

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Western Institute of Technology at  
Taranaki

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 22 August 2012

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# Purpose of this Report

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

## Introduction

### 1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT)
Location:	20 Bell Street, New Plymouth
Type:	Institute of Technology/Polytechnic (ITP)
First registered:	1972 (as Taranaki Polytechnic)
Number of students:	Domestic: 2006 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) (2011) (Self Study, 2012) International: 87 EFTS
Number of staff:	158 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff (2011) (Self Study, 2012)
Scope of active accreditation:	A wide range of qualifications, ranging from level 1 to degrees. For a full description, refer to: <a href="http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/details.do?providerId=601702001">www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/details.do?providerId=601702001</a>
Sites:	WITT has one main campus at Bell Street, New Plymouth, at which all programmes are delivered apart from rural programmes offered in other towns and localities of the region through its partnership with Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre; and te Reo Māori programmes delivered by Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust in New Plymouth.
Distinctive characteristics:	WITT is a relatively small ITP servicing Taranaki. It has a wholly owned subsidiary, New Zealand Institute of Highway Technology (NZIHT), established in 1995.
Recent significant changes:	WITT has come out of a period in the recent past when its strained financial position led to the appointment of a Crown Commissioner on the dissolution of the WITT Council. The financial recovery of WITT since the last mid-term academic quality review, undertaken by ITP Quality, has been

significant. There has been a marked improvement in financial performance, with an average surplus of 7 per cent over the past three years. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) has now assessed WITT as being on a 'low risk trajectory', and Crown intervention has ceased. There is a \$1.75m campus development programme planned for the next three years, to substantially improve and upgrade facilities on the site.

WITT's three key objectives which are driving the aim to remain both academically and financially viable are: consolidation of core business, financial sustainability, and community engagement. The Investment Plan 2011-2013 stated that the recent academic and financial success that WITT has enjoyed has been 'driven by institutional determination to meet these objectives'.

Previous quality assurance history: The last academic quality assurance undertaken at WITT was an audit in 2009, where WITT was granted Quality Assured Status for a period of four years. A mid-term quality review of WITT was conducted in 2010 and focused on WITT's developing self-assessment capability, where it was concluded that WITT was using effective and 'well-advanced' self-evaluation and review processes to maintain its Quality Assured Status.

In 2011, NZQA and the Nursing Council of New Zealand approved the reviewed and redeveloped Bachelor of Nursing programme at WITT and accredited WITT to deliver it.

Regular monitoring of both the older Bachelor of Nursing and the Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Highways) has been ongoing since those programmes were initially approved.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The mandatory focus areas were pre-determined as:

- Governance, management, and strategy
- Achievement and support of international students.

The former was addressed through meetings with the chief executive and the executive team, the academic board, the Council, and representatives of external agencies with which the Council and WITT have relationships. The latter was addressed through meetings with the manager and staff of Student Support Services, the director of marketing, managers involved with international student liaison and support, and a group of international students. Both mandatory areas

were also addressed in conversations undertaken with programme managers and team leaders.

The programme focus areas selected for the external evaluation and review (EER) are detailed below.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>2011 EFTS</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Cluster: NZ Diploma in Engineering (Civil); Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Highways); Graduate Diploma in Engineering (Highways)	62 9 6	New Plymouth	These NZIHT programmes are delivered through part-time distance learning, with block courses in four sites across the country (Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch). NZIHT is a wholly owned subsidiary of WITT.
Bachelor of Nursing	132	New Plymouth	A newly approved degree. Year one students are in the new programme; year two and three students are in the old (WITT) Bachelor of Nursing programme.
Pōkaitahi Mana Tangata (Empowering People) (Level 2)	21	New Plymouth	Taranaki Rugby League Education Academy. This programme aims to encourage young people into further study or employment options. Some learners are funded through the TEC Youth Guarantee programme.
Cluster: Certificate in General Farm Skills (Level 2); National Certificate in Farming Skills (Level 3)	29 10	Stratford	These programmes are delivered by Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre under a collaborative agreement with WITT, at the Taratahi Stratford campus and at designated farms in the area.
Cluster: Pōkaitahi Taiahoaho Taumata Wha (Certificate in Kaumatua Skills (Level 4)); Pokairua Hopuapua Reo (Diploma in Oral Taranaki Language (Level 6))	16 13	New Plymouth New Plymouth	This programme is for kaumatua and kuia, for work with iwi groups, central and local government, tourism, kohanga reo. Full-time/part-time. This programme is a progression option from the lower-level programmes. One-year full-time.
Certificate in Process Operations (Oil and Gas) (Level 3)	18	New Plymouth	This programme is industry-based, with a significant amount of sponsored work placement (one year full-time). Tutors are associated with an industry-based private training establishment (Alric Training) and are contracted by WITT.
WITT Certificate in Hairdressing (Level 3)	9	New Plymouth	The programme is two years full-time (including flexible/blended delivery).

The programmes selected as the focus areas are representative of all levels of programmes delivered by WITT, and generally representative of equivalent full-time student numbers in programmes throughout the institute. The focus areas also

include two partnership arrangements with other training providers: Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre, for the farming skills cluster; and Te Reo o Taranaki Trust, for the Māori language programme cluster. The delivery by distance and block of programmes by WITT's wholly owned subsidiary, NZIHT, was selected as a focus area because of its different delivery and the separate management structure from that of WITT. NZIHT has important organisational and quality assurance links with the parent organisation. The Certificate in Process Operations (Oil and Gas) is representative of a programme that is strategically very important for Taranaki, with significant industry links and sponsorship of work experience for the learners.

The Pōkaitahi Mana Tangata programme is part of WITT's response to meeting the need to improve employment and further education outcomes for youth in Taranaki, a strategic priority for WITT. The Certificate in Hairdressing is an example of a programme that had recently been assessed (2011) as being only marginally viable, but has significantly improved its performance in 2012. Factors influencing this change were looked for in the EER. The newly approved Bachelor of Nursing differs significantly from the older Bachelor of Nursing, and addresses community needs for graduate nurses as well as reflecting the revised standards of the Nursing Council of New Zealand. The two programmes are concurrently delivered; this aspect was also considered in the EER.

### 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 EER was conducted by four evaluators over a five-day period. The evaluation was conducted at the Bell Street, New Plymouth campus of WITT, with visits undertaken to NZIHT (5 Young Street, New Plymouth), Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre at Stratford, and Te Reo o Taranaki Trust (New Plymouth).

Evaluative conversations were held with the executive management team, representatives of the Council, the academic board, senior managers and staff of relevant service areas, programme leaders, teaching staff, and students. These conversations were complemented by discussions with members of advisory committees and employers of graduates in the focus areas. A range of documents, records, and databases was also reviewed, for triangulation of conversations.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT)**.

WITT has achieved a very high level of educational performance in terms of all of its strategic aims for performance. These centre around the promotion of engaging, innovative, and flexible learning opportunities that are responsive to a diverse market and its community; the provision of an effective and rewarding academic experience for all learners; and the production of graduates who are prepared for employment or higher education and who can make a positive contribution to today's global society (WITT Academic Strategy).

WITT graduates are gaining employment (85 per cent)<sup>1</sup> and/or continuing in further study (75 per cent). A high percentage gain qualifications (72 per cent) or complete courses (77 per cent), and a high percentage of graduates (93 per cent of the total) indicated that their qualification had made a positive contribution to their own life by enhancing the social, economic, cultural, or community aspects of their lives. Additionally, 89 per cent of WITT graduates (2008-2011) felt that their study at WITT had helped to improve their confidence, 64 per cent felt that their reading and language skills were enhanced, and 81 per cent said that study at WITT had helped them to value their perspectives of other people (Graduate Destination Survey report, WITT, 2012). WITT's delivery of two degrees – the newly approved Bachelor of Nursing and its antecedent, the older Bachelor of Nursing, and the Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Highways) – are fostering the creation and dissemination of knowledge through the steadily increasing research outputs of staff.

For 2011, WITT's course completion rate of 77 per cent (Student Achievement Component (SAC)-funded and EFTS-weighted) is ahead of the national median for ITP course completions (75 per cent), and the qualification completion rate of 72 per cent is well ahead of the ITP national median (56 per cent). The TEC performance measures (for course and qualifications completions) show WITT to be demonstrating steady improvements on all measures since 2009. The qualifications completions rate, for example, has risen from 59 per cent in 2010. Retention of learners, as measured by the TEC, has also risen, from 59 per cent to 75 per cent (2010-2011). This very commendable achievement has ranked WITT first out of 20 ITPs for 2011.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The percentages quoted in this paragraph are all from 2011, with reference to the TEC for qualifications and course completions and to the WITT Graduate Destination data 2008-2011.

<sup>2</sup> Updated EPI data from the TEC has been made available since the EER.

WITT's performance in terms of progression of learners to further study is variable depending on the levels at which learners gain qualifications. WITT has analysed its progression data to gain a better picture of what progression means for the institute. The tertiary sector Education Performance Indicator data for WITT shows an overall progression rate of 13 per cent, with low progression rates concentrated at New Zealand Qualifications Framework levels 2 and 3. It has been found that progression rates are low from levels 2 and 3 in particular, because most students at those levels are enrolled in trades education programmes, with no higher qualifications available (terminating programmes), and because of the reduced number of apprenticeships in Taranaki, attributed to the effects of the economic recession. This latter factor has influenced WITT's planning to develop higher-level programmes in some trade areas in order to further encourage trades students to stay in study. The WITT findings with respect to progression from levels 2 and 3 are supported by the 2011 Labour Market and Economic Profile (Infometrics, TEC), which indicates that the greatest demand for work in 2010 in Taranaki was for certificate-level qualifications; approximately 42 per cent of positions in Taranaki require this level of qualification.

