



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

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# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Tai Poutini Polytechnic

Not Yet Confident in educational performance

Not Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 30 November 2017

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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:	Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP)
Type:	Institute of technology (ITP)
First registered:	2004
Location:	73-78 Tainui Street, Greymouth
Delivery sites:	In addition to Greymouth, TPP offers courses in Auckland CBD, Manukau, Waikato, Christchurch, Wanaka, Southland, Westport, Reefton and Hokitika.  Details of approved sites can be found at: <a href="http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/details.do?providerId=602432001">http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/details.do?providerId=602432001</a>
Courses currently delivered:	TPP offers programmes and short courses in the following areas at levels 2-6 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) – refer <a href="http://tpp.ac.nz/study-options/">http://tpp.ac.nz/study-options/</a> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agriculture</li><li>• Business and Information Technology</li><li>• Cookery</li><li>• Hospitality</li><li>• Hard Stone and Jade Carving</li><li>• Civil and Mining</li></ul>

- Early Childhood Education
- Emergency Management
- Health and Beauty
- Music and Audio
- Outdoor Education and Ski Patrol
- Tourism
- Trades

Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	<p>In 2016:</p> <p>Domestic: 1,970 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) (7,397 students)</p> <p>Māori: 599 EFTS (932 students)</p> <p>Pasifika: 225 EFTS (653 students)</p> <p>International: 79 EFTS (422 students) including 19 EFTS (18 students) in full-time study and 61 EFTS (404 students) enrolled in short courses</p>
Number of staff:	165 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	Refer: <a href="http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/course-accreditations.do?providerID=602432001&amp;delSiteInd=0">http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/course-accreditations.do?providerID=602432001&amp;delSiteInd=0</a>
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>TPP’s vision is to ‘provide access to innovative, quality vocational education for learners on the West Coast and in niche specialisations nationally and internationally’.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>In 2017, TPP is delivering 59 training schemes and programmes. TPP’s mix of provision reflects a significant reliance on programmes delivered outside the West Coast region to support in-region provision.</p> <p>Programme delivery is based around three distinctively different faculties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Coast (32 per cent of EFTS in 2017) – based at TPP’s main campus in Greymouth, delivering</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Tai Poutini Polytechnic Investment Plan 2017–2018

vocational education at levels 2-6 to learners on the West Coast of the South Island (including Trades, Business and Information Technology, Hospitality, Tourism, Outdoor Education), plus Emergency Management courses to volunteer groups nationwide.

- Industry Training New Zealand (51 per cent of EFTS in 2017) – based in Auckland, delivering specialist programmes nationwide primarily at levels 3 and 4 (including Scaffolding, Cranes, Civil and Mining) with significant on-demand short-course commercial delivery (including Occupational Health and Safety)
- Music and Audio Institute of New Zealand (MAINZ) (17 per cent of EFTS in 2017) – based in Auckland, but also delivering in Christchurch, a portfolio of programmes at levels 1-6, plus two degrees and a graduate diploma.

TPP enrolls a high number of Māori and Pasifika students (in 2016, 30 per cent and 11 per cent of total EFTS respectively). A significant proportion of these students enrol in industry training courses and at MAINZ. More than 70 per cent of TPP's students are over the age of 25.

Recent significant changes:

During the period covered by this external evaluation and review (EER), TPP pursued an income diversification and growth strategy, to achieve significant commercial income from industry training activities and to grow the number of international enrolments.<sup>2</sup> While there was a decline in enrolments in full cost-recovery courses between 2013 and 2014 (from 16 per cent to 11 per cent of all EFTS), there was steady growth in these courses from 2014 to 2016 – 11 per cent (2014), 14 per cent (2015) and 17 per cent (2016).

International enrolments increased from approximately 57 EFTS in 2013 (53 EFTS in industry training) to 75 EFTS in 2016 (57 EFTS in industry training). However, over that period, total EFTS have declined – 2,563

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<sup>2</sup> Tai Poutini Polytechnic Annual Report 2015

(2013), 2,560 (2014), 2,327 (2015), 1,970 (2016.) TPP reports that a significant downturn in the West Coast economy and continuing high levels of employment and fewer school leavers for non-Coast operations are factors contributing to enrolment trends. In 2015, TPP reduced its final EFTS claim to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) by approximately 120 EFTS in order to comply with TEC funding rules.

There have been a significant number of changes to membership of Council and senior management since the July 2013 EER, including:

- In December 2016, the New Zealand Government appointed a Crown manager in response to concerns about TPP's financial position and weaknesses in its educational delivery and processes
- Resignation of the chair of Council (February 2017); at the time of this EER, there were four Government-appointed members of Council (including the chair), all appointed since August 2016
- Resignation of the chief executive (May 2016) and appointment of an acting chief executive (June 2016)
- West Coast – disestablishment of self-managing team and appointment of two general managers since 2014; current general manager appointed October 2016
- MAINZ – three general managers between 2013 and 2014; acting-general manager appointed February 2016-May 2017; role currently vacant
- Industry Training New Zealand – general manager appointed April 2015
- Resignation of academic director (August 2013) and appointment of academic manager (October 2013)
- Appointment of independent academic board chair (March 2017)

Since the previous EER, TPP has received approval

and accreditation for:

- Twenty-four New Zealand sub-degree qualifications
- Three Bachelor's degrees – Bachelor of Musical Arts, Bachelor of Audio Engineering, and Bachelor of Business and Enterprise
- Graduate Diploma in Business Enterprise

Previous quality assurance history:

At the previous EER in July 2013, NZQA was Confident in TPP's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

In May 2015, NZQA, together with MITO (Motor Industry Training Organisation), conducted a risk monitoring visit to gain assurance of TPP compliance in relation to extractives training. While the report noted suitable trainers being used and strong links with industry, it also identified a number of issues, including a failure to fully engage with MITO's pre-assessment moderation. The report required ongoing monitoring and self-assessment of extractives training.

In late 2014, TPP undertook a risk analysis of delivery of programmes to students engaged in full-time work, and identified 14 high-risk issues relating to compressed delivery in scaffolding and occupational health and safety programmes. In July 2015, TEC auditors reviewed TPP's report and agreed with TPP's identification of issues.

In September 2015, matters relating to the delivery of scaffolding and rigging courses were raised with TPP council and management (following an earlier complaint made in December 2013). The issues raised related to assessment and moderation, unapproved sub-contracting, and enrolment of international students. In August 2016, national external moderation by Skills Org found two unit standards not at the national standard, and an improvement plan was required from TPP.

During a routine audit in 2015, TEC identified discrepancies in the actual level of education delivery against TEC funding agreements. An independent investigation was commissioned into a number of programmes delivered by TPP from 2010 to 2015. The

majority of programmes are delivered as short modules (one to seven days), punctuated by short periods of work. The draft findings indicate material under-delivery of learning hours in a number of the programmes reviewed. At the time of the EER the TEC's process related to the investigation, including the agreement of outcomes and actions, was still to be completed.

In October 2016, NZQA reported on a review of the programmes identified in the TEC investigation. The majority of NZQA's findings, reported in October 2016, related to lack of oversight by TPP of all the programmes reviewed, although students were acquiring the requisite knowledge and skills to meet industry requirements. Specifically, NZQA found:

- That programmes were not being delivered as approved and that changes had been made to approved programmes but not notified or applied to NZQA (breaches of NZQA Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013)
- That TPP did not have an institutional approach to assessment and moderation practices
- That TPP did not have appropriate processes for checking the visa status and compliance with English language proficiency requirements in the programmes reviewed.

TPP has responded with action plans for each of the five programme areas.

Following poor results in the national external moderation of a significant proportion of standards for the core skills moderation system for 2013-2015, in June 2016 NZQA imposed conditions on TPP's consent to assess against standards (breach of the NZQA Consent to Assess Rules). TPP was required to submit additional assessment materials and learner samples in November 2016. The conditions were removed in April 2017.

In March 2017, TPP reported to NZQA that 47 students had been erroneously awarded the National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety. TPP is working



with NZQA to complete the corrective action required.

During 2015 and 2016, NZQA identified a number of unapproved sub-contracting arrangements and unapproved delivery sites and required TPP to submit those arrangements to NZQA for approval. All declared arrangements have now been approved.

Monitoring visits for the Bachelor of Musical Arts (2015 and 2017) have reported generally positive outcomes, although recommendations are made in relation to strengthening research, student voice and support services, external moderation, and improving relationships between MAINZ and TPP's main campus.

