suit the lifestyles of a variety of people. The SIT2LRN faculty offers programmes by distance, using electronic and traditional means. This enables people from further afield to engage with SIT programmes. SIT2LRN has been expanded so that it is now the third-largest provider of distance learning in the country. SIT also has a number of campuses in the regions as the need for education in those areas has become apparent, and through consultation with local organisations. SIT has campuses in Christchurch, Queenstown, Gore and Auckland to satisfy demand in those areas.

The evaluators found that, in some instances, the SIT2LRN faculty self-assessment functions still need some development, as these are not fully effective. There are a few areas of data management and course achievement that can be improved. For

example, achievement rates could be better in programmes such as the level 4 National Certificate and level 6 Diploma in Project Management that were sampled in this EER. Some work could be done to understand why there are disparities in the results between the SIT2LRN version of a programme and the face-to-face delivery model of the same programme. Work also needs to be done to gain more insight into improving the retention and motivation of distance learners, and the effect of large cohort sizes on the effectiveness of the teaching. Studies have been done in these areas, but the results of these have still to translate into improving completion rates.

For some programmes taught across faculties, consistency and communication could be strengthened. More communication between teaching staff on the same programme, or in the same discipline, across the sites would be useful. It would enable more consistency of delivery, an exchange of good practice ideas, and cross-moderation of assessments and resources. It would also allow management to make valid comparisons of achievement results to understand any regional differences. Systematised reviews of programmes also need to consider these regional nuances of delivery to ensure consistency.

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.**

The evaluators found that support for students is very good at SIT given the scope and complexity of the programmes offered and the different types of students. Support for international students is covered in Focus Area 2.1, and is effective, as shown by the very good achievement results by this group. Overall students are well provided for with learning support, library services, online services, health centre and counselling services all available at the main campus, and travelling support services for the outlying campuses. The evaluators noted that in the student survey, Queenstown campus had consistently lower rates of satisfaction across the support areas.

Support for Māori students is strong at SIT. Sixteen per cent of SIT's students identify as Māori which is higher than the proportion of Māori in the local community. SIT has strong links to the local Māori community and has an eminent local Māori as its kaumātua.

As an example of how SIT maintains strong relationships with other organisations, it has forged a partnership with Te Wānanga O Aotearoa and enrols students into programmes delivered by Te Wānanga o Aotearoa teachers on SIT campuses. These programmes are designed to initiate people in mātauranga Māori and te reo

Māori, which is useful not only for Māori students These programmes are also attracting people of other cultures as well as SIT staff, who want to understand Māori tikanga and kaupapa to help their professional practice. This is important if they are teaching Māori students.

The gap between Māori and non-Māori achievement has closed, but was still 6 per cent in 2016. Further support is given through the Tauira Tautoko – the Māori support centre which actively gives social and cultural backing to the students. Student feedback indicates that the Tauira Tautoko provides a valued service.

SIT also engages in a mentoring programme for Māori students and awards the Māori Student Leadership Awards to recognise the special attributes of Māori students. A special Māori advisory group was established at the end of 2016, comprising Māori staff members. This group has been set up to identify and respond to Māori issues.

Only about 3 per cent of students at SIT are Pasifika, which reflects the proportion of the Pasifika population locally. There is a tentative network of Pasifika support currently being developed, but Pasifika students did not seem sure how to go about using it. There are positive relationships with some local Pasifika advisory trusts, and attempts are being made to raise the achievement of these students. In the interviews, the students told the evaluators that they would value more contact with local Pasifika organisations.

SIT offers a variety of work-based learning modes which support students to be involved in real-world applied learning such as internships, clinical placements, work experience, operating the SIT gym, café, clinics, the nursing simulation suite or other workplace simulations. The experiences that these provide help prepare the students for future work in the industry of their choice.

SIT runs a comprehensive orientation programme for new students to allow them to acclimatise to their new surroundings. This is especially important for international students who receive induction into academic, accommodation and legal requirements. International and domestic students receive initiation into the rules and requirements of the specific programmes they are entering. Student attendance is a critical factor in programme success and this is monitored closely at SIT. Any lapses in attendance are noticed quickly and attended to by the pastoral care team.

SIT gathers student feedback through surveys run at various times throughout the delivery of a programme to give strategic information. The feedback is collated and analysed and the resulting information is used in programme development. Students at SIT are mostly pleased with support services, with 94 per cent expressing their satisfaction with the services in 2016. The student satisfaction survey shows that SIT2LRN students are less happy with assignment feedback and advice and assistance.

Final Report

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.**

The evaluators found that governance and management at SIT is generally effective, but management is still developing one or two areas and improvements can be expected. The overall achievement rates for SIT are good, as outlined in Table 2. SIT's position relative to other ITPs could improve, and qualification completions rates for SAC-funded students are strengthening, at 68 per cent in 2016.