WITT has found that there are very high rates of progression for learners completing studies at levels 1 and 4. Although the completion rates for students in level 1 study were low in 2011 (38 EFTS consumed at this level), of those who did complete, 70 per cent progressed to higher study. At level 4, of those who completed, 46 per cent progressed to higher study. The 2010 national progression medians for those two levels were, respectively, 48 per cent and 26 per cent.

A survey of 113 employers (Graduate Destination Survey, WITT, 2012) indicated that 77 per cent of respondents had employed a WITT graduate, who typically stayed in that employment for three years. More than half of the employed graduates worked with the business owner or manager. The survey indicated that most graduates demonstrated skills and knowledge in the area for which they were employed (93 per cent); had the necessary skills for the job (91 per cent); and had made a meaningful contribution to the business (81 per cent). Moreover, 93 per cent of employers would be willing to employ a WITT graduate in the future.

WITT engages with its communities, including Taranaki iwi, through its partnership with Te Reo o Taranaki Trust in the delivery of programmes that will support community and iwi development. WITT's Rautaki Māori strategy has been developed to seek to increase Māori participation in all programmes. This strategy has been developed in conjunction with the WITT Vision and Strategy Document, which has four key 'pillars' (pou) of strategic outcome: the student experience, community partnership and ownership, academic viability and vigour, and financial viability and sustainability.

The evaluation team considers the quality of data and its analysis at WITT to be excellent, with detailed analysis continuously occurring to assure WITT's leadership team and Council that the institute meets its Conversion Agreement, investment plan, and the Tertiary Education Strategy priorities on a continuously improving basis.

The evaluation team is highly confident in the educational performance of WITT because of its excellent achievement in terms of qualifications and employment outcomes, its effective internal benchmarking systems, and its analysis and understanding of the data available. The evaluation team found that there is institute-wide involvement in the achievement of the improvements in outcomes, from small programme teams to senior management. The governance and management support for WITT's educational performance is reflected in a variety of strategies for inclusion of all staff, for matching stakeholder needs, for encouragement of achievement, and for celebration of success.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT)**.

Self-assessment with respect to the extent to which learner and stakeholder needs are met is undertaken primarily through annual programme evaluations, as well as through wider institutional self-assessment procedures such as the Programme Viability Review. The policy and procedures for programme evaluations were approved in 2011 and have been accompanied by a planned enhancement of evaluative capacity throughout the institute. At management level, for example, there is a standing agenda item for self-assessment activities, and outcomes from various evaluations are regularly discussed at that level.

The WITT Scorecard and Dashboard have been developed to report on student achievement to the leadership team, academic board, and Council. Another system that can interrogate the student management system for analysis and reporting purposes is a database search tool which provides up-to-date comparative data (over time and between different student categories) with respect to any type of enrolment or achievement data.

WITT has undertaken a significant research project (WITT Graduate Destination Survey 2008-2011, April 2012) to show the extent to which its graduates are in employment (85 per cent), and further, the extent to which their employment is related to their study at WITT (47 per cent). This aspect of WITT's performance is detailed in section 1.2 of this report.

WITT undertakes internal benchmarking for all programmes through its annual Programme Viability Review. The viability study includes analysis of the programme's performance, with a score for each programme arrived at, using criteria relating to financial viability, educational performance<sup>3</sup>, and strategic

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<sup>3</sup> Key criteria against which educational performance is assessed include: course completions trend 2007-2011, programme completions trend 2007-2011, completions (course and programmes) of under-25-year students, completions (course and programmes) of Māori students, completions (course and programmes) of Pasifika students, progress of literacy/numeracy (levels 1-3 only), research and scholarly activity (levels 4 and above), self-assessment capability/activities, student evaluations/complaints, graduate outcomes.

relevance. Those programmes deemed at risk are then further analysed, with the aim of improving performance and thereby improving the ranking. For example, analysis of the Certificate in Hairdressing showed it to be of marginal viability in 2011. Improvements implemented in 2012, particularly with respect to student support, have contributed to a marked increase in qualification completion. External benchmarking with other TEOs and the industry has confirmed that this programme is now viable, and that its performance compares well with similar programmes delivered elsewhere.

The evaluation team saw many examples within the focus areas that were indicative of the effectiveness of WITT's leadership in the achievement of excellent performance and in the development of evaluative capacity across the institute.

Within WITT, the Community of Practice is a group of trained facilitators who work independently within departments or programmes. This self-assessment strategy appears to have enhanced the quality of the first round (2011) of self-evaluation (self-assessment) reports. A self-assessment database, accessible by all staff, records all events and related documentation, acting as both a repository of data and a professional development resource. The self-evaluation reports and associated critiques for every programme go into this database, and key word searches can be done. For example, a check on 'orientation' would enable communication with other programmes where orientation had been defined as an issue of either concern or strength.

The *Reflections* newsletter to all staff is a self-assessment record, and also a self-assessment 'coaching strategy'. The newsletter enables programme teams to learn from the self-assessment activity of others as well as to inform their own practice. This newsletter is good practice and indicative of a strongly led and developing self-assessment culture.

Capability in self-assessment is already effective across the institute and well developed. There is a methodology for self-assessment of all programmes on an ongoing basis, with self-assessment of governance and management areas (for example the academic board, the Council, the research committee, and student support) also occurring. In some areas, for example programmes delivered in partnership with external organisations, self-assessment capability may mature further; however, in all areas it is occurring effectively to date. Findings from all self-assessment activities have been used to generate improvement plans. The variations found in self-assessment capability within individual focus areas are commented on in relevant sections of this report. In time, the full capability of WITT's self-assessment strategies will be able to be demonstrated across all areas of the institute.

# Findings<sup>4</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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**.

WITT graduates are gaining employment (85 per cent of participants in the Graduate Destination Survey, covering the period 2008-2011)<sup>5</sup> and/or continuing in further study (75 per cent); a high percentage gain qualifications (72 per cent) or complete courses (77 per cent); and a high percentage of graduates (93 per cent) indicated that their qualification has made a positive contribution to their own life by enhancing the social, economic, cultural, or community aspects of their lives. Additionally, 89 per cent of WITT graduates from 2008-2011 participating in the survey felt that their study at WITT had helped to improve their confidence, 64 per cent felt that their reading and language skills were enhanced, and 81 per cent said that study at WITT had helped them to value their perspectives of other people (Graduate Destination Survey, WITT, April 2012).

The criteria used by WITT to measure and compare its overall educational performance with other ITPs include the TEC data (Education Performance Indicators), in particular as they reflect the performance of all ITPs, and the key performance indicators of WITT's 2009 Conversion Agreement with the Crown, which requires the institute to demonstrably enable the conversion of its debt to the Crown to equity. Further, WITT measures the extent to which its performance is aligned to the Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015.

The TEC data (Education Performance Indicators) for WITT demonstrates convincingly that learners are completing courses and gaining qualifications. For 2011, WITT's course completion rate of 77 per cent (SAC-funded and EFTS-weighted) is ahead of the national medium for course completions (75 per cent), and its qualification completion rate of 72 per cent is well ahead of the national median (56 per cent). The TEC performance measures (for course and qualifications completions) show WITT to be demonstrating steady improvements on all measures since 2009. The qualification completions rate, for example, has risen from 59 per cent in 2010.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

<sup>5</sup> The percentages quoted in this paragraph are all from 2011, with reference to the TEC for qualifications and course completions, and to the WITT Graduate Destination data 2008-2011.

<sup>6</sup> Updated TEC EPI data has been made available since the EER.

Retention of learners, as measured by the TEC, has also risen, from 59 per cent in 2010 to 75 per cent in 2011. This very commendable achievement has ranked WITT very highly among ITPs (first out of 20 ITPs).

WITT has analysed its progression data in comparison with the tertiary sector Education Performance Indicator data, including a very recent TEC re-calculation of the WITT data, which shows an overall progression rate of 13 per cent, with low progression rates concentrated at levels 2 and 3. Analysis and evaluation has been undertaken by WITT to gain a better picture of what progression means for the institute. First, almost all of the 'terminating'<sup>7</sup> programmes lie within levels 2 and 3. Factors that WITT believes have contributed to the overall decline in its progression rates include: progression rates are low from levels 2 and 3 in particular, mostly because students at these levels are enrolled in terminating programmes, and there are reduced numbers of apprenticeships in Taranaki, attributed to the recession (data supplied by WITT). This latter factor has influenced WITT's planning to develop higher-level programmes in some trade areas, to further encourage trades students to stay in study. For example, there are plans to gain approval for the level 3 automotive programme, to enable graduates of the level 2 programme to re-engage with study, as WITT is aware that fewer of them are gaining apprenticeships than in the past.

Although the completion rates for students in level 1 study were low in 2011 (38 EFTS at this level), of those who did complete, 70 per cent progressed to higher study. At level 4, of those who completed, 46 per cent progressed to higher study. The 2010 national progression medians for these two levels were, respectively, 48 per cent and 26 per cent.

WITT has found that its international students as a whole achieve to a higher level than do all students. The rate of course completion of international students in 2011 was 87 per cent, compared with the overall course completion rate at WITT of 78 per cent. WITT has targeted its marketing to international students generally in one Asian country (India), and within that has promoted two programmes in particular, with a focus on recruiting students who have related prior qualifications. Within the Diploma in Professional Cookery (Level 5), for example, the 86 per cent course completion rate (2011) was significantly influenced by the almost 100 per cent pass rate for international students within the programme cohort.