The degree monitor's report (March 2016) for the Graduate Diploma in Business and Enterprise notes revision of courses and learning outcomes following the first semester of delivery and makes six recommendations for improvement, relating to the target market, management of international students, class activities, staff qualifications, moderation processes and the establishment of an advisory committee. A subsequent report (July 2017) noted that four of the six recommendations had been actioned.

The monitor's report for the Bachelor of Business and Enterprise found serious issues relating to the evidence and processes for recognition of prior learning (RPL) (240 credits) and required retrospective RPL and quality assurance processes to be undertaken. In addition, 10 recommendations were made relating to staff research and support, student admission and induction, online components, moderation, the advisory committee, and self-assessment. In July 2017, accreditation for this programme lapsed, due to non-delivery of the programme within the previous 12-month period.

TPP has achieved mixed results for 2016 external moderation by industry standard-setting bodies (Connexis, BCITO (Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation) and MITO).<sup>3</sup> For pre-moderation samples, 55.5 per cent did not meet

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<sup>3</sup> Academic board report: External Moderation 2016, March 2017

standards or required modification; 74 per cent of post-moderation samples met the national standard.

In May 2017, City and Guilds International found that TPP satisfied City and Guilds' requirements overall in relation to the delivery of the Certificate in Food Preparation and Cookery. While City and Guilds expressed confidence in the learning programme and results, examples of non-compliances were identified, and an action plan is required by City and Guilds' to address issues relating to the authenticity and validation of records. A further visit is to be scheduled within six months of the initial visit.

In December 2016, NZTA conducted an audit of TPP's conduct of approved driver licensing courses (Classes 2,3,4,5,D,F,W,T,R,P). TPP was found to be non-compliant with several of NZTA's requirements.<sup>4</sup> TPP has advised action plans to address matters raised in the audit report.

NZQA has found TPP to be Sufficient in consistency for the New Zealand Certificate in Tourism (Level 3) and the New Zealand Certificate in Cookery (Level 4). TPP was found to be Not Sufficient in consistency for the New Zealand Certificate in Agriculture (Vehicles, Machinery and Infrastructure)(Level 3) and an action plan has been accepted by NZQA.

TPP has a largely successful history of gaining NZQA approval and accreditation for the delivery of programmes and consent to assess standards.

Other:

The West Coast is a large, sparsely populated region which is currently experiencing low economic growth. Investment in the region is a government priority. Vocational education has been identified as a key element for regeneration of the West Coast.<sup>5</sup>

On his appointment to TPP, the Crown manager was tasked with addressing issues to ensure access to

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<sup>4</sup> Conditions are set down in 'Statement of Approval Conditions governing the delivery of New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) approved driver licensing courses'.

<sup>5</sup> Tai Poutini West Coast Regional Growth Study (2016); Tai Poutini West Coast Economic Development Action Plan (2017)

tertiary level education and training on the West Coast; improving TPP's financial performance, management and reporting systems; and ensuring the appropriate use of public funding. Additional short-term funding has recently been committed by the Crown to enable TPP to continue to operate and meet its short-term financial obligations.

TPP is currently engaged in reviews and improvement initiatives to:

- improve the quality of programme delivery and academic processes
- strengthen relationships with stakeholders and review the programme portfolio
- achieve greater consistency across the organisation in meeting academic and funding requirements
- develop a recovery plan and new business model for a sustainable organisation.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

International student support and wellbeing is a mandatory focus area. TPP enrolls very few full-time international students (28 at the time of the EER). TPP also enrolls students who are in New Zealand on work visas and who undertake short courses related to their employment. During 2016, TPP enrolled 404 students on full-cost short courses that are necessary for their employment, such as scaffolding and residential care (133 in 2017 year-to-date).

Five programmes, or clusters of programmes, were also selected as focus areas. The focus areas are representative of TPP's faculties and delivery sites, including full and part-time students and programmes with significant numbers of Māori and Pasifika enrolments. The programmes also represent a spread of levels of study and achievement rates.

1. National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (Workplace Safety) (Level 3). This is a 50-credit, block course programme delivered in Auckland by Industry Training New Zealand (174 EFTS in 2016). A large proportion of enrolments are Māori students (76 per cent of total EFTS in 2016). A review by NZQA during 2016 identified weaknesses in the curriculum documentation, programme delivery and institutional processes. TPP has since advised NZQA of over-reporting for 47 students (refer previous quality assurance history above).

2. Music cluster – Certificate in Contemporary Music Performance (Level 4), Bachelor of Musical Arts (Level 7). This cluster represents a pathway for students (in 2016, 38 per cent of certificate students progressed to level 5). Students who opt not to complete the degree can be awarded the Diploma in Contemporary Music Performance (Level 5). The programmes are delivered in Auckland by MAINZ. In 2016 there were 50 EFTS enrolled in the certificate programme and 48 EFTS enrolled in the degree programme; a significant proportion of enrolments include Māori and Pasifika students (12 EFTS Māori and 16 EFTS Pasifika in the certificate; 10 EFTS Māori and 13 EFTS Pasifika in the degree).
3. Civil Plant Operations (Specialist Large Plant) programme. This programme leads to the award of three qualifications: New Zealand Certificates in Infrastructure Works Level 2 (40 credits) and Level 3 (50 credits), and New Zealand Certificate in Infrastructure Works Plant and Equipment Operation (Level 3) (70 credits). The programme is offered by Industry Training New Zealand in four locations (Auckland, Waikato, West Coast and Southland) and was first delivered in April 2016. This programme has replaced two programmes (Civil Quarrying and Mining and Civil Plant Operation). In 2016 there were 18 EFTS in the last year of delivery of Civil Quarrying and Mining, and 29 EFTS in the first year of delivery of Civil Plant Operations (Specialist Large Plant).
4. Trades cluster – Trades Academy and Certificate in Automotive Engineering (Level 3). The West Coast faculty has 165 Trades Academy places across a range of subjects including automotive engineering (33 places in 2017). The Certificate in Automotive Engineering (Level 3) is a 120-credit, full-time programme (14 EFTS in 2016). TPP has recently completed a new building for the delivery of this programme.
5. ICT cluster – New Zealand Diploma in Information Technology Technical Support (Level 5) and Diploma in Information and Communications Technology (Level 6). These programmes are delivered in Greymouth by the West Coast faculty (approximately 11 EFTS in 2017). The level 5 programme (120 credits) is being delivered for the first time in 2017 and replaces the first year of the level 6 Diploma in Information Technology which has an embedded level 4 certificate. The second year of the level 6 diploma (120 credits) is being delivered for the last time in 2017 – a level 6 programme of study leading to the New Zealand Diploma in Systems Administration is under development for delivery in 2018.

### 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 six-day period spread over two weeks, and included visits to the Auckland, Manukau and Greymouth sites.

The EER team met with the Crown manager, Council members, acting chief executive, senior management, and student learning and support staff (in person and via video conference). For each programme focus area, discussions were held with programme management, tutors, students and a range of external stakeholders, including industry advisory groups, employers, graduates and standard-setting bodies.

TPP provided access to a shared repository of important self-assessment documentation. This included a selection of documents and records, including programme documentation, self-assessment reports, strategy and review documents, meeting minutes, and teaching and learning materials, including assessment and moderation samples. This material was used to provide background for, and to triangulate with, the evaluative conversations conducted during the EER visit.

The evaluation team acknowledges the constructive engagement of management and staff with this evaluation, which occurred during a period of significant review and change.

# Summary of Results

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

NZQA is **Not Yet Confident** in the educational performance and **Not Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Tai Poutini Polytechnic**.