Table 2. SIT achievement rates (all students) 2016[5]

	Achievement	SIT 2016 %	Measured against all ITPs 2016	
			Median %	SIT's position out of the ITPs measured
SAC funded	Course completion	75	78	12th/18
	Qualification completion	68	72	14th/18
	Progression to higher study	34	36	12th/18
	Retained in study	68	68	14th/19
Youth Guarantee	Course completion	82	76	2nd/15
	Qualification completion	71	71	7th/15
	Progression to higher study	21	44	17th/17
	Retained in study	58	72	15th/17

Overall, in 2016 SIT had 4,229 EFTS of domestic students made up of: New Zealand European 78 per cent; Māori 16 per cent; Pasifika 3 per cent; Asian 6 per cent.

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[5] These figures are sourced from the TEC Educational Performance Indicator Report 2016.

International students comprised 1,084 EFTS in 2016. In total, in 2016 there were 13,462 students enrolled in 166 programmes.

SIT2LRN is the distance learning arm of SIT. SIT2LRN has been a faculty for over 14 years and is the largest faculty in terms of student numbers, EFTS and programmes delivered. The distance programmes allow people from further afield to engage in SIT study while maintaining their life needs. The traditional challenges of distance learning notwithstanding, some developments are needed to the delivery and support of these programmes. In the self-assessment of SIT2LRN, it would be useful if clear comparisons were drawn between in-house and distance delivery results, especially where the same programmes are being delivered by the two teams, so that clear improvement targets can be set. It is not clear that SIT2LRN students have as much support as some of them need. The provider would benefit from the strengthening of collection and analysis of student feedback for SIT2LRN. While some useful work has been done, such as the setting of a universal target of 70 per cent completions for all SIT2LRN programmes, the results have been slow to eventuate.

There have been developments in the installation of electronic data storage systems for student management. This development is still in its formative stages, and there are some inconsistencies in the way that data is being understood as a result.

The target area that is receiving a lot of attention at SIT is support for Māori learners. The proportion of Māori students at SIT has increased to 16 per cent over the past five years, and while there have been some improvements, the achievement rates still lag those of the rest of the students. The small number of Pasifika students generally achieve at a rate comparable to the whole student body. There is some contact with Pasifika organisations in Invercargill, but the Pasifika students interviewed said they would like more contact with local Pasifika groups. They said the mentor support schemes for new students worked well in some faculties at SIT.

Student support at SIT is strong, with a focus on supporting students to develop life and study skills through their academic studies that will support them in the future. Teamwork is fostered in some programmes. Students gain vocational skills and knowledge, introduction to industry, employment, or study pathways. They also gain confidence, communication skills and work skills. Stakeholders employ skilled graduates who are contributing to the local economy. Many programmes are designed with flexible delivery modes and night or weekend delivery to suit the lifestyles of the adult learners. Feedback from graduates and employers indicates that the learning has value. Feedback from the advisory committees is generally positive. More systematic gathering and proactive analysis of employer feedback to determine long-term value of the learning would be an advantage.

SIT has a partnership with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa which delivers a suite of its programmes in Māoritanga and Te Reo Māori at the SIT campuses. One of these programmes is used as professional development for SIT staff to enhance their understanding of tikanga Māori and kaupapa. SIT provides good support for Māori learners, and efforts are made to weave Māori tikanga throughout campus life in Invercargill.

SIT has some good methods of gaining feedback in other areas. It gains First Impressions survey responses from SIT2LRN students by telephone but, while this brings in useful data, the coverage of the survey needs to be extended. There is an embedded system of industry advisory committees (each meets two or three times a year). In some areas the roles of these committees and their responsibilities need to be clarified and reinforced. Internal moderation is used, but in some cases it is not clearly understood, especially pre-assessment moderation. SIT uses a system that requires each assessment standard to be internally moderated once every five years, but it is not clear that this is sufficient to ensure that assessments and marking continue to be valid, consistent, fair and sufficient. Under the present system, faults in assessment practice could continue for a long time without being rectified. The moderation practice between sites and between programmes varies in a few cases.

Students are well supported with library, counselling, health, learning, employment and cultural support. SIT owns accommodation units for those international students who require them.

Governance is well established through the SIT Council of eight government and community-appointed members. The Council has a good spread of business expertise and experience and has good lines of accountability with the senior management of SIT. The educational direction comes from the management of SIT, with all policies being scrutinised by the Council. Senior management is also very experienced. Two stand-out features of SIT philosophy are the strong support of local Māori and the general sense of involvement with the local community. There is an instilled attitude that the business fortunes of SIT and that of Invercargill are inextricably linked and that they support each other. This is the underlying principle behind the zero fees scheme, which was partly supported by contributions from the local institutions from 2001-2002 to draw students to the area and stimulate the local economy. SIT shows great resilience in managing change and maintaining a productive role locally.

SIT has a large academic board with one or two representatives from each faculty, plus senior management. The terms of reference state that the responsibilities of this board are to devise and sustain academic development at SIT. The academic board engages in a scheduled self-assessment exercise to determine its effectiveness. Each faculty has a number of industry advisory committees which draw on local industry experience to advise on programme content and development, and provides useful contact with work placement and employment

Final Report

possibilities for the students. These advisory committees are an important and integral part of the running of SIT, and they meet three or four times a year.