WITT has undertaken a significant research project (WITT Graduate Destination Survey 2008-2011, April 2012), to show the extent to which its graduates are in employment (85 per cent), and further, the extent to which their employment is

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<sup>7</sup> There are several programmes at WITT which do not lead to related programmes at a higher level. The majority of these are at level 2 or 3, and include trades areas such as Hairdressing (level 3), Automotive Trades (level 2), Certificate in Electrical Skills (Level 3), Certificate in Welding (Level 3).

related to their study at WITT (47 per cent). This aspect of WITT's performance is detailed in section 1.2.

WITT undertakes internal benchmarking for all programmes through its annual Programme Viability Review. The viability study includes analysis of the programme's performance, with a score for each programme arrived at, using key criteria relating to financial viability, educational performance<sup>8</sup>, and strategic relevance. Those programmes deemed at risk are then further analysed, with the aim of improving performance and adjusting the ranking.

For example, the Certificate in Hairdressing (Level 3) was assessed in 2010 as having marginal viability. Following that conclusion, a one-year programme (Certificate in Hairdressing Skills (Level 2)) was developed to enable an earlier exit from the level 3 programme for students who could then begin an apprenticeship and become employed. The hairdressing programme has been externally benchmarked in consultation with the Hairdressing Industry Training Organisation (HITO), mostly in terms of student satisfaction. WITT has also been in contact with other ITP providers of similar programmes to share completion rates and discuss remedial strategies, as low completion rates in hairdressing is a national issue.

WITT measures its performance in relation to the Tertiary Education Strategy priorities, which include increasing the number of young people (under 25 years) achieving qualifications at level 4 and above, Māori and Pacific people achieving at higher levels, and young people moving successfully from school into tertiary education. In 2011, the average course completion rate for Māori students at level 4 was 80 per cent (for all students it was 76 per cent), and at level 7 for Māori students, course completions were 91 per cent (93 per cent for all students). In 2011, 39 per cent of all EFTS identified themselves as Māori. For both categories of learners, course completions were higher than the target rate for 2011. Students under 25 years also achieve highly (75 per cent average course completion (level 4) in 2011, and at level 7, 96 per cent). There are few Pacific students at WITT (2 per cent of the total student number); they achieve at the average rate for all students at levels 4 and 7, and slightly under at levels 5 and 6.

The WITT Scorecard and Dashboard have been developed to report on student achievement to the leadership team, academic board, and Council. Another system that can interrogate the student management system for analysis and reporting purposes is a database search tool for programme managers which can provide up-to-date comparative data (over time, and between different student categories) with respect to any type of enrolment or achievement data.

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<sup>8</sup> Criteria against which educational performance is assessed include: course completions trend 2007-2011, programme completions trend 2007-2011, completions (course and programmes) of under-25-year-old students, completions (course and programmes) of Maori students, completions (course and programmes) of Pasifika students, progress of literacy/numeracy (levels 1-3 only), research and scholarly activity (levels 4 and above), self-assessment capability/activities, student evaluations/complaints, graduate outcomes.

There is substantial evidence throughout the institute of excellent achievement, whether in terms of the TEC Education Performance Indicators or in learners achieving employment outcomes. The quality and analysis of data at WITT is excellent, with detailed analysis continuously occurring to assure WITT leadership and governance that the institute meets its Conversion Agreement, investment plan, and the Tertiary Education Strategy priorities on a continuously improving basis. There are few gaps in the development of self-assessment with respect to learner achievement; there is good evidence of a comprehensive approach to self-assessment, although all systems will further mature and develop. Variations found in self-assessment capability within individual focus areas are commented on in the relevant sections of this report.

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

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

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

A survey of 113 employers (Graduate Destination Survey, WITT, April 2012) indicated that 77 per cent of respondents had employed a WITT graduate, who typically stayed in that employment for three years. More than half of the employed graduates worked with the business owner or manager. The survey indicated that most graduates demonstrated skills and knowledge in the area for which they were employed (93 per cent); had the necessary skills for the job (91 per cent); and had made a meaningful contribution to the business (81 per cent). Moreover, 93 per cent of employers indicated that they would be willing to employ a WITT graduate in the future. Of a range of professional attributes, employers rated computer skills most highly, followed by teamwork and interpersonal skills. The survey indicated that employers' needs with respect to these valued skills were being met.

Eighty-five per cent of graduates are in employment after qualifying at WITT. The 2008-2011 Graduate Destination Study undertaken by WITT (April 2011) complements the employer survey undertaken for the same period. Seventy-one per cent of graduates who responded were employed, of which 47 per cent were in an occupation related to their study at WITT. Over 90 per cent of graduates said they would recommend WITT to their colleagues and friends, indicating the value they placed on their study at WITT.

Additionally, 89 per cent of WITT graduates (2008-2011) felt that their study at WITT had helped to improve their confidence, 64 per cent felt that their reading and language skills were enhanced, and 81 per cent said that study at WITT had helped them to value their perspectives of other people (Graduate Destination Survey report, WITT, 2012). Graduates have reported that their well-being, including confidence, literacy, and communication skills, has been improved through their study.

The evaluators found examples within all of the programme focus areas of the extent to which all stakeholders, including learners, value the outcomes of WITT's programme delivery. For example, evaluators heard, from both tutors and industry, that the Certificate in Process Operations (Oil and Gas), which was developed as a response to an ageing workforce in the oil and gas industries in Taranaki, has high value to these companies and to the regional economy. Students within the programme value it highly as providing entry to a good career-change option, and which is well remunerated. Virtually all students gain employment with the process industries.

The 2011 Labour Market and Economic Profile (Infometrics, TEC) indicates that the greatest demand for work in 2010 in Taranaki was for certificate-level qualifications – approximately 42 per cent of positions in Taranaki require this level of qualification. The majority of WITT's 2011 graduates (66 per cent) indicated that they were not continuing their studies at the time they were surveyed, and the 34 per cent who were continuing gave as their main reason the purpose of gaining more specialist skills. Excellent employment outcomes for WITT's certificate-level graduates are indicated by the above findings.

WITT engages with its communities, including Taranaki iwi, through its partnership with Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust in the delivery of programmes that will support community and iwi development. Student feedback from the Taiahoaho programme (Certificate in Kaumatua Skills (Level 4)), for example, confirmed that learners achieve a great sense of confidence and pride, increased proficiency in te reo Māori, increased knowledge of tikanga a Taranaki, greater connectedness to their identity, and awareness of their contribution to their whānau, marae, and iwi. These outcomes are consistent with the four pou of the WITT Rautaki Māori.

There is substantial evidence throughout the institute that the outcomes of course and programme delivery are of high value to learners and other stakeholders. In all of the focus areas considered, WITT has demonstrated that it seeks feedback from, and is highly responsive to, its stakeholders. In all areas, self-assessment is occurring effectively to date, although the evaluators found that there are, as yet, some differences in the development of evaluative capacity among the focus areas of the EER, with variations relating to the demonstration of institute-wide self-assessment strategies.

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

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

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

WITT has identified a number of key contributing factors to its increase in completions and retentions over the past few years. Important among these are the actions now being taken to ensure that potential students are matched with the best possible course or programme options. There is a focus on putting more effort

into ensuring that students are academically prepared so that they can meet the learning requirements of the course into which they wish to enrol. Discussions with students when they are applying for admission are now aimed at ensuring that they are taking the appropriate courses, that they are on the right pathway, and are well informed about their choices. This is in line with the key academic objective of 'having students engaged, prepared and ready to learn' (WITT Academic Strategy).

The embedding of literacy and numeracy testing and provision of additional support has contributed to increased progression rates at all levels. For example, the needs of students without a sufficient maths and science background who wish to enrol in the Bachelor of Nursing are addressed through prior enrolment in an appropriate bridging course or programme. WITT's research into the profile of successful nursing students has indicated that those with higher levels of maths and science are more likely to complete the programme and have better practice outcomes. This demonstrates the commitment of WITT to providing an academic experience 'that enables students to reach their potential' (Academic Objective 6, WITT Academic Strategy). This aspect is discussed further in section 1.5 of this report.

The Council and leadership team have promoted and supported strategies that demonstrate WITT's commitment to matching learner and other stakeholder needs. For example, the posters that have been designed for many programme areas have a theme of 'YOU  $\Rightarrow$  WITT  $\Rightarrow$  WORK'. These are repeated in promotional posters designed for individual programme areas, for example, 'YOU  $\Rightarrow$  WITT  $\Rightarrow$  NURSE. It's that simple'. These posters are displayed throughout the institute and in satellite teaching areas. The evaluation team was informed in some focus areas that the posters have had a positive impact on learners and other stakeholders. This is a good initiative, and the anecdotal comments heard indicate that it is successful in giving learners options to match their longer-term employment needs.

The programmes delivered by WITT are matching community and external stakeholder needs. This is demonstrated clearly by the Programme Viability Review process. There are three key criteria for Programme Viability Review, one of which is the strategic relevance of the programme. Within that criterion, the following are considered: staircasing and pathway, stakeholder connections, reputation with industry, and potential for growth. Each of these factors is explored within the programme evaluation framework, and individual programmes are allocated a score within the viability review process.

The Bachelor of Nursing, for example, scored very highly on the strategic relevance measure. It is the required pathway to employment and to postgraduate study, and its recent redesign is now better providing for community needs with more practical skills in nursing and a greater emphasis on clinical placement. It is strongly supported by community agencies, the profession and employers, including the district health board. Similarly, the programmes delivered by NZIHT have scored very highly on strategic relevance – they provide a clear pathway to higher-level programmes, there is a close association between programme delivery and the industry, and the community needs more graduates in this field.