- Evidence of serious deficiencies in governance and management has emerged since the previous EER. There has been a lack of accountability and effectiveness in managing compliance obligations and the maintenance and oversight of academic standards and integrity, which has undermined the quality of educational provision at TPP.
- TPP's new governance and management (appointed 2016) are implementing plans to strengthen systems, processes and capability to address the issues that have been identified. Examples of progress made include accurate and standardised programme documentation, central coordination of moderation activities, and improving engagement with key stakeholders. Staff have better knowledge and understanding of organisational requirements and the regulatory context. Accountabilities and reporting requirements have been clarified, and improved processes for management monitoring of academic quality and compliance have been established. Further evidence of the effectiveness of these changes, and improved consistency across the organisation in the application of new processes, is required for NZQA to be confident in TPP achieving the required improvement in educational performance.
- The effectiveness of stakeholder engagement has been variable across TPP over recent years. TPP has identified the need to strengthen its connection with communities on the West Coast. There has been limited engagement with iwi by Council or senior managers, although this is now being addressed. Recently, membership and engagement with some programme advisory committees has been enhanced which is providing greater industry input into programme delivery and development. Further work is required to strengthen the alignment of TPP provision with the needs of industry and the West Coast region.
- TPP has weak processes for providing reliable, timely and accurate data to inform decision-making. Gaps in information and analysis have contributed to a limited understanding of overall learner achievement and outcomes for learners and other stakeholders. Programme-level achievement has not been consistently monitored at faculty or organisation level, although recently developed initiatives for collaborative and ongoing review of programmes are positive.

- From 2013 to 2015, overall course completion rates were approximately 82 per cent for all student cohorts.<sup>6</sup> However, in 2016 there was a significant reduction in overall course completion rates (to 71 per cent) and in Māori and Pasifika student achievement (to 60 per cent). Qualification completion rates were between 63 and 66 per cent from 2013 to 2015, but increased to 72 per cent in 2016. TPP has not provided convincing explanations for the 2016 achievement data (or steps to be taken to improve results), although some contributing factors have been identified. This reflects a weakness in self-assessment.
- A very high level of delegation to faculties for learner outcomes and an ineffective academic board have contributed to poor oversight of key academic processes in the past, such as changes to programme delivery, assessment and moderation, and processing of results. TPP is implementing plans to improve academic quality overall, and to address moderation issues, specifically those identified by NZQA during 2016 in particular<sup>7</sup>, to strengthen confidence in the achievement data. Some examples of good assessment and moderation practice were noted during this evaluation; however, compliance with organisational requirements for internal moderation is variable across the focus area programmes. Recent external moderation outcomes provide a basis for improving confidence in the processes underpinning achievement results. However, a more robust and consistent approach is required across all teaching units towards undertaking moderation and using the outcomes to improve assessment practices.
- There is some evidence of TPP graduates achieving employment and/or progressing to further study. In the focus area programmes, staff know about graduate destinations for more recent years, but information is gathered and held informally rather than systematically. Organisation-wide data-gathering has historically reflected graduates' intentions rather than actual outcomes, which has had little value for informing programme improvement. TPP has recognised this gap and recently commissioned a survey of 2015 graduates. The report provides useful data and analysis on graduate outcomes, but has not yet been formally reviewed (refer Findings 1.2).
- There were some examples of good teaching in the programme focus areas. However, there is a general reliance on the commitment and skills of individual teachers, and TPP's processes for understanding and enhancing teaching effectiveness need strengthening. TPP is currently focusing on teacher qualifications and faculty-led processes for strengthening academic practice.
- There are few mechanisms for gathering feedback from students apart from the regularly conducted student surveys. It is not apparent that survey results are

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<sup>6</sup> Source: TPP data which includes all funding categories, including full-cost recovery.

<sup>7</sup> Academic Quality Improvement Plan (versions sighted December 2016, February 2017 and June 2017); Tai Poutini Moderation and Assessment Action Plan (TPPMAP) (2017)

being consistently reviewed or are influencing organisational decision-making. Some teachers are gathering and using feedback from students and classes, and responding with changes to their teaching activities and support for learners.

- Learning and support services staff are currently distributed across faculties. It is not clear how well accountabilities are managed and information is shared. The usage of support services is tracked, but there is no self-assessment of how well the services are meeting learner needs. In some programmes, tutors and support services staff work closely together to provide a good level of learning support and pastoral care, which is supporting retention and student success. Targeted support is available for Māori and full-time international students. There is little evidence of how this support impacts on learner wellbeing and success. There are no targeted services available for Pasifika students who, in 2016, represented 9 per cent of all students.
- International education is a very small component of TPP activities (4 per cent of total EFTS in 2016). Achievement data indicates variable performance and little information is available to understand the value of outcomes for international learners.
- TPP has undertaken reviews and developed improvement plans in response to the identification of discrepancies in relation to delivery hours and non-compliance with NZQA rules. Key factors in the high rates of non-compliance have been poor staff knowledge and understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements, and a lack of consistency and accountability across the distributed workforce. Some progress has been made in strengthening central oversight and monitoring of compliance. Examples include the curriculum documentation project, the TPP moderation action plan, the manager's monthly report to the acting chief executive, and revised terms of reference and membership of the academic board. However, faculties, which historically have developed their own responses to compliance requirements, are not yet consistent with revised processes in every case. Further improvement is required to ensure TPP is managing its compliance obligations effectively.
- TPP is an organisation in transition, facing significant challenges in developing effective responses to the serious issues identified over recent years, maintaining its normal function as a tertiary provider and developing a robust plan for the future. Effective and open communication practices are contributing to the constructive engagement of staff with these challenges in the face of ongoing uncertainty.
- TPP is meeting the most critical needs of its learners and other relevant stakeholders. Students are acquiring the required skills and knowledge to meet industry requirements. Across the focus area programmes there was a good mix of theory and practical learning activities and access to appropriate facilities and resources, including work placements in some cases, which are building



students' understanding, skills and work-readiness. Adequate plans have been developed to address key areas of weakness in educational performance, such as the role of the academic board in monitoring academic integrity. There is some evidence of improvement in important processes contributing to learning and other outcomes, including delivery matching curriculum documents, moderation, and stakeholder engagement. However, needed improvements are not yet consistently evident across the organisation.

- TPP does not have an effective, organisation-wide and systematic approach to monitoring educational performance. TPP reports improving levels of understanding of self-assessment across the organisation, and the evaluators noted some steps being taken to improve capability at faculty level. However, the validity and usefulness of self-assessment information is too weak to usefully inform decisions, including timely and accurate results and evidence of valued outcomes for graduates and other stakeholders. Self-assessment processes for the analysis and use of information (such as learner achievement data, programme performance review documents and student feedback) require strengthening. In addition, the examples of non-compliance identified in sampling processes during this evaluation suggest that changes arising from TPP's self-assessment have not yet had the intended effect and that institutional compliance monitoring processes are not yet sufficiently developed. Taken together, these are critical weakness in TPP's capability in self-assessment.

# Findings<sup>8</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

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

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

From 2013 to 2015, most students enrolling at TPP (across all funding categories) successfully completed their courses (Table 1). However, in 2016 course completion rates dropped for all students, and even more significantly for Māori and Pasifika students. Achievement rates for full-time international students have improved but fluctuated over the period, although the very small number of enrolments, particularly in 2013 and 2014, reduces the usefulness of the data.

**Table 1. TPP successful course completion percentages (and number of EFTS enrolled), 2013-2016, (priority groups, all funding categories)**

	2013	2014	2015	2016
TPP overall	82% (2,563)	84% (2,560)	82% (2,327)	71% (1,970)
Māori	82% (604)	83% (606)	79% (563)	60% (540)
Pasifika	77% (331)	78% (330)	79% (347)	60% (216)
Students under 25	82% (808)	80% (920)	78% (998)	71% (1,068)
International students full-time	77% (4)	70% (12)	93% (19)	85% (18)
International students short-course	73% (53)	69% (38)	73% (49)	66% (57)

Source: TPP-supplied data

TEC-published educational performance data (SAC<sup>9</sup>-funded) for TPP shows similar trends (Table 2). Over the period, course completion rates have been generally at or close to the median, although there was a significant decline in 2016. However, there has been a downward trend in TPP's successful course completion rates when compared with other ITPs.<sup>10</sup> Qualification completion has been consistently

<sup>8</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>9</sup> Student Achievement Component funding

<sup>10</sup> TPP ranked eighth among ITPs for course completion in 2013; in 2016 TPP ranked fourteenth.

below the sector median, although some improvement was evident in 2016.<sup>11</sup> TPP consistently ranks low for progression to further study. Retention rates are variable over the period, and TPP has been consistently below the sector median. Progression and retention rates reflect TPP’s portfolio of programmes, which are heavily focused on block courses delivered to students who are in employment.