SIT fosters many meaningful relationships and understands the need for strong connections and associations nationally and internationally. There is good liaison with local secondary schools to support students and to assist the transition from secondary to tertiary education. This is obvious in the establishment of Trades Academies and in the STAR[6] courses. SIT fosters close and meaningful strategies to attract international students to the Invercargill campuses. These students may become residents to bolster population growth and provide skills and qualifications to boost the local economy. SIT has many very useful partnerships with other national institutions like Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, Telford Campus of Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre, and Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre. SIT is very active in building and maintaining a local profile. Its name is associated with a variety of sports and cultural events locally, all of which helps to improve the profile of SIT in the area.

SIT also has a focus on maintaining educational standards. It teaches programmes from levels 1-9 inclusive, and has an active research culture to support its delivery of programmes at Master's degree level. It has good strategies for attracting Māori, Pasifika and youth and actively fosters pathways in learning, guiding students to higher programmes of learning and higher levels of skill and knowledge. SIT has a good sense of the developments in local industries and keeps in contact to organise work placements for students in various programmes, and keeps abreast of employment opportunities which are offered through the employment hub on campus.

SIT has an active research output and many of the staff teaching degree-based programmes and other high-level programmes are engaged in research. SIT publishes an annual outline of research outputs, and a chapter on research is added to the annual report. The research output is published in reputable journals and presented as papers at conferences and symposiums. There is also some production-based output in visual and performing arts. SIT runs its own contestable research fund for staff, and this is administered by the SIT academic board. SIT also administers journals and publications for the printing of research outputs, and joint symposiums for the presenting of research findings. SIT is not on the Performance-based Research Fund (PBRF).

The teaching staff are valued at SIT, and many of the staff interviewed had been at the organisation for a long time. There are opportunities for teaching staff to improve their professional and teaching skills and to keep up to date with industry practice through supported professional development, which is linked to the annual

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[6] Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource, which aims to help Year 11-13 students move from school to tertiary study or work.

performance review plan for each staff member. Teaching quality is maintained through the performance reviews and formal observation of teaching skills. Teacher training is required, and training towards qualifications in adult literacy and numeracy education and adult education is encouraged. Some of the teaching staff are engaging with Māori language and cultural studies. SIT engages in a range of teaching methods to suit the learning style and lifestyles of the learners. Where the same programmes are being taught in different national locations there could be more communication to ensure consistency of practice, to compare and analyse achievement results, and share good practice.

While most of the sampled programmes appear to be taught in the way they were approved, NZQA's sampling could not confirm that every programme meets approval requirements. For example, in a few cases there was some evidence of abbreviated delivery, and immersion learning techniques which makes it difficult to see how the credit values are made up. Similar issues were identified in the Deloitte report of 2015 and it is of some concern that NZQA was unable to verify learner hours two years later.

The evaluators also found that some international student files lacked information on how English language scores had been achieved, i.e. IELTS[7] (or equivalent) results transcripts and information that the specific students had been appropriately insured. These aspects are advised by NZQA as being good practice in accordance with the Education Code of Practice 2016.

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.**

SIT manages its compliance responsibilities well. The evaluators are confident that the programmes selected as focus areas are mostly being delivered in accordance with approval conditions. In the case of one or two programmes it is not clear how they meet the requirements of the credit rating, i.e. that they meet the learning hours required. As the students are the responsibility of SIT in these cases, it is important that SIT assures itself that these programmes meet the learning hours/credit value requirements.

SIT is mostly compliant with the Education Code of Practice 2016. There is good knowledge among the relevant staff members of the requirements of the code, and of recent developments and changes. SIT now checks the credentials of its

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[7] International English Language Testing System

overseas recruitment agents carefully. Although SIT has recently been identified by Immigration New Zealand as having an unacceptable visa decline rate of 58 per cent for prospective students from India, it is working to reduce this to 40 per cent by the end of 2017. SIT's overall visa approval rate as at end August 2017 was 86 per cent, so it is doing well. It would be useful if the international student files contained evidence of the necessary insurance and a copy of the English language test results. The international manager has undertaken to heed this advice in the future. SIT conducts an annual review of its practice in relation to the Education Code of Practice 2016, as required. This allows it to evaluate its performance and identify any areas of need. SIT needs to document some of its practice for complying with the Code. For example, there was little documentary evidence of how SIT determines that student accommodation remains fit for purpose over time.

In its dealings with NZQA, SIT has a good history with no applications for approval and accreditation, or changes to approved programmes, being declined. The TEC audit of 2016 had a few recommendations which have been addressed or are in the process of being so. There have been some issues with the NZQA moderation of standards and NZDipBus (New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 6)) courses which have been identified and are being remedied. The moderation of assessment standards administered by industry training organisations was satisfactory in the reports that were supplied on site. Where performance was not satisfactory, , processes for improvement have been put in place.

SIT has a comprehensive quality management system of policies and procedures by which the institute operates. Alterations and adaptations are made by senior management, in consultation with the academic board and Council. A system of electronic monitoring of compliance matters is being established at SIT, which follows all the items of compliance through their reporting cycle and allocates an appropriate staff member to be responsible for making it happen. At Council level there is a finance and risk committee and a risk matrix that is presented at Council meetings. In addition, the organisation has introduced audits, policies and practices to maintain compliance.