Other focus areas of the EER demonstrated an excellent matching of programme with the needs of learners and other stakeholders. WITT has successfully matched the learning needs of youth with low school-leaving qualifications in the level 2 programme, Mana Tangata: Empowering People. Students with strong sporting backgrounds, particularly in rugby league, are attracted to the programme which matches their need to succeed in their sporting goals. Goals are set for each learner through the individual learning plan to develop possible pathways to other programmes or employment. Activities within the programme have relevance to the learners. For example, there are noho marae, where learners form their own team and play against other teams in Tainui or the Auckland area. A conscious effort is made to match the learners' interests, and through them to engage the learners in further learning to match their individual learning plans.

As noted above, WITT has effective engagement with its communities. This was evidenced through its partnership with Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust in the delivery of programmes to support community and iwi development. The Taiahoaho programme (Certificate in Kaumatua Skills), for example, is well matched to the needs of the community including Taranaki iwi. There is an identified need to support kaumatua to fulfil their roles in the community, and a need to revitalise te reo Māori in line with the aspirations of Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust. The programme is designed to meet these needs through its marae-based and wānanga style of delivery, and feedback from tutors and students indicates that these needs are still relevant. The evaluators noted that the four pillars (pou), which originate from WITT's Vision and Strategy and are central to the WITT Rautaki Māori, are also demonstrable through the outcomes of the partnership between WITT and Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust.

WITT has excellent systematic processes for identifying the needs of its learners and external stakeholders, and for ensuring that there is a best possible match of learners with courses or programmes, and of programmes with community or industry needs. All focus areas demonstrated a consistently high level of commitment to matching needs and high levels of stakeholder support for the different programmes. Evaluation and self-assessment procedures in place at WITT support internal and external benchmarking, to ensure that programmes remain both current and relevant to learner and stakeholder needs. As noted above, self-assessment is occurring with varying degrees of effectiveness in all areas to date.

Capability in self-assessment is good, although WITT has not yet had time to demonstrate that all of its strategies for increasing capacity in self-assessment are highly effective, resulting in comprehensive understanding of educational performance across the majority of its programmes. The evaluators acknowledge that, throughout WITT, there is good evidence of effective self-assessment, well-supported by both governance and management, being used to understand educational performance and bring about many worthwhile achievements.

## 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

The provision for an effective teaching and learning environment is described within the WITT Academic Strategy, which centres around the promotion of engaging, innovative, and flexible learning opportunities which are responsive to a diverse market and its community; the provision of an effective and rewarding academic experience for all of its learners; and the production of graduates who are prepared for employment or higher education, and who can make a positive contribution to today's global society. Within the strategy there are specific objectives relating to the provision of a positive student experience, investment in professional development, and the development of fit-for-purpose educational pathways.

The evaluation team interviewed learners, tutors, and external stakeholders in all focus areas, and saw institution-wide documentation, such as learner evaluation summaries and the latest programme evaluation reports. The evaluation team was interested to find out the extent to which staff in all areas are supported to undertake effective teaching, the extent to which self-assessment verifies that teaching is effective, and the extent to which effectiveness is both measured and benchmarked internally and externally. In most focus areas, all three aspects were clearly demonstrated, with examples of exemplary performance found, and in all focus areas at least two of these aspects were evidenced.

A personal plan for teaching staff sets key actions and targets, which must link to strategic, operational, and/or departmental objectives, and must also link to adult teaching and learning. The plan sets out the ways in which the actions or targets will be met. For degree-teaching staff, research actions must be detailed, and as agreed to by the school research leader. A personal plan guidebook (2011-2012) provides clear directions for the personal plans. Interviews with tutors, programme managers, and the leadership team, and review of related documents, indicated the effectiveness of the personal plans in informing staff needs for professional development, and in monitoring research outputs.

Professional development days for all staff are planned within the WITT Human Resources and Organisational Development Strategy. The theme of the staff professional development day on 19 April 2012, for example, was 'The positive student experience', with a wide choice of related presentations during the day.

The intranet newsletter *Reflections* contributes to the ongoing culture of self-assessment, and is targeted at staff to assist in the promotion and growth of a self-assessment culture throughout the institute. Staff members are encouraged to engage in self-assessment continuously; the newsletter seeks feedback through team responses to current self-assessment issues or topics. Posters placed throughout the WITT sites are also targeted at staff, for example, 'What have you done today?'. There is substantial evidence throughout the institute that the growth of evaluative capacity is increasingly being promoted to all staff.

The evaluation team found evidence within all focus areas of very effective teaching that was demonstrating coherence with the key academic objectives, particularly those around the provision of an academic experience that enables students to meet their potential, the maintaining by staff of currency and relevance in their own discipline areas, using delivery methods that enable students to have control over their learning, and the provision of opportunities to connect and network with industry (WITT Academic Strategy, Objectives 6, 8, 9 and 11). In this context the delivery of programmes in partnership with other TEOs was taken into account by the evaluation team, to evaluate the extent to which these key objectives are being met.

Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre, for example, delivers a cluster of farming programmes at its site in Stratford and on local farms, in partnership with WITT. The tutors, who are employed by Taratahi and thus subject to the performance expectations and requirements of that organisation, are also able to access professional development opportunities at WITT, and have taken these up. In particular, they have received training in literacy and numeracy testing (the TEC assessment tool) and one is enrolled at WITT in the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education (NCALNE). Tutors who were interviewed believed that their own learning opportunities were enhanced by these professional development opportunities. Taratahi staff are included in all communications with WITT staff that are aimed at promoting a culture of increasing evaluative capacity. The evaluators consider that there is demonstrable growth in evaluative capacity within the partnership; this is commented upon further in section 2.4 of this report.

Staff who are engaged in teaching degrees are, according to WITT records, increasing their research outputs. Within the nursing degree programme there is a well-established research culture, given that a Bachelor of Nursing has been delivered by WITT for some years. Within the revised and recently re-approved Bachelor of Nursing programme, collaborative research has been undertaken, especially during programme development, which has informed the increased emphasis within the new programme on matching community needs for graduate nurses.

A research management plan has been implemented at NZIHT and is monitored by the Research Committee, reporting to the Academic Board, to further encourage a research culture within that organisation. There is an increasing focus on applied research in particular, and the capture of research activities by teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and contract tutors. The evaluators considered that the increasing research in both degrees demonstrates that the students are 'taught mainly by people who are engaged in research'.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Approval and Accreditation of Courses Leading to Degrees and Related Qualifications for Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs)*, NZQA, 2010, p.21

The action plans for research that are in place within the two degree programmes at WITT reflect institutional support for development of a research culture. There is a central research committee, which undertook a self-evaluation in August 2011. A series of evaluative statements were considered, with consensus agreements found, indicating that a culture of research is at an early, although developing, stage at WITT. An action plan was derived from this activity and is being implemented.

There is substantial evidence throughout the institute of highly effective teaching. All staff are supported through professional development opportunities and requirements to undertake effective teaching, and the effectiveness of this is measured and benchmarked internally and externally. There is provision of a well-resourced and effective teaching environment to support learning, teaching, and research. There is substantial evidence throughout the institute that the growth of evaluative capacity is increasingly being promoted to all staff. There is good evidence that self-assessment is being used effectively to better understand educational performance and to bring about many improvements. Given that many strategies for self-assessment are relatively new, it is expected that they will continue to develop and mature over time.

## 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

The evaluation team considers that there is clear evidence, across WITT, that the provision of guidance and support to learners is exemplary, and generally very effective. Learners are well supported from the point of enquiry about courses, through to provision of pastoral care, including food and transport in some instances, and academic learning support for degree students.

The evaluation team has found that barriers to entry are minimised for new students, from the point of first inquiry about enrolment. As noted in section 1.3 above, discussions with students when they are applying for admission are now aimed at ensuring that they are taking the appropriate courses, that they are on the right pathway, and are well informed about their choices. This is in line with the key academic objective of 'having students engaged, prepared and ready to learn' (WITT Academic Strategy). Once enrolled in a course or programme, every effort is made to ensure that learners are retained in their programme of choice, and that opportunities for progression to employment or to further study are clearly identified for the learners. The roles of the library, Learning Centre, and support staff are central to this approach. The rise in retention rates, as measured in the Education Performance Indicators, from 59 per cent to 75 per cent (2010-2011), may reflect this additional attention.

In line with WITT procedures, learning needs assessments are undertaken of all learners at induction. These assessments are used to develop individual learning

plans to help tutors ensure the learners have a reasonable chance of success. In the Mana Tangata (Empowering People) programme, for example, staff are proactive about ensuring student attendance. During 2011 students from Waitara were collected each day in a WITT van. This practice is also effective in retaining the farming skills of students at Stratford, with Taratahi vans being used to collect young students, who often do not yet have driving licences. Students also reflected in interviews with the evaluators that the support to enable them to remain in their courses had significantly helped them.

Learners in lower-level courses are tested for literacy and numeracy on arrival to determine what help they need. The results are used to identify any extra support students may need, and referrals are made if necessary to the literacy support staff. This information is also used to help gauge the effectiveness of delivery and teaching. The Mana Tangata students are personally 'walked' to other services if deemed necessary, and breakfast is also provided to ensure that the learners come to their studies prepared to learn.

Within the Certificate in Hairdressing, learners are provided with academic learning support early in the year; those who were interviewed said this has had a positive effect on their learning. As noted above, tutors work one-to-one with students to identify and match their needs. Attendance is monitored and there are awards, such as end-of-term certificates, for full attendance. E-texting by tutors gives timely reminders about assessments due and about attendance requirements. The additional support and guidance provided within the Certificate in Hairdressing programme has been assessed as being instrumental in raising its status from 'marginally viable' in 2011 to 'viable' in 2012.