**Table 2. TPP educational performance indicator (EPI) data, 2013-2016 (SAC-funded) compared with the ITP sector median**

EPI by year	2013	2014	2015	2016
Course completion	81%	80%	78%	73%
ITP sector median	80%	80%	79%	78%
Qualification completion	72%	69%	68%	72%
ITP sector median	74%	72%	72%	72%
Progression	19%	16%	13%	16%
ITP sector median	37%	37%	34%	36%
Retention	52%	61%	69%	60%
ITP sector median	68%	69%	69%	68%

Source: TEC Performance of Tertiary Education Organisations tables (2013–2016)

TPP does not have an organisation-wide and systematic approach to reviewing and analysing achievement data overall or at programme level. TPP has identified that results for levels 3-4 programmes (which comprised 42 per cent of all EFTS in 2016) have impacted on course completion rates for 2016. However, it was not clear why there had been a significant decline in learner achievement in these programmes. The lateness of some results was also suggested as a contributing factor, although there was no evidence provided to support this. There was also no credible explanation provided for the relatively poorer performance of Māori and Pasifika learners in 2016. Some informal conclusions were reported in focus area programmes as to why learners were withdrawing or not succeeding. These include student preparedness for the programme, financial and personal circumstances, high learning needs, and early employment opportunities. In some instances, changes have been made to recruitment and selection processes or the provision of learning support, but improved outcomes are not yet evident.

For the very small proportion of Youth Guarantee-funded provision (59 students (44 EFTS) in 2016) successful course completion rates are variable over the period: 87 per cent in 2013, 73 per cent in 2014, 69 per cent in 2015, and 84 per cent in 2016. However, apart from 2015, TPP has performed well in relation to other ITPs for qualification completions at level 3. Not discounting the variability, these are good results overall.

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<sup>11</sup> TPP advises that qualification completion rates reflect the volume of ‘short course’ delivery. No evidence of how, or how much, the volume of short course delivery impacts on qualification completion was provided during the EER.

TPP has taken steps to strengthen confidence in achievement data by clarifying requirements and increasing management oversight of moderation activities. In 2016, NZQA required improvements to assessment and moderation practice at TPP, following poor results in national external moderation and the outcomes of investigations into the programmes highlighted as areas of concern by the TEC.<sup>12</sup> Recent external moderation outcomes indicate some progress is being made in addressing issues, and this provides a basis for improving confidence in the processes underpinning achievement results. However, further work is required to ensure compliance with the TPP moderation action plan and to ensure moderation outcomes are used to improve assessment practices.

In some programmes reviewed during this evaluation, the additional skills and attributes that students are achieving, in addition to the completion of courses and qualifications, are clearly identified and measured. These include communication and teamwork skills which are enhancing students' wellbeing and work-readiness. However, this broader understanding of learner achievement is held mainly by individual tutors and is not reflected at the organisational level.

In 2016, 79 per cent of students at levels 1-3 were tested using the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool (TPP target is 85 per cent). Of those tested, 71 per cent made gains in reading and 75 per cent made gains in numeracy, although analysis of the significance of these gains was not available.<sup>13</sup>

In 2015, TPP reviewed the effectiveness of self-assessment processes leading to educational performance, and EPI data specifically. The review concluded that significant improvement was required in systematic and evidence-based analysis and review of achievement at all levels of the organisation. Limited progress has been made on the recommendations set out in that report, or those included in the 2013 EER report in relation to student achievement. During this evaluation, the following issues were identified for self-assessment capability in relation to this key evaluation question:

- The lack of an effective regime for monitoring learner achievement data across the organisation as a whole
- Little evidence of effective monitoring of programme performance over the period covered by the EER, although recent initiatives for reviews at academic board and in faculties are noted

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<sup>12</sup> In June 2016, conditions were imposed on TPP's consent to assess against standard for the core skills moderation system following poor results in national external moderation from 2013 to 2015. In October 2016, NZQA reported that TPP did not have an institutional approach to assessment and moderation practices, although students were acquiring the requisite knowledge and skills to meet industry requirements.

<sup>13</sup> TPP 2016 Literacy and Numeracy Report to Academic Board, 3 May 2017

- Concerns about the accuracy and timeliness of achievement data, arising from inconsistency in processes and timelines for notifying results
- Limited use of cohort analysis or benchmarking (across sites and tutors, and with other tertiary providers) to support analysis and reflection on achievement trends.

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

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

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

Since the previous EER, TPP has made little progress on improving the quality and usefulness of information on student outcomes, including data on graduate destinations and feedback on the value of specific programmes. End-of-year student satisfaction surveys provide information on student intentions for work or further study. Survey responses are analysed by faculty. However, this data has limited value for TPP's understanding of the actual outcomes for graduates, or for informing programme improvement.

TPP has recognised this gap and commissioned a survey of graduates who completed qualifications in the 2015 calendar year.<sup>14</sup> Key findings of the survey, which had a 33 per cent response rate, were:

- 55 per cent of respondents were in full-time work, 21 per cent in part-time work, and 10 per cent were self-employed; 26 per cent of respondents were currently studying or had enrolled to study
- 62 per cent of respondents said their qualification was highly or partly relevant to their current job
- 97 per cent of respondents were overall satisfied with the quality of the programme they completed.

The report contains potentially useful information, including analysis by student cohort and programme, but has only been available to TPP since June 2017 and has not been formally reviewed.

Some programme staff have information on graduate destinations for more recent years. However, in every case the information is gathered and held informally rather than systematically. There is little evidence that feedback is gathered from graduates on the quality and relevance of their programmes for employment or

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<sup>14</sup> Tai Poutini Polytechnic Graduate Outcomes Report 2015, June 2017, Otago Polytechnic

further study. Such information could be useful for identifying programme strengths and areas for improvement.

The effectiveness of stakeholder engagement has been variable across TPP over recent years. More recently, the membership and functioning of programme advisory committees has been reviewed in some programmes, and this is improving TPP's understanding of industry requirements and trends.

TPP recognises that it has become disconnected from some of the communities it serves, including on the West Coast. This has had an impact on TPP's understanding of stakeholders' needs and valued outcomes. Despite some efforts by individual staff, there has been limited engagement with iwi by Council or senior managers, although that shortcoming is now being responded to. A considered approach is now being taken to strengthening relationships with key stakeholders for all faculties, but particularly on the West Coast. A comprehensive analysis is planned to improve the alignment of TPP provision with the needs of the West Coast region. This will also be done with reference to the outcomes of the regional growth programme.<sup>15</sup>

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

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

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

During 2015 and 2016, NZQA and the TEC conducted reviews into programme delivery, including learning and assessment activities, which have identified concerns regarding TPP's effectiveness in maintaining academic standards and integrity (refer Findings 1.5 and 1.6). At the time of the EER the TEC's process relating to the investigation was still to be completed; however, there is evidence of under-delivery of provision in a number of programmes. NZQA has found a lack of oversight by TPP of 14 programmes reviewed during 2016. Specifically, NZQA found evidence of poor programme documentation and management of programme changes, and inadequate management and oversight of assessment and moderation across the organisation. TPP identified risks associated with compressed delivery as early as 2014. However, organisational responses were inadequate. TPP was also unable to achieve the required improvements identified by NZQA for a significant proportion of standards for the core skills moderation system from 2013 to 2015.

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<sup>15</sup> The Tai Poutini West Coast Regional Growth Study was released in September 2016. The Tai Poutini West Coast Economic Development Action Plan sets out how the opportunities identified in the growth study are to be executed.

During 2016 and 2017, TPP has strengthened policies and practices relating to programme design and delivery. Key projects include the redevelopment of curriculum documentation and aligning programmes with programme approval documents and the STEO website.<sup>16</sup> Systems are being developed to strengthen monitoring of programme delivery hours. These projects have led to improved curriculum documentation and better monitoring of programme design and delivery.

An organisation-wide moderation action plan (TPPMAP) has been developed. There is a much greater focus in faculties on moderation taking place and on ensuring staff are responding to moderation outcomes. However, some inconsistencies in practice remain and were identified during this evaluation. These include areas where internal moderation is still not occurring (refer Focus Area 2.2) and the quality of assessment is variable (refer Findings 1.6, Focus Areas 2.1 and 2.5). While the results of external moderation by NZQA have improved in 2017, industry training organisation moderation outcomes for 2016 and 2017 have been mixed. A more robust and consistent approach, including further capability building in relation to assessment and moderation, is required to achieve further improvements.