Staff members work in defined roles to negotiated standards through their performance reviews. Staff are encouraged to get involved in professional development to keep abreast of their area of speciality and teaching and cultural awareness. They are given mandatory training in the requirements of New Zealand social, commercial and safety legislation. At management level, SIT has appointed a health and safety co-ordinator to supervise and report to the chief executive and the Council.

Focus Areas

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

2.1   Focus area: International students: support and wellbeing

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

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

SIT manages its contingent of international students very well, and the high achievement rates in this group support this view. International students are an important and growing area for SIT. Between 2015 and 2016 international student numbers were boosted by 30 per cent, from 835 to 1,085 EFTS, most of whom came from China, India, South-East Asian countries, Europe, Southern Africa and the United States of America.[8] To further enhance its relationships with some of these regions, SIT has partnerships with several international educational institutions abroad. SIT has increased international student numbers annually for five years as part of a regional Southland strategy with local industries and communities who see the need for skilled workers, population growth and enhanced tourism. Approximately 70 per cent of the international students at SIT stay in New Zealand after completing their studies.

In 2016, international students generally achieved at a level higher than their peers at SIT. The international students' achievement rate for 2016 was 91 per cent compared with the rate for all students (SAC) of 75 per cent. SIT is improving its system for the collection and assimilation of achievement data. This is analysed and understood by the management.

SIT takes care to acclimatise the student and their family to the area and to New Zealand culture. This gives migrant students a better chance to adapt, and local businesses gain qualified, trained workers to contribute to the local economy.

SIT supports its international students well, in many ways. To maintain transparency and fairness, SIT charges international students one fee with all costs included. There is significant awareness of international student requirements with national days being celebrated. The city of Invercargill shows its solidarity, with the mayor being involved in these events. Support is shown by providing airport pick-ups and two weeks of free accommodation. SIT has its own student accommodation available for international students, handy to the main campuses in Invercargill. International students are given an orientation to the campus and a tour of the city centre to locate important amenities. Several gifts are provided to

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[8] Statistics and information taken from the SIT Annual Report 2016, p. 29.

international students on their arrival to help them acclimatise. These include phone cards, cold weather clothing, a satchel and free English language support for the student and their spouse. Driving instruction for New Zealand conditions is organised through the police. SIT maintains a 24-hour 0800 telephone number for students' urgent calls from throughout New Zealand. In 2016, 87 per cent expressed satisfaction with international student services, which is positive.

Generally, the staff are aware of the requirements of the [Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice](#). The teaching and support staff take part in training sessions every semester and at induction, to discuss any Code-related issues that arise and to assist awareness. Homestay hosts are police vetted and accommodation is checked by the support staff. English language requirements must be met before students can enter the programme of study. SIT checks the students' IELTS results or will use its own testing tool to determine the standard of English language. The evaluators found that some international student files were lacking details of insurance and English language test scripts.

In recent years there has been an issue with Immigration New Zealand over the number of student visa applications that have been considered and declined. This indicates that the agents hired to recruit students are not being fastidious in applying Immigration New Zealand criteria. SIT has now placed its overseas agents on carefully monitored contracts. It realises that visa decline rates were unacceptable at about 58 per cent for prospective students from India, and that it needs to meet a target of 40 per cent by end of 2017. SIT is on track to meet this target. As most of the visa declines come from one main catchment of international students, SIT has realised the value of diversified markets and is expanding its range.

2.2 Focus area: Bachelor of Fashion (Level 7)

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

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

Achievement in the Bachelor of Fashion is strong, with course completion rates between 88 and 96 per cent for 2014-2016. The small number of Māori and Pasifika students that are enrolled also achieve well in the programme. Across the three years of the programme, 31 EFTS have been enrolled, and the programme staff know their students well and have a good understanding of their achievement.

There is strong value for graduates and employers. Graduates from 2014 to 2016 have been tracked and it is evident that a significant number move to relevant employment. Employer feedback is positive about the knowledge and skills of the graduates. Opportunities to participate in community events and competitions are also valued by the students and members of the community. Key teaching staff are active in research, with some of this research directly related to improving the

Final Report

quality of the programme's delivery. With only one full-time staff member, quality-assured outputs are low.

Programmes are current and well linked to industry. This is supported by a programme manager with extensive industry experience and an industry advisory committee that meets regularly. In addition, students visit industry workplaces, textile wholesalers, museum exhibits and events including the World of Wearable Art in Wellington, New Zealand Fashion Week in Auckland and Dunedin iD Fashion Week. Students valued these trips for the understanding they gained of what is happening in the field of fashion across the country. There is a good array of facilities and technology available to the learners to support the development of their knowledge and skills.

There is useful self-assessment evident through the annual programme reports and tutor reflections on course student feedback. A big change to the programme made in 2016 was a shift to block mode delivery. This change was carefully monitored and improvements have been made in 2017 to ensure the workload is manageable. A shift from module-based to project-based learning is planned in the future. Another development has been through the engagement of the programme with a local theatre company to manufacture the costumes for their productions. The process of researching and producing costumes, followed by a debrief from the producer and actors was a useful 'real-world' experience for the students. This experience will be built on in 2018.