The provision of guidance and support to learners who are studying off-campus, within one of WITT's partnerships for programme delivery, is consistently offered, although take-up of learning and support provisions by learners is more variable. Learners at Stratford, within the Taratahi programmes, for example, are brought to the WITT campus in New Plymouth for their initial orientation to their study. They are encouraged through Taratahi's site in Stratford to take up opportunities for learning support, although many do not because of the distance to New Plymouth. Learners in the farming programmes who were interviewed said they are 'WITT students', not 'Taratahi students', and were positive about the support available to them should they seek it. They are also able to access pastoral care services and learning support through Taratahi in Stratford, with WITT's support.

As a result of feedback from the learners within the kaumatua programme delivered by Te Reo o Taranaki, an identified barrier to entry has been the requirement for provision of a legal birth certificate for enrolment. This has been addressed by WITT: the enrolment process has been further simplified, and a whakapapa form has been developed in response to the perceived protocol issue around kaumatua having to provide birth certificates. There is encouragement of learners to visit the main campus for guidance and support. An example of the focus at induction on welcoming these learners as WITT students is a formal pōwhiri as part of the induction process. Te Reo o Taranaki staff and students are also invited to attend

other pōwhiri held at WITT. The provision of support and guidance, which recognises the cultural background of the learners and the programme's relationship with Taranaki Māori heritage, is apparently effective for the kaumatua learners; however, further self-assessment concerning the limited uptake by these learners of support and guidance provisions on the WITT campus will determine its actual effectiveness.

Learners within the NZIHT programmes were less likely to use WITT services for support and guidance. These learners study by distance and block courses and, because they are generally studying from their workplaces, they are more likely to contact NZIHT's offices for any learning support. Students who were interviewed noted that because they are employed and studying from a distance, they are unlikely to seek support and guidance from WITT. Learners are provided with all relevant information about support and guidance services. Further self-assessment of this issue by WITT and NZIHT could determine the extent to which the limited uptake of support and guidance provisions by these learners is fit for purpose for them.

Higher-level programmes delivered on the WITT campus measure significant use of learning support and guidance services. Within the Bachelor of Nursing, for example, learners are frequent library users and are encouraged to use learning support services for assistance with the acquisition of academic writing skills. Students who were interviewed reported that they are well supported by tutors and clinical staff. Staff who were interviewed provided anecdotal impressions that the support and guidance that is offered, and taken up by nursing students, is having a positive effect on achievement. The evaluators consider that self-assessment of the new Bachelor of Nursing programme during 2012 is likely to address this issue.

WITT's self-assessment concerning the provision of guidance and support is still developing. While there is generally a reasonably comprehensive approach to self-assessment across the institute, at individual programme level there are variations in the extent to which learners are encouraged to use support and guidance services, or the extent to which support and guidance received has had an impact on learner achievement. There is good knowledge of the extent to which all support services have been used during the year, programme-by-programme. For example, the end-of-year report on provision of all support services details the use by all programme areas of all services.

A more evaluative approach to self-assessment concerning provision of support services has been taken in the Academic Monitoring Quality Trends Report 2011, which was populated from trends noted in all other forms of self-assessment across the institute in 2011. This meta self-assessment found two significant trends: that students aged under 25 are most likely to withdraw, disengage, or become discouraged, and that those students who are experiencing difficulties often do not know who to approach within the institute if they feel that their immediate tutor or department has not properly addressed their concerns. Improvement plans are being, or have been, implemented following this analysis, many of which relate to provision for increasing pastoral care.

On a wider scale, self-assessment of the implementation of the academic strategy has occurred, with the evaluation team sighting a report due to be submitted to the academic board in May 2012. This has analysed progress with respect to all objectives within the strategy, including those around the provision of appropriate support and guidance, from pre-enrolment to the provision of a positive student experience. There are few gaps in the development of self-assessment with respect to the support and guidance of learners; there is good evidence of the development of a comprehensive approach to self-assessment, and that all systems will further mature and develop.

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

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

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

The WITT academic strategy expresses the governance and management intentions and expectations relating to academic performance, and has performance indicators that are both aspirational and measurable. There is a clear intention to continually interpret the key performance indicators within the strategy with respect to all academic areas. Management decisions are made in the context of the overall strategic aims of the institute, but also with respect to the specific needs of programmes or learner cohorts. For example, the decision was made in 2012 to pilot the use of iPods within the Certificate in Hairdressing, as a strategy to increase retention and completions and as a means of increasing support to the students. There are several indications that this strategy is working well, although it is yet to be fully evaluated.

The academic board recognises its role as the guardian of academic quality, and while it recognises that monitoring of self-assessment is part of that role (complementing approvals of changes to courses and programmes and approvals of new programmes), much of the self-assessment monitoring is being undertaken at board of studies level, from which the academic board is largely informed by 'exception reporting'. The board acknowledges the need for ongoing evaluation of its role and functions, and has more recently identified the need for greater clarification of its role in relation to boards of studies and the leadership team, and the extent to which its sub-committees are necessary or appropriate. A comprehensive self-assessment was conducted with respect to all of the key evaluation questions in March 2012. An improvement plan was agreed and is being implemented. During 2012, an academic board self-assessment working party has been established with agreed terms of reference. The evaluators noted that WITT improvement plans have indicators of improvement: measurable outcomes that might demonstrate that the required action has achieved improvement.

The WITT Council conducted self-evaluations (self-assessments) using contracted facilitators in June and August 2011. The purpose of each was for Council to assess its governance role with respect to its own performance and to WITT's educational provision. An improvement plan was developed following both evaluative sessions, with related recommendations and indicators of improvement. In line with the outcome of the academic board self-assessment, the Council has determined to continue regular self-assessment with specific foci, including the clarification of its roles and responsibilities, and to identify the impact that Council has on educational performance at WITT.

Within WITT, the Community of Practice is a group of trained facilitators who work independently within departments or programmes. This self-assessment strategy has enhanced the quality of the first round (2011) of self-evaluation (self-assessment) reports. A self-assessment database, accessible by all staff, records all events and related documentation, acting as both a repository of data and a professional development resource. The self-evaluation reports and associated critiques for every programme are entered into this database, and key word searches can be done. For example, a check on 'orientation' would enable communication with other programmes where orientation had been defined as an issue of either concern or recognised as a strength. This is working well to identify examples of good practice which can be shared across all areas of WITT, and similarly areas where, across the institute, improvements can be made.

The *Reflections* newsletter to all staff is a self-assessment record and also a self-assessment 'coaching strategy'. The newsletter enables programme teams to learn from the self-assessment activity of others as well as to inform their own practice. This newsletter is good practice and indicative of a self-assessment culture strongly led by the leadership team.

A staff engagement survey, carried out in September 2011, resulted in the Consolidated Employment Engagement Report, with associated action plans. This was an externally contracted survey on the extent to which staff are 'engaged' with WITT. Overall, WITT employees have a 72.4 per cent 'engagement index', comparable to other educational organisations that have participated in this survey. Of the key driver questions, the highest scoring questions were, 'I have confidence in the leadership of this organisation', and 'I believe in what this organisation is trying to accomplish', and these scored 10 per cent higher than the education sector benchmark. The evaluators found examples in all areas where there was both pride and confidence expressed by staff and management in the directions that WITT is taking, and in the considerable improvements made in overall performance over the past three years in particular.

The evaluation team saw many examples within the focus areas that were indicative of the effectiveness of WITT's leadership in the achievement of excellent performance and in the development of evaluative capacity across the institute. Although all programmes are required to demonstrate within the annual Programme Viability Review that they are financially viable, this does not happen at the expense of sound resourcing in order to support educational performance. The

example of the additional resourcing put into the Certificate in Hairdressing in order to enhance achievement and retention has been mentioned. The NZIHT programmes, for example, are highly focused on matching industry needs to ensure that the programmes are current. There appear to be no budgetary constraints in this area on resources and materials that support learning. Members of the national advisory committee informed the evaluators that NZIHT is considered by industry as a leading provider in civil engineering relating to highway technology.

The research committee, a sub-committee of the academic board, undertook its own self-evaluation in August 2011, in order to determine the extent to which it adds value to WITT, to identify what 'added value' looks like, and to decide whether the research committee was the best way of adding that value. The outcome of the self-evaluation was generally positive: it was found by consensus within the self-assessment working party that the research committee supports research opportunities for WITT staff through sharing of information, provision of resources, promotion of research activities, and provision of opportunities to present and/or publish research. There has been an increase in research outputs, in line with WITT's academic strategy. Further self-assessment is yet to occur to determine the extent to which research is understood and valued within the wider institute.

Until very recently, research outputs have not been high within the two degree programmes selected as focus areas, and have not been widely visible throughout the Institute. The research committee action plan intends to address these wider issues around the value and visibility of research by late in 2012. Within the School of Nursing there is a research management plan. The current plan has identified the new curriculum as a focus for research, possibly of a collaborative nature, and sets out the research plans for each member of the teaching team. This action plan is currently being aligned with staff members' personal plans, and will thus also inform performance reviews. There is already a well-developed research culture within the School of Nursing. Within NZIHT, there is a developing research culture. There is clear support for research activity and outputs are increasing, although this is noted by NZIHT as an area for improvement. The research committee action plan (2012) and the associated NZIHT research management plan should contribute to a continued improvement in research outputs. The relevance of this issue to the definition of a degree (NZQA, 2010) has already been mentioned.

The evaluation team has found good evidence of strong performance with respect to the role of governance and management in supporting educational achievement. The strategies in place to implement this role are proving, on the achievement of WITT to date, to be highly effective, although as yet there has been insufficient time for self-assessment to be fully effective in all areas. The improvement plans for the academic board, Council, and research committee are all indicative of the commitment of both governance and management to raising the educational performance of WITT, from a level which has already been deemed to be high. The self-assessment activities that are routinely carried out are part of a coherent system in place within WITT for self-assessment. Improvement plans associated

with self-assessment activities are duly monitored. There is clear evidence of a well-developed and effective culture of self-assessment, both supported and encouraged by governance and management.