Faculties are taking various approaches to strengthening academic practices. Examples include regular discussions and information sharing on teaching and learning, the new curriculum documentation, and developing practices for collaborative reviews of programme self-assessment reports. New processes for submitting and approving results have been developed. These are positive initiatives which are increasing tutors' understanding of academic processes and expectations. However, evidence gathered during this evaluation suggests required improvements are not yet consistent across the organisation (refer Findings 1.6).

This evaluation, and earlier investigations and reviews by NZQA, have found that TPP is generally meeting the most critical needs of its learners for teaching and learning activities which enable students to build the required knowledge and skills, including key attributes required for work-readiness. There are some good examples of study pathways supporting student progression from school (for example the Trades Academy) or from lower-level programmes through to degree-level study (for example in MAINZ). Tutors use a mix of theory and practical activities and resources to ensure students are engaged with their learning. Many programmes include work placements which provide students with opportunities for real-world learning. Facilities and resources are generally fit-for-purpose, and in some cases, such as the automotive workshop, students benefit from access to a custom-built environment and modern equipment.

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<sup>16</sup> The Services for Tertiary Education Organisations (STEO) website is a register of funding, qualification, course and delivery site details for tertiary education organisations.

TPP does not have a teaching and learning strategy. A discussion paper was prepared on the development of a framework for twenty-first century learning in early 2016, but no further action was taken. Although TPP now delivers two degrees and one graduate diploma, little support is currently available for tutors to become research-active or to ensure that teaching is informed by research. TPP largely relies on student feedback for monitoring teaching effectiveness. Students provide feedback on their tutors in regular surveys, and collated findings are provided to programme staff. There is some evidence in programme self-assessment documents of tutors responding to this information, although the commentary tends to be descriptive rather than insightful and improvement-focused. In most programmes reviewed during this evaluation, performance appraisals had not taken place for several years. TPP is encouraging tutorial staff to upskill, particularly in teaching adults, and has developed a central database of tutor qualifications. The evaluators saw some examples of good teaching in the programme focus areas. However, there is a general reliance on the commitment and skills of individual teachers, and processes for understanding and enhancing teaching effectiveness need strengthening.

As noted in Findings 1.2 above, some programme advisory groups are working closely with tutors to strengthen the match between programme delivery and the skills needed by industry. However, in other cases, programme advisory groups are not meeting at all. In the absence of systematic engagement with a range of employers and other industry bodies, this represents a significant gap in self-assessment.

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

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

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

Although examples of effective engagement of students with their learning were noted during this evaluation, the distributed and diverse nature of TPP, and weaknesses in self-assessment, mean that it is difficult to determine the overall quality of guidance and support.

Students are generally receiving appropriate advice and information prior to and at enrolment. Interviews with prospective students provide opportunities to review entry requirements, discuss the course workload and expectations, and identify learning needs, including literacy and numeracy. However, some examples were noted where entry requirements had not been met (refer Focus Area 2.2).

During this evaluation, examples were noted of tutors and support services staff working closely together to provide a good level of learning support and pastoral



care. Some tutors are gathering and using feedback from students and classes (for example, through regular meetings or student reflections on assessments), and responding with changes to their teaching activities and support for learners. These include activities to strengthen communication and teamwork skills which enhance students' wellbeing and contribute to an inclusive learning environment. Learners interviewed during this evaluation reported receiving useful and timely feedback on their progress which helps to maintain their motivation. This evidence reflects aspects of good performance in relation to this key evaluation question.

A small team of staff establish relationships with individual students who identify as Māori through the first impressions survey, and provide pastoral care and assistance with connecting to iwi and accessing financial support. Some programmes appear to have strong embedding of tikanga and Te Ao Māori. Māori content and local knowledge includes pōwhiri and noho mārae delivery. This focus provides cultural knowledge, relevance and familiarity for Māori learners, and enhances engagement in classroom activities. Some case studies are available of Māori students who have successfully progressed from foundation to degree-level studies. However, student survey responses are not analysed by ethnicity and there are limited avenues for gathering meaningful feedback on the effectiveness of the support provided for Māori students or for understanding the impact on learner wellbeing or success. There are no targeted support services available for Pasifika students who, in 2016, represented 9 per cent of all TPP enrolments.

TPP's self-assessment processes do not systematically address the quality of learning support and other support available to students outside the classroom. The specialist services available to students vary across campuses, although they generally reflect the usual types of support (including library and learning services, enrolment and financial support services, and disability, careers and counselling support). Additional pastoral care is also provided for full-time international students. Some data is gathered on usage of these central services and positive feedback was noted from students in interviews during the evaluation. However, apart from a 2014 survey of 17 users of the Greymouth library, there is very little evidence of efforts being made to understand the value or impact of the services for student learning and wellbeing.

One potential source of information on student engagement, as well as the quality of guidance and support, are student satisfaction surveys. However, it is not apparent how survey results are being used to inform organisational decision-making.<sup>17</sup> The surveys are administered three times a year for full-time students (online surveys) and at the end of short courses (paper-based surveys). Overall, the findings for 2013-2016 are positive (although below institutional targets in 2016). In 2016, for both semesterised and short courses, there was an overall

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<sup>17</sup> Several reports summarising survey results from 2013 to 2016 were provided to the academic board in March 2017.

rating of 4.2 (4.5 and 4.6 respectively in 2015).<sup>18</sup> The lowest satisfaction rating was 3.98, for the MAINZ faculty. A 2015 report to management on survey findings stated that 38 per cent of West Coast students and 48 per cent of MAINZ students had identified barriers to their learning. Better quality and improved access to course resources and facilities, and further feedback and help from tutors, were sought by those respondents. However, it is not clear what actions, if any, were taken in response to these findings. The programme advisory committee and monitor also noted inadequate learning support services at MAINZ during 2015 and 2016.

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

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

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

Evidence of serious deficiencies in governance and management at TPP has emerged since the previous EER. Reviews and investigations undertaken by TPP itself and by external agencies (the TEC and NZQA) identified major concerns in relation to TPP's management of its compliance accountabilities in relation to funding conditions<sup>19</sup> and the NZQA Rules (refer Findings 1.6). Following the forecast of a significant financial deficit for 2016, a Crown manager was appointed to address the issues identified by the reviews and the need for significant change to enable TPP to meet its financial obligations.<sup>20</sup> In April 2017, additional short-term financial support was provided to TPP. Governance and management have not given sufficient attention to ensuring compliance with funding rules and monitoring key indicators of educational performance and the effectiveness of processes that contribute to learning and other important outcomes. Significant improvement of TPP's performance is now required to establish a sustainable organisation ensuring access to high-quality tertiary-level vocational education and training that contributes to the economic development of the West Coast.

There are significant challenges for TPP's governance and management in ensuring effective responses to serious compliance issues while also maintaining business as usual and developing a robust plan for the future. During 2016 and

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<sup>18</sup> TPP targets are an average rating of 4.5 for semesterised programme satisfaction and 4.6 for short course satisfaction.

<sup>19</sup> At the time of the EER the process related to TEC's investigation into the actual level of education delivery at TPP against the TEC's funding agreement was still to be completed.

<sup>20</sup> The Crown manager appointment was made in December 2016. The manager was tasked with addressing issues to ensure access to tertiary level education and training on the West Coast, improve TPP's financial performance, management and reporting systems, and ensure the appropriate use of public funding.

2017 there have been changes to organisational leadership including the appointment of an acting chief executive in June 2016 and completely new membership of the TPP Council. There has also been considerable turnover of faculty senior management since the previous EER. The leadership team is implementing plans to strengthen systems, processes and capability. This activity is a high priority for management and there is some evidence of improvements being achieved. Examples include:

- Reviews and action plans are being implemented to strengthen the management and oversight of academic quality and processes and actions by faculty management, central service units and the academic board. Important organisation-wide outcomes of these activities include accurate and standardised curriculum documentation, improved processes for monitoring programme delivery and central coordination of moderation activities, and revised terms of reference and membership for the academic board and sub-committees. Some faculty-specific processes have been developed to provide additional quality assurance, such as results processing and sign-off.
- TPP has identified weaknesses in the quality and consistency of its engagement with important stakeholders and communities in the development and delivery of programmes. A considered approach is being taken to building relationships with key stakeholders, including strengthening programme advisory committees and assessing the needs of the West Coast communities and industries. This activity will inform a review of the programme portfolio.
- TPP is an organisation in transition. This is placing management and staff under considerable pressure. Open and effective communication practices (including the acting chief executive regularly attending faculty and departmental meetings) are helping to maintain staff commitment to business-as-usual activities and engagement with important change processes. Staff have better knowledge and understanding of organisational requirements and the regulatory context, and accountabilities and reporting requirements have been clarified. However, further work is required to ensure consistency across faculties in meeting academic and funding requirements.