Students receive clear guidance for their assessments and marking schedules, and rubrics are used to make levels of performance clear. Students were positive about the support they received from their tutors, including extensive feedback on returned assessments. There was evidence of useful internal and external post-assessment moderation, although documentation of pre-assessment moderation could be strengthened. There are effective pathways into the programme with many students noting the value of the certificate programme to prepare them for the rigour of degree-level study. The programme has a relationship with a private training establishment in Auckland, and five Pasifika students have moved from there to study in Invercargill. To support a smooth transition of these students, the programme manager visited the private training establishment and met with the students' families. Accommodation was provided initially, and for those who require extra support, the programme uses peer tutors. These students are positive about their experience.

The biggest challenge for the programme is to increase the number of students enrolled as the programme and facilities have the capacity to grow. The programme is well managed, with staff engaged in ongoing professional development and systematic performance reviews. This boutique programme supports positive outcomes for graduates who are ready to engage in industry with a strong understanding of the design and production aspects of fashion.

2.3 Focus area: Postgraduate Diploma in Health Science

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 postgraduate programme provides a professional development pathway for registered nurses. The programme has been designed and kept up to date with input from industry and is supported by an active industry advisory committee. Feedback from stakeholders is positive, with evidence that the SIT programme meets their needs, is kept relevant and up to date, and that graduates are valued for their skills, knowledge and demonstrated leadership capability.

Student enrolments have remained strong over the last four years, with the great majority of the 80+ students studying part-time. Staff counsel students to make them aware of the workload associated with the programme and advise them to do no more than two papers per year. In 2016 these part-time students equated to 21 EFTS. Students are required to be working at least 0.4 FTE to enable them to complete the clinical components of the programme. Course completions have been strong – 90.8 per cent in 2015 and 90.4 per cent in 2016 – and qualification completions continue to increase in line with the part-time nature of most students' study pathway. The programme is part of the zero fees scheme and students can access funding from the district health board to cover their materials fees and study time.

Very few students identify as Māori or Pasifika in this programme so it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons of achievement rates. The programme is delivered in blended mode with a mix of online and workshop delivery. Staff have identified that for many students returning to study there is a need for academic upskilling, so in 2017 the orientation day was made compulsory. Academic writing and referencing are covered in this.

There is a strong culture of staff monitoring student progress using the student analytics available through the student management system. Students who do not access the materials on Blackboard[9] are followed up and, where necessary, referred to academic support. One-to-one support is provided to students who are struggling, and students are encouraged to form study buddies or use the programme's mentoring system.

Students felt they were well supported and that staff were available via email to answer queries or concerns. Library support is available to students and there is a

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[9] An online programme for monitoring attendance, achievement, etc.

24/7 help desk for issues related to accessing the online materials. Students commented positively on the quality of the library service.

Graduates spoken to commented on the confidence and skills and knowledge they had gained from undertaking the programme and that completion had enabled them to progress in their careers and/or to progress to further studies. Graduates are tracked and the staff take an interest in how many go on to Master's study and/or the nurse practitioner programme.

There is strong programme leadership and a staff culture of research, reflective practice, collaboration and professionalism which ensures the programme and teaching remain current and relevant. Guest lecturers from the district health board and the wider profession are used to contribute to programme delivery. The programme is monitored by the Nursing Council and reports demonstrate that it is meeting all requirements. There is a strong moderation practice in place with external moderators regularly moderating in line with the five-year moderation plan. The programme is well resourced and staff commented that they had access to research and professional development time and participated in decisions relating to equipment, learning resources and materials.

2.4   Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Animal Care (Level 3)

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

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

As the New Zealand Certificate in Animal Care is a new programme for 2017, achievement rates are not yet available. The programme is delivered by both distance (SIT2LRN) and face to face. It replaces the Certificate in Basic Animal Care Science (Level 2) and while not strong, achievement for the level 2 programme exceeded that of the overall SIT2LRN completion rates in 2016. Likewise, achievement rates for the certificate have progressed positively toward the SIT2LRN target of 70 per cent, throughout this period.. . SIT also uses a national database and benchmarks favourably against ITPs and the university sector for distance delivery, for which ITPs averaged 60 per cent achievement in 2015.

Table 4. Completion rates for Certificate in Basic Animal Care Science (Level 2) 2015-2016 (SAC and full cost recovery students)

Certificate in Basic Animal Care Science (Level 2)	Target	2016 (201 enrolled)		2015 (188 enrolled)	
	Course completions	Course completions	Qualification completions	Course completions	Qualification completions
SIT2LRN	70%	65%	58%	63%	51%

There is recognised value in the distance delivery method, supported by 91 per cent of the 1,721 (47 per cent) responses to the student satisfaction survey in 2016, that indicated overall satisfaction with the SIT2LRN processes. This is an improvement from 87 per cent in 2015. The evaluators noted the lower satisfaction rates on areas like advice, support and assessments within the SIT2LRN faculty. Support mechanisms are available for SIT2LRN students, assisted by the newly established student liaison officer as a key contact between programmes and distance students. SIT2LRN resources and handbooks guide students through the online format and learning tools. Distance delivery assists students in full-time employment, or who are located at a distance from the SIT campuses.