## Focus Areas

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

### 2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Civil); Bachelor of Engineering (Highways); Graduate Diploma in Engineering (Highways)

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

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

Completion and retention data for this focus area is high for course completions and qualification completions, particularly for distance learning programmes. NZIHT has recently benchmarked the student completion data against national statistics for providers that offer the same qualification (Unitec and Open Polytechnic). The analysis has shown that NZIHT compares relatively well with other institutes offering the New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Civil). For example, statistical comparison of national examination results with Unitec over 2008-2010 showed that of the 27 courses analysed, 15 courses results for NZIHT were significantly better than for Unitec and three course results were worse. This benchmarking analysis has enabled NZIHT to see where it is doing well and to focus on areas where further work is needed.

In 2011, retention in the Bachelor of Engineering (Highways) was 98 per cent, course completion was 93 per cent, and qualification completion was 158 per cent (members of two part-time cohorts completing in the same year). Achievement within the New Zealand Diploma of Engineering (Civil) was similarly high (retention 98 per cent, completion 88 per cent, qualification completion 127 per cent).

NZIHT has undertaken its own analysis of programme completion data over the past eight years to identify more meaningful statistics for self-assessment of the success of part-time students. Programme completion data has also been analysed for the New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Civil) from 2003-2011, to identify the total number of enrolments in relation to the number of graduates. This data has been used to identify how long students are taking to complete the diploma programme (3.5 years). This self-assessment activity has enabled NZIHT to better understand why some learners do not complete the qualification, and the value that these programmes add to the industry. For example, mathematics has been identified as an area where some students struggle with course requirements. As a result, more support has been provided through additional block courses in 2012. Improvements noticed as a result of the changes have not yet been determined through further self-assessment.

Research outputs from NZIHT have been commented on in section 1.6 above. Permanent tutors can attend an international conference every year, paid for by

NZIHT. NZIHT and WITT place high value on the teaching staff being up to date with highway technology industry developments internationally. A research management plan has been developed and implemented, and is monitored by the WITT Research Committee, which reports to the Academic Board. There is a focus on applied research in particular, and on capturing ongoing research activities by teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and contract tutors.

## 2.2 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**.

Central to the Bachelor of Nursing redevelopment process has been wide community consultation about the specific needs of hospitals, practice, and private and community healthcare services in the region. This redevelopment was also informed by research by the head of school around the anticipation of future needs regionally, and building on research in relation to the future needs of nursing practice internationally.

The programme has recently been developed in response to a Nursing Council of New Zealand requirement for a five-year review, but also taking advantage of the opportunity to reconsider stakeholder engagement. The new programme features on-ward experience at an early stage, a feature that is already contributing to increased confidence among learners and retention within the programme. Second and third-year clinical practice can now be in specialist units, either within hospitals or in rest homes or other community healthcare services. A problem with the older nursing degree programme had been abandonment by some students at the end of year one because of examination results and anxiety about on-ward experience in year two. The introduction of an earlier hospital placement in the revised programme means that students are able to be sure that nursing is the appropriate career for them at an early stage in the degree.

It has been confirmed by health providers that the revised programme, with its heightened focus on clinical experience, is well suited to regional workforce needs. Community needs for more practical skills in graduate nursing are also being addressed through the redesign of the programme.

Research into the profiles of successful nursing students has shown that those with higher levels of maths and science are more likely to complete the programme and have better practice outcomes. This has led to changed entry requirements, including science to level 3, as for university entrance. The needs of learners without a maths and science background are now being addressed through prior enrolment in an appropriate bridging course or programme.

The 'old' Bachelor of Nursing programme had high course completions (approximately 90 per cent), but lower qualification completions (approximately 59 per cent). Of 26 students who entered the programme in 2008, 14 graduated in

2011 and a further six will graduate in 2012. Two students graduated with science-based qualifications other than nursing. All but one of the 2011 graduates have entered nursing practice.

There was competitive entry for the revised programme in 2012, with 55 students admitted from 200 applications. To date, 54 of those students have been retained in the programme. As noted above, staff who were interviewed considered that the support provisions available to learners, including learning support, have had a positive impact on learner achievement. Māori students are well supported within the programme; staff also work closely with Te Wānanga Māori. There is now more encouragement of interaction between year cohorts, and learners who were interviewed commented on the value of this.

The evaluators found that the new Bachelor of Nursing programme is highly valued by learners and other stakeholders, and that it appears to be matching the needs of the profession and health community for a more clinically based programme. Achievement so far is high, and, because of greater emphasis on maths and science ability prior to entry and a focus on support for learners, retention is likely to be higher than in the older programme. There are effective processes in place to ensure that there will good outcomes.

### 2.3 Focus area: Pōkaitahi Mana Tangata (Empowering People) (Level 2)

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

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

In 2011, course completions for this programme were 90 per cent, and qualification completions 86 per cent. The majority of learners are Māori, and all learners are male, with an average age of 18 years. This very high achievement rate places the programme well ahead of the average for WITT, and far ahead of the national median of 56 per cent (using TEC data) for qualification completions.

The programme is achieving success in attracting and retaining young male learners, many of whom have not previously achieved at school. In 2011 the programme had a high number of Youth Guarantee students (15 of the 24 students). The remainder of the learner group had chosen the programme because of its focus on sport, primarily rugby league. Analysis of the completion data from 2011 has shown that rugby league and Youth Guarantee students achieve comparatively well. The 2011 qualifications achievement data showed a considerable improvement on the 2010 data (58 per cent).

Graduate outcome data collected by programme staff at the end of 2011 showed 64 per cent of the graduates progressed to employment and further study. This compares favourably with the overall employment of WITT graduates, which is 71 per cent (Graduation Destination Report). Three of the graduates were recruited into rugby league clubs in Australia. Learners who were interviewed stated that

they had increased confidence and self-esteem and felt that they now had the confidence to seek and find a job. Some others were looking forward to engaging in further study.

Changes made in 2012 include the introduction of improved advice to potential students prior to enrolment and the introduction of individual learning plans for students, both strategies that have been implemented across the institute. The entry requirements for Youth Guarantee students have also been clarified, with some now redirected to other foundation programmes. To date there have been few opportunities for progression into relevant higher-level programmes at WITT.

There are now higher-level programmes offered for the fitness industry, for example the National Certificate in Fitness (Levels 3 and 4). WITT has also considered broadening the focus of the Mana Tangata programme to include other sports codes. External stakeholders had considered that it was important for learners to have further study pathways after their first year. While getting previously disengaged learners into study is a worthwhile achievement, keeping them engaged into the future is the next challenge.

The Mana Tangata programme gives value to the Taranaki sporting community. Students support Taranaki primary school rugby league tournaments by refereeing and setting up equipment, and some students are involved in coaching primary school league teams, a positive outcome for students and the community. The community perception is that the programme is producing graduates who can succeed in society. The external stakeholders have a strong interest in the programme given the positive outcomes it is providing for the learners.

As noted above, staff are proactive in providing support for the learners. Tutors are engaged in professional development to further develop their own qualifications, particularly with respect to literacy and numeracy. Tutors are also well versed in mātauranga Māori, with oral and written te reo Māori skills, and have qualifications in sport. Tutors will 'walk' learners to other support services if they are needed, and have provided breakfast at times. Learners use the library for self-directed learning and were observed there during the evaluation visit.

Strategies for self-assessment within the focus area reflect WITT-wide strategies, yet have been implemented with the particular needs of the cohort in view. For example, from 2012 individual learning plans are reviewed every four weeks with the learners, to monitor their achievement of performance targets in terms of their learning and sports conditioning. The programme has a self-assessment plan, involving facilitated discussions with all stakeholders. The plan is seen by all, submitted, critiqued, and an action plan developed then implemented. The self-assessment report and action plan are monitored by the board of studies.

#### 2.4 Focus area: Cluster: Certificate in General Farm Skills (Level 2); National Certificate in Farming Skills (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 **Adequate**.

WITT has a partnership arrangement with Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre (Taratahi) to deliver farming courses and programmes in Taranaki, at three separate sites. Taratahi is a major provider of agricultural programmes, based in the Wairarapa but delivering programmes at a number of sites nationally. The TEO also owns and operates farms, several of which are in Taranaki. A Programme Facilitation Agreement between WITT and Taratahi (Jan 2011-Dec 2013) sets out the respective responsibilities of each party in relation to programme delivery and its resourcing. It is noted that WITT is responsible for the overall quality assurance of the qualifications delivered. The partnership is reviewed annually through an audit process against the partnership agreement itself. WITT academic managers consider that this process could become more evaluative as the partnership matures.

Currently, self-assessment within the partnership reflects Taratahi's methodology and usual practice. With WITT's development of newer and very effective self-assessment strategies, their implementation within the partnership with Taratahi could evolve to better reflect the WITT model of annual self-assessment, rather than audit of the partnership agreement as at present, and could include an annual programme report, as undertaken for all programmes delivered by Taratahi.

The evaluators visited the Stratford site of Taratahi, where farming courses are delivered in partnership with WITT. At this site, there were 85 per cent course completions for the level 3 programme in 2011, and 75 per cent qualification completions. For the level 2 General Farm Skills programme, both course and qualification completions were lower (57 per cent and 32 per cent respectively). The reasons for these lower achievement results for the level 2 qualifications are addressed below.

While course and qualification completions for the level 3 qualification are higher than the overall WITT completions data, they are expected to rise. There have been some issues affecting the completions rates for the level 2 qualification, including a high drop-out rate among young and academically disadvantaged learners, many of whom have struggled to access the training sites in the past year without transport of their own. During 2012 additional support, including vans to deliver learners to the training site, has been provided. The additional support being provided to learners, including increased literacy and numeracy support, is already seen to be having an effect on the 19 level 2 students so far for 2012, trending to an 80 per cent qualification completion. This suggests that the strategy is working well to boost educational performance, although to date there has been little formal self-assessment undertaken with respect to the enhanced support and guidance provisions in 2012.