The scale of changes, planned and underway, is very significant. Implementation of new processes is variable across faculties and many initiatives are very recent. Further evidence of the effectiveness of the activities in achieving sustainable improvements to educational performance is required.

Self-assessment at TPP is weak. TPP does not have an effective organisation-wide and systematic approach to monitoring educational and organisational performance. Since the previous EER, various processes have been introduced to support reflection and improvement on key aspects of performance. However, the usefulness of such initiatives has been reduced by varying levels of self-assessment capability and uptake across the organisation. Gaps in information (including comprehensive data on graduate employment and the value of other outcomes for

graduates and other stakeholders) and inadequate reporting processes have resulted in a limited understanding of overall learner achievement and outcomes for learners and other stakeholders. It is not clear how effective student support services are in supporting achievement and wellbeing and processes. Processes for reviewing and responding to student feedback at an organisational level require strengthening. A plan for improved reporting to the academic board is being implemented and summary reports on learner achievement and student survey data for 2013–2016 have been tabled recently. However, TPP is not yet undertaking robust analysis and reflecting on the information or developing action plans for improvement.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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

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

Since the last EER, TPP's management of important compliance matters has been weak. This is demonstrated by:

- Draft findings of an independent investigation commissioned by TEC which indicate serious under-delivery of provision in a number of programmes
- Inadequate programme documentation and failure to notify NZQA of programme changes
- Deficiencies in the oversight of assessment and moderation processes identified by NZQA
- Multiple examples of unapproved sub-contracting arrangements and lack of site approvals.

In late 2014, TPP undertook a risk analysis of delivery of programmes to students engaged in full-time work, and identified 14 high-risk issues relating to compressed delivery in scaffolding and occupational health and safety programmes. Since that time, and in response to investigations by external agencies, TPP has sought to understand how the situations of non-compliance occurred and to strengthen institutional systems. Management and staff are responding to issues, but the evaluators had difficulty in determining progress on individual initiatives. This is a concern, as previously some corrective actions have not been implemented or have not been implemented effectively. This reflects poor central oversight of processes for managing compliance and longstanding patterns of independent action by faculties, when it is not clear that there has always been capability and knowledge to do this effectively.

The risk associated with dispersed and variable compliance management has been recognised by the acting chief executive and is beginning to be addressed. Communication of compliance accountabilities is being improved and managers'

monthly reports to the acting chief executive now include a specific section on compliance. The academic board has been reviewed and changes in membership and terms of reference are to be implemented soon with the aim of improving academic rigour. Processes for central monitoring of programme delivery hours, using multiple sources of information, are being developed. Deficiencies in the institution's quality management system have been identified and redevelopment is planned.

Although the planned activities should result in improved management of compliance accountabilities, it is too early to determine whether they go far enough or will be implemented effectively. However, during this evaluation weaknesses were identified that reduce confidence in the effectiveness of TPP's response. Identified weaknesses include the following.

- NZQA site and programme requirements are not consistently met:
  - Programme delivery hours are planned in accordance with the approved hours, but in some instances they are not monitored and staff and students report different delivery hours. This lowers confidence that the correct hours are delivered.
  - Programme documentation show entry requirements that differ from those approved by NZQA. This indicates a weakness in documentation control.
  - Overall, staff delivering degrees are not sufficiently engaged in research.
  - A significant delivery site did not have the required NZQA approval.
  - A student was enrolled on a programme although he did not meet the entry requirements and consequently is unable to complete (until additional requirements are met).
  - A 2016 student was studying by distance when this was not an approved mode of delivery for the programme.
- Assessment and moderation is not consistently managed:
  - A significant proportion of results are reported late to NZQA (17 per cent at April 2017).
  - Processes, described by management, for recording and approving student results are not always followed.
  - A small sample of assessments revealed an instance of plagiarism that had been identified but not responded to by the marker.
- Compliance with the Code of Practice requires strengthening:
  - Despite steps being taken to ensure international students are identified as such when they enrol in industry training courses, this has not occurred in

several instances during 2017. This poses risks for ensuring that they have appropriate visa status, English language proficiency and insurance cover.

## Focus Areas

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

### 2.1 Focus area: National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (Workplace Safety) (Level 3)

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

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

This programme has been negatively impacted by past poor management, the absence of programme leadership, and a lack of some key processes. Several compliance and performance issues surfaced during an investigation of the programme by NZQA in 2016, including TPP not having sought approval for programme changes or sub-contracting arrangements. A lack of institutional oversight, leadership and support of staff, and poor assessment processes were found. TPP has responded to these issues, but progress has been recent and slow, as the following findings confirm:

- Staff appraisals have not occurred. Tutors have not felt appropriately valued, or that their specific activities undertaken to ensure effective delivery have been recognised. The recent operations manager appointment is viewed favourably.
- A formal advisory committee was established in the last year, but no information was provided during the EER about the make-up and terms of reference, or the work of the committee to date.
- Until last year, the programme lacked curriculum documentation that accurately recorded the programme structure. Since then, a fit-for-purpose curriculum document has been developed, reflecting programme components and the different delivery and electives offered. It is not clear how well core components such as self-directed learning and work experience are monitored.
- The entry criteria for the programme requires adequate literacy so that students will cope with the reading and written assessment requirements of the course. However, there are no guidelines in place to support an assessment of that ability. Responsibility for this is left to the person who recruits learners and is not checked.
- The evaluators heard that internal moderation was undertaken by the faculty during 2016 and 2017; however, there was no evidence provided of this activity occurring. A formal moderation schedule has now been developed. The results of two rounds of moderation from June 2017, which were facilitated at an organisational level, were sighted. The quality of assessment is of concern due

to the standard of marking schedules and assessments. This has an impact on the ability to understand the quality of marking.

Despite these issues, NZQA in its 2016 programme review report found that the calibre of the delivery staff, their experience and understanding of industry requirements meant that students acquired the requisite knowledge and skills. The delivery of the programmes by TPP was educationally appropriate.

Interviews with staff and past students for the EER confirmed the relevance and strength of the delivery of the programme and value it has added. Programme delivery has been tailored to individual needs (through noho mārae, weekend and weeknight delivery) and the tutor has ensured a strong tikanga Māori component.

For some learners, completing the programme is the first time they have experienced success in education. Their positive learning experience has instilled a desire for continued education. TPP identifies that 52 per cent of students who completed the programme in 2016 and 2017 have progressed to level 4 study.

TPP has reached people in remote communities and raised awareness of health and safety requirements and implications of unsafe environments. Several examples of changed practice included a community's closure of a mārae after assessing it as unsafe, and employers having improved equipment and recruitment processes.

Course completions have been strong, but the decline from 92 per cent in 2014 to 87 per cent in 2015, and 79 per cent in 2016, is unexplained. The data needs to be considered alongside issues with the quality of assessment and a lack of moderation. The recent identification of the incorrect reporting of qualifications for 47 students resulted in TPP retrospectively auditing results reported, although the audit report was not made available to the evaluation team.

Some matters relating to results processing emerged during the evaluation. While achievement data is regularly reviewed at faculty and team meetings, issues were raised regarding the process for sending hard-copy assessments to Greymouth and the delay in returning results, which affects the currency of data. Information is now recorded before assessments are sent.

## 2.2 Focus area: Music cluster: Certificate in Contemporary Music Performance (Level 4), Bachelor of Musical Arts (Level 7)

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

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

Since the last EER, both the Certificate in Contemporary Music Performance (CCMP) and the Bachelor of Musical Arts (BMA) have undergone significant change. The CCMP has moved to 15-credit modules and is now achievement-based. The BMA, originally aligned to the degree delivered by Ara Institute of



Canterbury, has undergone a number of changes to modules to strengthen the scaffolding of students from supported learning at level 5 to independent learning – including an independent capstone project – at level 7. For both programmes, components are taught over one semester to allow for greater integration and co-teaching. Other examples of changes made during 2016 and 2017 to the programmes are the introduction of Collaboration Week to strengthen the real-world context (a project-focused cross-functional team environment is created to enhance communication and personal development). Classes with theory components are now streamed to increase tutorial support for students with less foundational knowledge. It is too soon to verify the effectiveness of these changes.