Student feedback indicates that SIT2LRN suits students who like to work independently, with limited contact, and are happy without additional support. For the Certificate in Basic Animal Care Science, 80 per cent and 75 per cent respectively for student feedback survey 1 and 2 agreed that they were getting a lot out of SIT2LRN, could see the value in what they were doing, and were enjoying the programme. However, comparing the satisfaction in this programme through the faculties that deliver it, SIT2LRN had the lowest rating.

The facilitator uses a system for tracking of student submissions and feedback by intake, as this allows her to compare intakes. All data from this is used as required by SIT's quality management system. The facilitator has vast experience and networks in the field of animal care. The efficacy, development and currency of facilitator knowledge is managed through internal training through mandatory professional development. However, there is limited capacity for the facilitation and overseeing of learning for both the level 3 New Zealand certificate and the remaining level 2 certificate students, with currently only one facilitator for over 200 learners in nine intakes throughout the course of a year. It is not clear that the facilitator has the support to help manage the high workload.

2.5 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Cookery (Level 3)

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

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

Achievement in the New Zealand Certificate in Cookery was strong in 2016, with course completions sitting at 95 per cent for SAC-funded learners and 100 per cent for Youth Guarantee and international students. This compares with 84 per cent and 76 per cent for SAC-funded learners who participated in the old National certificate programme in 2014 and 2015. The shift in achievement is attributed to a move away from unit standards. Programme staff track individual learner achievement closely and understand how the different cohorts are progressing. They show a good understanding of the reasons why some learners have not been retained. There was a variation in completion rates for the second semester of

2016 in the various reports and print-outs for the programme, which at first made it difficult to see what was happening.

There is implied value for the graduates in the fundamental cookery knowledge and skills they have learned, with the majority progressing to level 4 and a smaller number to the level 5 New Zealand Diploma in Cookery (Advanced). There is good evidence that students that follow that pathway are sought after in industry and gain relevant employment. Outcomes data could be strengthened with a systematic process to monitor those who progress from level 3 to relevant study at level 4 and how well they meet the graduate profile.

The students engage with their study with a good mix of practice and theory. The facilities are well appointed, although an increase in student numbers means the resources are used across six days to ensure everyone gets the necessary kitchen time. Programme staff have strong industry experience and continue to engage with the sector through the industry advisory committee, guest lectures, industry events and, for the higher-level students, work experience placements. Student class time is planned and structured and literacy and numeracy activities are embedded. Adult literacy and numeracy testing is done, and for those learners at risk an individual learning plan is developed. For those struggling to achieve, extra support is accessed through peer tutoring, Youth Guarantee and international student services. Extra classes are provided to support international learners with their English.

Student feedback about the programme is positive, with over 90 per cent of students surveyed in 2016 agreeing they were satisfied with the programme, the teaching and the learning environment. Students spoken to by the evaluation team were positive about the feedback they received on their assessments, and it is evident that tutors reflect on assessments to understand where extra teaching needs to occur. Internal moderation is occurring across both the Invercargill and Queenstown campuses. The programme has decided to move away from working with City and Guilds and it is important that alternate external moderation partners are established.

The programme is well managed, and the programme manager has been busy to ensure consistency of delivery across two campuses. However, tutor observations and moderation of practical assessments and ongoing professional development for staff support consistency across the sites.

2.6 Focus area: Trades Academy

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

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

The evaluation team focused on the Trades Academy, Hokonui Tertiary High School, that SIT facilitates at its Gore campus in Southland. This is a well-run facility which gives good results for the students, local high schools and the local community. SIT funded the first year in 2013 as a pilot programme, and the Ministry of Education funded 2014-2016 as part of a Youth Guarantee pilot programme. In 2017, Trades Academy funding was secured. The Hokonui Tertiary High School was developed as a joint venture in Gore in 2013 between SIT, a number of secondary schools, the Hokonui Rūnanga, community leaders, local authorities, and Telford Campus of Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre as part of a community youth initiative. The students are from local secondary schools and attend one day per week for a year.

The Gore campus facilitates three subject options for the 35 students currently enrolled: salon skills, engineering and basic hospitality. The requirement is that students achieve at least 20 credits towards their NCEA completion. Many of the students achieve this, and the evaluators were told that the rate of attainment is faster at the Trades Academy than at secondary school.

Achievement and value in the programmes are measured in several ways and these are tracked by SIT. Among the valued outcomes are continued engagement in the education system, re-immersion in the secondary school system, achievement of NCEA levels, achievement of unit standards towards trade qualifications, advancement to employment or further training, and the acquisition of soft skills. The students also learn work skills and develop as people. These are all regarded as positive outcomes by SIT and the secondary schools.

Completion of the 20 credits is the main yardstick by which achievement is measured. There has been a general rise in completions from 2015 to 2016 as shown in Table 5, showing that modifications in the delivery of the programme are generally working.