The four students who were interviewed had confidence in positive employment outcomes. Of the January and the July 2011 intake for the level 3 programme, 13 out of 28 graduates are employed generally in agriculture, four are engaged in further study (not mutually exclusive), and four are seeking employment in agriculture (75 per cent positive outcomes). Students all claimed that they were undertaking the best course for them and that they had significantly enhanced their

skills and attributes. Students claimed that confidence had been enhanced by their success in the level 3 programme. Students are confident that the programme will assist them into their chosen careers.

Taratahi<sup>10</sup> performs regular student feedback evaluations and produces self-assessment reports. WITT has stated that the implementation of the 'WITT Way' of self-assessment will not necessarily happen within the partnership. However, as long as self-assessment is happening, Taratahi will still meet WITT's aspirations for the educational performance of the course. Taratahi is a major provider of agricultural education and has its own well-developed self-assessment methodology. WITT will still apply the programme viability review and associated critique, as it does for its internal programmes.

WITT has been able to develop its capability in delivering agriculture programmes by entering into this partnership. Agriculture is regionally a very important industry for Taranaki (refer WITT Investment Plan). It is also highly valued by Taratahi, because it extends its reach as a provider. Regional delivery of programmes is part of Taratahi's own strategic plan. There is benchmarking with Taratahi's delivery of the same programmes from its Masterton campus. Through Taratahi, there is the possibility of further benchmarking of these agricultural/rural skills programmes with both Eastern Institute of Technology and NorthTec. To date, benchmarking with Taratahi's internal programmes (levels 2 and 3) has shown that achievement rates in Taranaki are generally lower than at Taratahi's main campus in Masterton. However, because of the relatively recent introduction of the Taranaki programmes, and some issues that affected performance and retention at level 2 until 2012, performance at Stratford within the WITT-Taratahi partnership is expected to improve in 2012, with initial results indicating this improvement.

Tutors' needs for professional development are now well matched by the partnership. For example, courses related to assessment and tertiary teaching are being provided through WITT, and professional development in farming skills through Taratahi. Tutors who were interviewed believed that their own learning opportunities were enhanced under the partnership. The significant proportion of graduates who are being employed in the farming sector indicates that employers' needs are being matched. Moderation of assessment is undertaken by the Agriculture Industry Training Organisation, and records of this showed no significant issues. Tutors value the moderation cluster meetings they regularly attend.

The evaluators consider that there are few gaps or weaknesses in educational performance in this focus area and that these are being managed effectively. Self-assessment capability will continue to improve as the partnership matures. Both

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<sup>10</sup> The evaluators noted that, at its 2010 EER, Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre achieved Highly Confident in educational performance, and Highly Confident in self-assessment capability.

parties to the Programme Facilitation Agreement have significant strengths in self-assessment capability.

## 2.5 Focus area: Cluster: Pōkaitahi Taiahoaho Taumata Wha (Certificate in Kaumatua Skills (Level 3)); Pokairua Hopuapua Reo (Diploma in Oral Taranaki Language (Level 6))

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 programmes in the focus group are delivered by Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust, in a partnership with WITT. The partnership is acknowledged by WITT as one of its strategic relationships in the region, and reflects the importance placed by WITT on its role with respect to 'developing the cultural and academic competence (of Māori) in a supportive environment' (2011 Annual Report, p.6). WITT is very supportive of Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust, recognising that they have intellectual protection of tribal knowledge, and therefore the responsibility for teaching exists with them. The Tumu Paetaki (WITT manager of Te Wānanga Māori) provides a good connection between the two organisations. The relationship is reflected in WITT's Te Rautaki Māori Strategy.<sup>11</sup> WITT has involved Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust in self-assessment of Te Wānanga Māori programmes, and an improvement plan has been developed and is being actioned.

Students in both the Hōpuapua and Taiahoaho courses achieve well, as reflected in the 2011 retention and completion rates. For the Hōpuapua – Diploma in Oral Taranaki Language, course completions increased to 70 per cent in 2011 from 69 per cent in 2010. Programme completions were 70 per cent in 2011 and 68 per cent in 2010. Retention for 2011 was 70 per cent and in 2010, 69 per cent. The Taiahoaho – Certificate in Kaumatua Skills was first introduced in 2009 with 39 enrolments; the data indicates that most if not all completed the course. In 2010 the average course completion was 95 per cent, and qualification completion was also 95 per cent. The programme was not funded by WITT in 2011 because of insufficient enrolments, although it may have been offered independently by Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust. It is noted that there is no progression for kaumatua after the level 4 programme, although further studies in te reo Māori may be undertaken.

The Taiahoaho programme is designed to assist kaumatua to fill their community roles and support their cultural development and sense of contribution. Feedback from tutors and learners as reported in the self-assessment report states that learners achieve a great sense of confidence and pride in being part of Taiahoaho. This was confirmed in conversations with learners and tutors at the EER. While

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<sup>11</sup> Te Rautaki Māori Strategy is embedded across WITT. Tumu Pae Arahi (Māori Adviser to the Leadership Team) provides written updates to the chief executive and leadership team, and faculties also provide updates on how they are contributing to achieving the objectives of Te Rautaki.

learners achieve a qualification as a result of completing both programmes, this is generally a secondary consideration when enrolling on the course. Learners achieved increased reo proficiency, increased knowledge of tikanga a Taranaki, greater connectedness to their identity, and awareness of their contribution to their whānau, marae, and iwi (community).

Self-assessment is an embedded part of how Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust and Te Wānanga Māori operate and is a continuous process of improvement. As an iwi-based organisation, Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust is a part of the community, regularly hosting and contributing to events. As such, both organisations receive feedback directly from their communities on the quality of the programme and on the quality of the graduates they 'produce'. Tutors who were interviewed also felt the course created a space for kaumatua to come together and share the company of other kaumatua, and thereby transfer knowledge to their mokopuna.

Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust has used the annual programme report template for reporting outcomes in 2009 and 2010. The organisation was also involved alongside Te Wānanga Māori in a facilitated self-evaluation process to discuss the portfolio of Te Wānanga Māori programmes in 2011. An improvement plan has been developed and is being actioned, and progress has been overseen and reported to the leadership team by Tumu Pae Arahi.

The Hōpuapua learners are mainly in work already and are doing the course to develop their reo. However, the course has also stimulated an interest in learners living away from Taranaki to come back home and learn more about their whakapapa. The programme has been adjusted to meet the need to also recognise and teach about south and north Taranaki tikanga.

Peer moderation occurs in Hōpuapua between tutors, who observe each other's teaching and moderate each other's assessments (they support each other as there are only a few of them). There has been difficulty in finding external moderators, although one has now been found. Tutors have been invited to attend WITT professional development activities for staff. As part of the partnership arrangement, WITT uses Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust tutors where possible for its internal courses within Te Wānanga Māori. Pre- and post-moderation of assessments is undertaken for the level 6 programme within WITT.

Issues around the provision of support and guidance to kaumatua learners have been discussed under section 1.5 above. As noted, WITT formally welcomes its learners to the organisation with a pōwhiri as part of the induction process. Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust staff and learners are also invited to attend other pōwhiri held at WITT. Learning needs assessments are formed for all learners at induction. WITT uses these assessments to develop individual learning plans to help tutors ensure learners have a reasonable chance of success.

The evaluators found extensive evidence in related documents, and through interviews with learners and tutors, that the programmes are highly valued by the students who are affiliated to Taranaki iwi. The courses filled a need to reconnect

to the learners' cultural identity to Taranaki reo and customs. Learners and other stakeholders reflected their pride in seeing the growth in Kaumatua, who go into the course with little confidence and reo, and are then able to more confidently speak in te reo and recite karakia and mihi. There is no other similar course offered in the region.

Self-assessment capability is already well developed, and the methodology for this reflects the special nature of the partnership between WITT and Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust. As the WITT Rautaki Māori strategy (developed in 2011) is further embedded within the overall vision and strategy of WITT, self-assessment of the programmes delivered in partnership with Te Reo o Taranaki Charitable Trust will also further develop and mature.

## 2.6 Focus area: Certificate in Process Operations (Oil and Gas) (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 **Good**.

This programme was developed as a response to an ageing workforce in the oil and gas industries in Taranaki and thus has high value to these companies and to the regional economy. Although the programme is delivered by tutors who work within a private training establishment, Alric Training Limited<sup>12</sup>, these tutors are contracted directly by WITT to deliver the programme. The programme has very high course and qualification completion outcomes: 97 per cent for course completion in 2011, and 93 per cent for qualification completion. In 2010 the outcomes were 99 per cent and 94 per cent respectively. Twenty-four of 32 graduates (75 per cent) from 2010-2011 are reported by the tutor to be employed in the seven process industries in Taranaki.

The evaluators confirmed WITT's self-assessment that the learners value the programme highly, as it is providing entry to a good career change which is well remunerated. Virtually all students gain employment with the process industries, as it is the only programme of its kind in New Zealand. The programme is designed to match the needs of students, generally mid-career, who come from a range of backgrounds seeking a career change towards roles in the processing operations of the petrochemical and energy industries. There is a strong likelihood (but no guarantee) of jobs as an outcome.

The two tutors within the programme have a wide knowledge of, and connection with, the oil and gas industry. They hold appropriate industry qualifications. Although they tend to seek and obtain their professional development through their

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<sup>12</sup> The evaluators noted that, at its EER in September 2011, NZQA was Highly Confident in Alric Training Ltd's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

own parent company, they value their relationship with WITT in delivery of the programme. Assessor decisions have been demonstrated through moderation by EXITO (New Zealand Extractive Industries Industry Training Organisation) and NZITO (New Zealand Industry Training Organisation), that assessment meets national standards for the industry.