For both qualifications, successful course completion rates have declined, particularly in the CCMP overall (70 per cent in 2014 and 49 per cent in 2016). Although the overall course completion rate for the BMA declined by only 2 percentage points, the decline for Māori students was significant (91 per cent in 2014 and 68 per cent in 2016).<sup>21</sup> Qualification completion rates for both programmes have also declined. While the CCMP has been identified as a poor performing programme<sup>22</sup>, there is no evidence of a planned approach to resolve this. In the case of the BMA, programme staff have used a different dataset from that provided by TPP's report portal in their self-assessment report, but the analysis, resulting action plans and discussions during the visit did not show any real understanding of reasons for the declining achievement.<sup>23</sup> Although programme management, staff and students all consider semesterisation has created issues and a loss of contextualisation and cohesion, it is unclear how this affects educational performance. Formal internal moderation is occurring for the CCMP. The development of marking rubrics is one outcome of this process. There is some evidence of internal pre-moderation for the BMA. However, external moderation has yet to take place. This weakness in moderation practice undermines the validity of assessment results for the degree.

Learners appreciate the balance between theory and practice and the opportunity to build on their strengths and personal musical aspirations. All students interviewed during the evaluation have either progressed or intend to progress from the CCMP to the BMA. However, there is no evidence of reflection on how effectively the CCMP prepares graduates for such progression. Some data on graduate outcomes is available, although it is incomplete and largely anecdotal. There is no information available on how many BMA graduates are still involved in the music scene but not employed in the industry. This is a likely outcome for many graduates.

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<sup>21</sup> Successful course completion rates for the BMA for all students were 76 per cent in 2014 and 2015 and 74 per cent in 2016.

<sup>22</sup> Tai Poutini Polytechnic 2013-2017 Self-Assessment Summary

<sup>23</sup> Evaluation Report Bachelor of Musical Arts 2016

There is evidence of low levels of student engagement and attendance in these focus area programmes. Overall student satisfaction is lower for MAINZ than for other faculty<sup>24</sup>, and MAINZ had the greatest number of complaints on the register for 2016. The appointment of year group co-ordinators is intended to improve communication with students and ensure timely responses to issues raised by them. Students recognise this as a positive step. Examples were also provided of staff responsiveness to students' requests. While students indicated that teaching staff were available and willing to provide additional assistance, and that the library staff provided some academic capability-building, they felt that greater support was needed. This was reiterated in the programme advisory group minutes as well as in the 2015 BMA monitoring report. Non-replacement of key management positions, in the view of staff and management, reflects a lack of support from TPP senior management. Over the period covered by the review, research activities have received limited central support.

### 2.3 Focus area: Civil Plant Operations programme

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

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

The Civil Plant Operations (Specialist Large Plant) programme started in mid-2016, replacing two programmes that had been offered for several years and led to national certificates relating to civil infrastructure and plant operations or extractive industries.

Over 2013-2015, successful course completion rates in the programmes leading to national certificates have been consistently good at about 80 per cent. The rates for both Māori and Pasifika students have generally been comparable to other students. In 2016, the successful course completion rate in the newly introduced Civil Plant Operations (Specialist Large Plant) programme was significantly lower, due mainly to a large drop in the rate for Māori learners. Programme management identified that this was due to a cohort of Māori and Pasifika Trade Training (MPTT) students in Auckland. Reflecting on this, programme management identified that they did not have the resources to support these students adequately, and consequently there have been no further intakes of MPTT learners. This is an example of effective self-assessment in the programme.

Excellent results in the external moderation of unit standards over the last four years indicate that assessment has been at the national standard. However, in changing to a programme that leads to New Zealand certificates, assessment of unit standards and consequently external moderation by industry training organisations has been reduced. To date, moderation of the course assessments has been informal, and there has not yet been any external moderation of course

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<sup>24</sup> Tai Poutini Polytechnic 2013-2017 Self-Assessment Summary

assessments. Although there is an annual plan for moderation, more work is required to establish robust moderation for the new programme.

Engagement with industry is largely through tutor contacts and is not systematic. Although a programme advisory committee was formed for the development of the new programme, it has not been operational since late 2016. Information about graduate outcomes is positive but only anecdotal. Also, there is no formal process for gaining information from graduates or employers about the effectiveness of the programme, although feedback is sought from employers about students on work placements. Lack of systematically collected and analysed information about programme outcomes is a weakness in self-assessment.

Teaching on the programme is effective. There is a very high level of engagement between learners and teachers which enhances the learning environment. Students are kept informed of their progress and receive regular coaching about this and their potential career pathways. There is good support for learners. Tutors are the first point of contact for pastoral support, and there are appropriate additional support services available when required.

The programme is effective in developing core skills that learners need when entering work. This is achieved through a number of strategies. For example, the development of literacy and numeracy skills is well embedded in the programme, the programme is structured to reflect the workplace, and the programme includes a 200-hour work placement with a capstone assessment. Learners appreciate the ability to enhance their employment opportunities through work placement and the willingness of staff to use their industry contacts to find jobs.

The programme is adequately resourced with plant and staff, although difficulty in recruiting a staff member in Auckland is restricting enrolments. There is variability in information technology between sites which has some impact. For example, the West Coast offering has introduced e-portfolios, and both staff and students find them to be of value in gathering evidence to demonstrate achievement. However, it has not been possible to adopt e-portfolios at other sites because of lack of computer access. Management of the programme is supportive, and staff have professional development opportunities.

Regular staff meetings are held to help maintain consistency between sites, and academic systems are being strengthened. However, systems are not always implemented as described by management which poses a risk of ongoing inconsistency. Additionally, delivery hours are planned according to the approved programme documentation, but it is not evident how, or if, this is monitored; information provided by students and teachers did not match the expected hours.

Two non-compliances were identified in this focus area. The delivery site in Auckland does not have NZQA approval, and a student who did not meet the driver licence entry requirement has been admitted to the programme. These factors indicate that compliance is not yet effectively managed in this focus area.

## 2.4 Focus area: Cluster: Trades Academy and Certificate in Automotive Engineering (Level 3)

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

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

The Trades Academy Automotive Engineering (TAAE) programme is taught by staff from the West Coast faculty of TPP. It has improving retention rates and very good rates of NCEA level 2 achievement (87 per cent) and transition into further study (86 per cent). Māori students, however, do not achieve as well as non-Māori. High schools consider the TAAE to be a strong performer, and now rely on it to provide their automotive training. In 2016, 10 of the 12 students completed the second year of the programme and progressed to employment or further study. The TAAE offers an effective pathway to the Certificate in Automotive Engineering (CAE) (Level 3), with four graduates progressing in 2015, four in 2016 and six to date in 2017. The CAE is a 120-credit, pre-apprenticeship programme also offered by the West Coast faculty at the Greymouth Campus. Successful course completion rates have declined over the period covered by the EER (88 per cent in 2014 to 64 per cent in 2016). Management and staff attribute this to low retention rates due to personal circumstances and gaining early employment.

Students in both programmes are well supported by tutors and, when necessary, referred to external literacy and numeracy specialists (internal support is not considered appropriate for these students). At-risk students in the TAAE are provided with additional support through the development and monitoring of independent learning plans. The CAE programme requires students to complete a monthly self-assessment, which provides the focus for discussions with staff on progress and engagement. Tutors offer additional assistance sessions each Friday morning. This was initiated in response to declining success rates and the identified needs of students.

There is evidence of appropriate assessment and moderation practice underpinning achievement data. Samples of internal moderation were sighted, with assessment tasks being provided by another ITP. The latest ITO report was positive, with all standards met.

Both programmes focus on gaining the full engagement of students in their learning. Student feedback is mainly positive and students enjoy good relationships with their tutors. The CAE incorporates a variety of teaching methods to accommodate a variety of learning styles. The provision of a state-of-the-art automotive workshop at TPP has greatly enhanced the reputation of the programme and is appreciated by the students. The development of visual learning resource posters displayed throughout the classroom and workshop have proved effective in supporting student learning.

The CAE provides a range of general automotive skills and knowledge for progression to apprenticeships in a range of automotive-related industries. Students gain work experience in a variety of workplaces in five one-week blocks. This provides real-world experience as well as exposure to employer expectations. Industry stakeholders attested to the fact that students gained transferable skills such as self-management, health and safety awareness and communication skills.