Table 5. Trades Academy programme completion rates – Gore Campus[10]

Programme	2015 %	2016 %
Engineering	100	69
Hospitality	50	90
Salon Skills	70	100

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[10] These figures were supplied by SIT to the EER team during the visit.

Final Report

The strands in the Trades Academy programme allow the student to get practical experience, client engagement and involvement in project work. Engineering students work on a go-cart project, culminating in a race day. Hospitality students gain catering experience at a local hotel and conference centre, and salon skills students enter local hairdressing competitions. Feedback from leaving graduates and employers is mostly positive and endorses the value of the learning. However, the long-term value of the programme could be explored further by gaining longitudinal feedback from graduates at intervals after they leave.

The students are well supported in their Trades Academy learning. SIT allocates some of its best teachers to the programme, to support the learning and keep the learners engaged. Students are transported to the Gore campus by their high schools to attend class. Literacy and numeracy is integrated into the learning and has relevant practical applications to the work. The small class sizes allow for a lot of one-to-one tuition to meet individual student needs. Readers/writers are available for assessments if required.

The assessment materials for this programme are developed by the industry training organisations (Service IQ and Competenz). The materials are pre-moderated and those that are developed in-house are moderated by an industry expert before use. Internal post-assessment moderation takes place by peer tutors within the department.

The programmes are very much in line with the mission statement of the institute. There is very good management support for the programme, which also has the support of a consortium of seven high schools. The Gore community is very supportive as shown in the mayor of Gore's statement that the level of local petty crime had diminished since the advent of the programme. An effective advisory board containing school principals and local industry advises on developments. The board meets monthly.

The evaluators found that the subject options are being taught in accordance with the approval conditions. The subjects are nested within larger qualifications to provide a pathway and do not intend to meet all the credit requirements of these qualifications. Students are required to attend 80 per cent of the programme, with attendance being carefully monitored. There is a strong emphasis on health and safety awareness in the programme strands because of the use of tools, chemicals, gases and the like.

2.7 Focus area: Certificate in Construction (Level 3)

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

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

This 120-credit programme is made up of unit standards. Successful completion leads to the SIT Certificate in Construction. This programme is delivered from several SIT campus sites including those in Invercargill, Christchurch and Queenstown. Teaching teams across campuses share teaching and assessment materials. The programme attracts strong enrolments, although class intakes are capped at 22, and course completions are high.

Table 6. Certificate in Construction (Level 3) course completions

	2013	2014	2015	2016
EFTS	141.4	118.9	88.0	74.5
Course completions	76%	82%	87%	80%

As a rule, there are multiple intakes starting across the year to meet student demand, and completions vary across cohorts. Māori generally achieve well; however, the achievements rates vary between years. In 2015 Māori achieved at a higher rate than all students, but in 2016 the achievement rate for Māori fell below that for non-Māori and the gap was large. Student numbers are small, however, with 14 enrolled in Invercargill in 2016 and nine in 2015. There are very few Pasifika students at the Invercargill campus – two in 2015 and three in 2016. The different delivery sites monitor their programme delivery, but practice in sharing outcome reflections across delivery sites is not yet consistent.

An interview at enrolment has been introduced in 2017 because of poor completion rates for some cohorts in 2016. The interview is used to ensure students are aware of the programme requirements and have the motivation to complete their studies. Students undertake literacy and numeracy assessments at the start of their programme, and the results are used to target support. There is evidence of gains in capability at completion of the programme, particularly in numeracy levels. Student learning is planned so that students are exposed to learning tasks matched to their abilities. They start in the workshop and progress to a house building site when they have the skills and health and safety awareness required.

Student satisfaction levels are high and interviewed students commented positively on the programmes and the teaching. They particularly commended the mix of theory and practice and the opportunity to apply their learning in work experience which is an encouraged, although not formal, part of the programme. Staff are in contact with employers and assist students to gain work experience when necessary. The programme staff and students have close involvement with the local community through the building of houses for such charities as Hospice Southland and Gore Women's Refuge. This provides the students with a worthwhile context in which to practise real-world skills.

Final Report

Stakeholders interviewed commented positively on the skills students demonstrated, but also commented on the need for students/graduates to have good time-management skills. Such advice is incorporated into the learning. There are active advisory committees who meet at least twice a year, with each campus having their own committee to ensure connection and relevance to their region's needs. There is a strong relationship with the industry training organisation. Graduates are successful in gaining employment and many go on to apprenticeships. Staff commented that many of the students who withdraw without completing do so because they have gained a job, which is seen as a positive outcome.

There have been some issues relating to ensuring the teaching and assessment materials used across delivery sites are consistent and that moderation is effective in ensuring assessment is valid, consistent, reliable and fair. These issues have been identified by management and there is an improvement plan in place with evidence that it is being effective. Awareness of health and safety issues associated with drug use have led to training being provided to staff on how to detect and deal with students who may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Invercargill teaching staff demonstrate a strongly collegial approach to programme delivery, and there is evidence of engaging in effective reflective practice linked to continuous improvement. New staff are inducted and supported to gain the skills to be effective teachers, and all teaching staff have access to and are encouraged to engage in professional development. All Invercargill teaching staff have or are studying towards adult teaching qualifications including the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education.