WITT's analysis of course and staff evaluations indicates that students are well informed about the programme prior to enrolling, and the programme is well organised, presented, and assessed. The quality of teaching is rated highly. No specific actions were identified as necessary from these evaluations. Students are made aware of learning and other support services at WITT at orientation; the library was especially noted in conversations with the evaluators as helpful.

The programme has a governance board comprising industry representatives, including those involved in work placement and scholarships. However, the programme participates in all the usual WITT self-evaluation processes. The programme is well resourced. An example is the operations control room simulator currently leased, but which WITT intends to purchase. The governance board meets four times a year, 'owns' the programme, and is involved in its development and continual review. Sampled board minutes indicate that discussion is principally related to work placement prospects, access to plant for practicals, and minor changes to the programme.

This is a highly effective focus area in terms of achievement, with effective contributing processes and excellent outcomes. There is good evidence of effective self-assessment being used to bring about worthwhile improvements. The industry stakeholders and WITT management regard this programme as being strategically very important for Taranaki industry, with excellent tutoring matching learner needs.

## 2.7 Focus area: WITT Certificate in Hairdressing (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 **Adequate**.

The Certificate in Hairdressing is a two-year programme. Course completions increased significantly in 2011 (67 per cent) from those achieved in 2010 (41 per cent). Seventy-three per cent of under 25-year-olds completed courses in 2011. In 2011, of seven students, one withdrew to an apprenticeship and one went on to employment, and five who completed all have apprenticeships, demonstrating a high progression rate to further qualification.

The indicators of improvement, as noted in the 2011 self-assessment improvement plan, were: that clients would be better utilised, collection of evidence would be enhanced through the year, and students would have better study skills resulting in a higher quality of work (and these would also lead to improved retention and achievement). The self-assessment to date in 2012, and interviews with learners

and other stakeholders, all indicate that the improvement indicators will all be demonstrated in 2012.

The evaluators heard from both tutors and industry that the programme is highly valued by industry (employers). The 2011 self-assessment report agrees that year two graduates are sought after. Students have increased confidence (students, tutors, and employers all stated this) and are work-ready. The evaluators were informed by the head of faculty that 49 per cent of graduates are staying in the industry. The networking of the programme manager in industry association meetings is regarded (by the employers who were interviewed) as key to maintaining the value of this programme within the industry.

Students in year one of the programme can exit with a level 2 qualification. Employers also value this as an entry into the industry, as students can then gain apprenticeships. Within the Certificate in Hairdressing (Level 3), students can gain a subsumed New Zealand Certificate in Hairdressing (Salon support) (Level 3).

The learning environment is conducive to learning, especially since improvements have been made to the planning and structuring and delivery of the programme following self-assessment activities. Students now have, for example, a day planner to coordinate assessment requirements. The confidence course, established in 2012, has enhanced learners' ability to access clients for their practice. It has enabled them to develop a relationship with clients, so that the same client can be used for several assessments. The introduction of iPods as a learning tool has been seen by all learners, tutors, and stakeholders who were interviewed as an effective teaching and learning aid. (Tutors use it to record visual resources, and learners are very comfortable with its use). Informal feedback to WITT has to date been very positive about the use of iPods but, given that they were introduced in 2012 following analysis of earlier feedback, no formal self-assessment has yet occurred.

The requirements of the Hairdressing Industry Training Organisation (HITO) for external moderation of assessment have been met. Following external moderation in 2011, HITO has confirmed the continuation of WITT's status as having HITO Developing Best Practice Quality Mark Status.

Tutors remain current with the industry; all have strong industry links. All tutors have adult teaching qualifications, and three of the four are engaged in NCALNE. Learner feedback (evaluation forms) assists in informing staff performance reviews. The critique of the 2011 self-evaluation report notes that the report could strengthen the evaluative statements in it. In 2012, for example, the effect of the professional development of staff on improving the educational outcomes for students could be considered.

The 2011 self-assessment report notes that other ITPs (for example Eastern Institute of Technology) have achieved heightened retention rates through advances in aspects of programme management, for example consideration of entry requirements. WITT is intending to follow up with benchmarked tertiary institutes to discover what is working well for them.

The improvements identified and noted have, according to tutors, programme management and students, all contributed to the considerably higher achievement recorded in 2011 over 2010, and so far indicated for 2012. Further self-assessment in 2012 will hopefully confirm this; indications in the documentation provided, and from interviews with learners and all other stakeholders, indicate further improvements in outcomes for this programme.

## 2.8 Focus area: Achievement and support of international students

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

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

In 2009 the WITT Council agreed to a managed approach to increasing the number of international students at WITT. In 2011 there were 87 full-time international students studying at WITT. Changes of immigration policy in 2011 meant that programmes had to be of two years' duration in order for international students to be eligible for a work visa.

Council was concerned to minimise the risk to the institute should there be a downturn in the number of international EFTS that could be recruited to WITT. Accordingly, it introduced online marketing with a particular focus on India and two programmes, the NZ Diploma in Engineering (Civil) and the Diploma in Professional Cookery. Both qualifications lead to occupations for which there are currently shortages in the Taranaki region.

In 2011 there was an 87 per cent qualifications completion rate for international students; this is higher than for the overall WITT outcome for qualifications completion. There is anecdotal and informal knowledge through an international liaison Facebook page about graduate destinations. In 2010 the Diploma in Hospitality staff began an annual survey of students at the time of graduation, asking about employment plans. The decision to set up a Facebook page was deliberate as it currently appears to be an effective mechanism for maintaining contact with graduates.

All students within the Diploma in Professional Cookery in 2012 are already in part-time employment. A report on the Diploma in Professional Cookery was compiled through interviews with students shortly before their graduation in November 2011. Of 20 students, 18 were already in part-time employment, and 16 (80 per cent) were looking to gain full-time work in New Zealand. WITT Student Support Services knows of the employment plans of all 2011 graduates of the professional cookery programme and, through WITT's social networking pages the destinations of all international students become known, whether they have returned home or stayed in New Zealand.

The valued outcomes for international students themselves are completion of qualifications and employment. Almost all see their qualifications as the means

through which they will gain employment in an area that has been identified as one where there is a skills shortage.

The international student liaison person has close contact with all current students and maintains regular contact with most graduates. This relationship is valued, as seen by the evaluators in emails, and confirmed in interviews with current students. All students are supported from the time of arrival in New Plymouth – they are met at the airport, given help to set up a bank account, delivered to the department at WITT, introduced to the staff. An induction course is provided for groups of students, usually classroom-based. Support staff get to know each student and will quickly identify those that are 'at risk'. This was confirmed in interviews with support staff and the tutor of the cookery programme. All tutors are expected (by Student Support Services) to keep closely in touch with these students, for example by letting support staff know that a student is late or absent. All teaching staff have professional development relating to the pastoral care of international students, and Student Support Services monitors overall numbers of students who seek all types of support. Information about services used within student support is also kept on a course-by-course basis. The types of pastoral care given for international students are reported in the Student Support Services end-of-year report (2010 report sighted). There is a good understanding of the needs of the international student cohort at WITT and the student support services that they are accessing. There is less self-assessment with respect to the value of these services to international students.

It was identified in 2011 through feedback from students and tutors that assistance with CV writing and interview skills was required; workshops have been provided, and learner feedback has been positive. Students who were interviewed confirmed the usefulness of this learning support. Literacy and numeracy is embedded in the cookery programme and has assisted with the understanding of cookery-specific language. International students use the online TEC literacy/numeracy tool. Student Support Services staff have plans to benchmark this with the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) literacy testing system. Again, the improvements noted have been received positively by the international students as reflected in feedback to date and confirmed in the interview with evaluators. Formal self-assessment of the effectiveness of these improvements has yet to be fully undertaken.

A self-assessment report for international student support was produced for 2011. Identified needs are documented in the report, with related action points. The resolution of actions is not detailed in the report. A self-assessment report of a short (four-week) course for Japanese students (the Nihon University Group) was carried out in December 2011. An associated improvement plan was produced to ensure that agreed actions would be implemented for the next short Nihon University Group course.

Student satisfaction surveys, which include international students, are carried out within Student Support Services. Additionally, WITT student satisfaction surveys also refer to provision of student support. Because of the nature of the support

provided, informal student and tutor feedback is frequently received, often on a personal level. A 'mini-audit' has been undertaken across ten students within different programmes, to monitor attendance. The finding was that tutors are accurately reporting international student attendance.

There is an internationalisation policy for the WITT campus, along with the managed growth policy for international student numbers, in order to enrich the student experience for all students. For example, Diwali, the Indian Festival of Lights (with the provision of Indian food) will be celebrated on campus in 2012.

The self-review of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students for 2011 has been conducted in line with Ministry of Education guidelines. The evaluators found this review to be a full and detailed account of the pastoral care provisions at WITT for international students.

The evaluators have found that international students are supported by WITT to achieve excellent performance, and that WITT is committed to providing excellent support for its international students. Self-assessment in this area has been undertaken in a less comprehensive way, although is developing. There is a good understanding of the needs of the international student cohort at WITT and the student support services that they are accessing. There is less self-assessment with respect to the value of these services to international students. In the focus area in which most international students enrol (Diploma in Professional Cookery), self-assessment was comprehensive and included a graduate destination survey of the international students which showed that, by the end of 2011, 90 per cent of the graduates were already in part-time employment.

## 2.9 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

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

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

Refer to section 1.6 of this report.

# Recommendations

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



# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E [qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)