Local employers value the stream of potential apprentices, and the CAE was endorsed as the preferred preparation for employment. In 2016, 50 per cent of CAE graduates gained apprenticeships, with three students in non-related employment still seeking motor trade roles. Information from graduates about the utility of the programme would provide useful additional data on the relevance and appropriateness of the skills and knowledge taught.

The high-quality engagement with industry is evidenced by the refocused and enthusiastic programme advisory committee which actively supports the programme, ensuring its continued relevance for the West Coast. The 2017 industry survey provided useful high-level industry information and insight.

TAAE self-assessment is carried out in conjunction with Ministry of Education reporting requirements, with detailed data and analysis regularly provided. CAE staff have developed their own authentic, practical approach to self-assessment and review, recording issues and discussions, and monitoring planned actions using a traffic light system. The tutorial team's self-assessment is ongoing, with a finalised report being provided at the end of the year. CAE staff benchmark data and share best practice with Ara Institute of Canterbury to support better outcomes. Management and staff in both programmes showed evidence of insightful reflection and analysis of data, and improvements made in response to this. Initiatives to improve results include entry interviews for the CAE, resulting in early detection of learning support needs.

Staff feel well supported by management. They are required and supported to complete adult teaching qualifications and all have completed the required literacy and numeracy teaching qualifications. Staff are police vetted in compliance with legislation, and health and safety requirements are well understood and processes for management and reporting are implemented and appropriate.

## 2.5 Focus area: ICT cluster: New Zealand Diploma in Information Technology Technical Support (Level 5) and Diploma in Information and Communications Technology (Level 6)

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

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

From 2013 to 2016, learner achievement in the level 6 ICT diploma has been variable and data analysis is affected by low enrolment numbers.<sup>25</sup> Successful course completion rates have been consistently below the TPP target of 80 per cent, and in 2016 were below the 60 per cent benchmark (57 per cent) for poor performing programmes. Low participation rates by Māori preclude meaningful comparisons of achievement with other students.

Tutors have identified reasons for low student engagement and poor retention rates, including specific papers that are problematic. Responses include providing more information for prospective students about the nature of the course and early identification of learning needs and provision of support. Student attendance is closely monitored and opportunities to study off-site have been reduced. It is too soon to determine the impact of these initiatives on learner achievement.

A review of a small sample of assessment and moderation materials confirmed that assessment is generally at the required standard, although in one case plagiarism was evident but not reflected in the marking.

A recently restructured programme advisory committee, with new local membership, is beginning to offer useful input into programme development and delivery. In response to feedback on essential skills for ICT graduates, tutors have recently increased the focus on the development and assessment of communication and project management skills.

The tutors have a general knowledge of graduate destinations, although no records are maintained. Of the two students that graduated in 2016, one is still looking for work related to the qualification and one has progressed to degree study. The West Coast is a small catchment and industry demand is low for graduates with general knowledge and core skills in IT (for help/service desk and entry-level technician roles). Further engagement with industry will be required to improve the relevance of the ICT programmes for the region and to build student numbers.

Teachers are using a variety of teaching and learning activities, including role plays and an opportunity to work on the TPP helpdesk, which are effective in engaging students in their learning. Students receive good feedback on assessments and their progress overall. Students who need additional learner support are identified

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<sup>25</sup> The ICT programmes are very small, with 11 students enrolled in the two focus area programmes in 2017.

and referred to specialist services as required. Tutors are responsive to student feedback, including reporting back on changes made.

Prior to October 2016, little support and leadership was available to the two tutors, including feedback on their performance. This contributed to a lack of consistency with institutional academic processes and accountability for teaching resources, including non-compliance with moderation requirements. It is also noted that one student was permitted to study by distance, which is not an approved delivery mode for the programme. Staff confirmed that they now feel more supported and engaged with faculty processes, such as cluster group reviews of programme self-assessments, which has increased their understanding of academic practices and requirements. Expectations for maintaining currency in their discipline and professional development have also been clarified and a revised performance appraisal system is being implemented.

## 2.6 Focus area: International student support and wellbeing

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

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

There has been a lack of connectivity across TPP's different faculties, limiting a coherent and strong understanding of performance for international students overall.

Full data on the total number of international students enrolled by programme (rather than EFTS) and faculty was not provided during the EER (but has since been made available). Although small numbers of full-time enrolments enable individual achievement to be monitored on a case by case basis, there was no evidence demonstrating TPP's analysis and understanding of achievement trends for international students overall, or in short courses. There is no strategy focused on improving achievement. TPP indicated that it follows the progress of its international graduates, although no destination or outcomes information was provided.

The limitations of TPP's results reporting portal restricts the organisation's understanding of international student achievement, as the portal does not easily provide a breakdown of short course and full-time student achievement data. However, following the EER, data was manually extracted and provided by TPP which shows that in 2016 successful course completions for all international students were 70 per cent (compared with 71 per cent for TPP students overall). Over 2013-2016, successful course completion rates for the small number of full-time international students ranged between 77 per cent and 93 per cent (85 per cent in 2016). When successful completion of certification of proficiency courses is included, the successful course completion rates for international students enrolled

in short courses in 2016 was 66 per cent (compared with 72 per cent for all other students).<sup>26</sup>

TPP's self-assessment in relation to the Code of Practice is well considered. In December 2016, TPP identified some non-compliances in relation to: students not being able to get all required information from printed material; industry training students' language ability not being checked and their insurance policies not being sighted; additionally, some visas were not compliant. In 2017, these areas have been a focus for TPP.

A review of a small sample of full-time international student files mostly demonstrated that students had appropriate visas and met English language requirements. Where there were gaps in information on file, explanations were provided, suggesting a need for tighter file management rather than key requirements not having been met. TPP accepts that it would have been better to have records of insurance cover on the hard-copy files, in addition to the electronic record.

It was apparent that staff have a solid understanding of the background, experiences and progress of full-time international students on an individual basis and engage regularly with these students during their time at TPP. That process is assisted before students enrol by the requirement that they provide a statement of purpose demonstrating their understanding of the particular programme they seek to enrol in and its relevance to their aspirations. It is also assisted by small international numbers.

It was evident from speaking with full-time international students that they had received appropriate induction and orientation information and support. Pastoral care and academic support were commented on favourably. The expectation of 100 per cent attendance was clear, and the Academic Statute provides guidance to staff about when actions such as the issuing of warning letters should take place.

Students interviewed discussed doing their own research about studying at TPP rather than relying on agents. They appreciated information that had been provided directly by TPP. TPP indicated that it obtained feedback from students about the quality of information provided by agents, but this was not evidenced. Annual reports over time show ongoing analysis and reporting on feedback from agents contributing to organisational needs analysis and informing programme development.

TPP formally surveyed international students and graduates for the first time in 2017 with 14 responses received. No information was available on the survey response rate. The survey confirmed that students found their study relevant. The evaluators also heard that TPP's programme offerings were of interest and

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<sup>26</sup> Certificate of proficiency courses (being those courses which do not lead to a qualification) have very high completion rates (95 per cent in 2016).



relevance, providing study options not available to students in their home countries. Relevant pathways from certificate to diploma or degree level are valued. The annual international student prospectus contains a selection of case studies demonstrating the relevance of programmes for graduating students.

# Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Tai Poutini Polytechnic:

- Strengthen self-assessment systems, processes and capability to improve and support effective management and oversight of educational and organisational performance.
- Develop effective processes to ensure that planned improvements are implemented consistently across the organisation and that the impact of improvement initiatives are regularly monitored.
- Prioritise the implementation of an effective regime for maintaining academic standards and integrity, including ensuring a more robust and consistent approach to assessment and moderation practices.
- Strengthen processes to ensure accurate, valid and timely data is available and analysed to inform self-assessment activities and decision-making.
- Improve support and guidance for staff research.
- Improve the accountability and management of learning and support services, to improve understanding of how well services are contributing to learner wellbeing and success.
- Improve stakeholder engagement processes to increase understanding of the needs of communities and industries.
- Ensure each programme systematically collects information on graduate destinations and the effectiveness of graduates in the workplace, and analyses the data to inform programme development.
- Improve processes to ensure effective management of important compliance accountabilities across the whole organisation.

# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

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

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

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

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

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

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

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

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

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