The programme is well resourced and supported by a passionate management team.

2.8 Focus area: Project Management – Certificates level 4 and Diplomas level 5 and 6

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

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

This suite of programmes includes the 70-credit level 4 National certificate, the 60-credit New Zealand Certificate in Project Management introduced in 2016 via SIT2LRN, the 120-credit level 5 National diploma, and the 120-credit level 6 SIT diploma. The programmes are delivered in two modes, blended with online and face-to-face workshops at the Christchurch campus or fully online through SIT2LRN.

Student achievement varies across delivery mode and across programme as shown in Table 7.

Final Report

Table 7. Project Management EFTS and completions 2015-2016

Programme	Delivery	EFTS (all)		Course completions	
		2015	2016	2015	2016
National certificate level 4	Christchurch	54.96	33.2	66%	81%
National certificate level 4	SIT2LRN	14.5	61.4	89%	58%
New Zealand certificate level 4	SIT2LRN	N/A	10.2	N/A	95%
National diploma level 5	Christchurch	84.8	39.2	50%	51%
	SIT2LRN	16.1	47.3	75%	71%
SIT diploma level 6	Christchurch	16.0	24.0	94%	79%
	SIT2LRN	9.8	14.5	82%	53%

While the certificate programme and level 6 diploma delivered in Christchurch show good achievement, the level 5 diploma does not. SIT2LRN achievement also varies, with only two programmes in 2016 meeting or exceeding the 70 per cent completion target. Larger cohort sizes appear to be in correlation with poorer completions, and the Christchurch teacher noted that he had found it difficult to teach large classes, particularly as students did not have the motivation required to manage the workload associated with the delivery model. Facilitators (tutors) can access data on the usage of Blackboard through the student management system and use this to monitor student engagement, but the extent to which this is used or is effective varies across delivery mode.

The certificate and diploma programmes are delivered in blended mode, and the hours of learning are tailored to student needs, enabling students to complete their programme, studying while also working at the same time. Graduates commented that this met their needs as they felt they would not have completed if they had to study over a longer period. As a result of this finding, an interview process was introduced at enrolment to ensure all students are aware of the programme requirements.

The two delivery modes are taught and managed independently of each other under two different management structures. One tutor is responsible for delivering the Christchurch programmes, supported by a dedicated learner support person. The manager of each delivery mode completes their own annual self-evaluation of the delivery of the programmes under their management. However, there is not a review that compares the outcomes of these programmes to each other. There were some differences in the figures provided to the evaluators which made it hard to gain a consistent picture of the delivery and achievement of the programmes. Students and graduates from the blended Christchurch delivery commented that the programmes were relevant and valuable, although some who were interviewed commented on the jump in workload between level 4 and level 5, with one commenting that he dropped out as he could not manage this. Graduates commented that doing the programme had enabled them to apply their learning to

work and they gained confidence in their ability to take on new roles and challenges.

The Christchurch delivery of the level 4 programme was implemented following the earthquake and consultation with key companies engaged in the rebuild. There is no advisory committee in place but the tutor regularly meets with companies in the region and maintains the necessary networks to ensure the programme materials are relevant, current and lead to meaningful outcomes.

The certificate and diploma programmes have high student satisfaction levels, particularly for the blended delivery mode. The student sample for student satisfaction covering the SIT2LRN delivery for 2016 was very small, making it difficult to draw definitive conclusions.

Internal moderation is undertaken according to the five-year moderation plan, although only one unit standard has been externally moderated in recent years. Some issues of consistency of marking have been identified through moderation, but reporting of actions resulting from moderation are not well documented. A facilitators' workshop for tutors in the SIT2LRN programmes is held in Invercargill annually and facilitators are encouraged to attend. This provides opportunities for staff to share learnings about their programmes, to be updated on institutional developments, and to take part in workshops to improve teaching practice. Moderation training has been provided at the facilitators' workshop, as has instruction on the use of student data and analytics through the student management system.

The staff teaching on SIT2LRN programmes are part-time and widely distributed across New Zealand and, in some cases, off-shore. They are supported via regular contact with the programme manager, newsletters and online information, and can access research support where this is negotiated. Staff interviewed commented positively on the support provided to them.

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Southern Institute of Technology:

1. Improve analysis and use of achievement data to identify trends over time that will be useful in programme development and improvement.

2. Develop and implement a strategy of enhanced consistency of practice across the various sites, especially where the same programme is being taught. This will enable consistency of processes so that valid data can be compared and good practice can be identified and shared.

3. Develop clarity and consistency in internal and external moderation systems, so that every effort is being made to ensure that assessment is fair, sufficient, valid and consistent, and that this is the primary objective for conducting moderation.

4. Further develop the academic procedures and monitoring of SIT2LRN programmes, to provide more clarity and consistency of processes, and explore how the learning experience and achievement rates can be improved.

5. Foster relationships with more local Pasifika organisations to support the Pasifika students at SIT.

6. Develop a process to gain systematic assurance of compliance with the learning hour requirements of the programmes delivered, or delivered by others on the ITP's behalf.

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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Final Report