External Evaluation and Review Reports

Bay of Plenty Polytechnic

Waiariki Institute of Techology

The enclosed historical external evaluation and review reports were carried out in 2010 by ITP Quality, the body that quality assured Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics prior to NZQA taking over that function.

They form part of the quality assurance history of Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology. Toi Ohomai was formed by the merger of Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and Waiariki Institute of Technology in 2016.

2010

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Bay of Plenty Polytechnic

Date of Report: 21 June 2010

Contents

Purpose

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Institute of Technology or Polytechnic"s (ITP) 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 ITP itself for quality improvement purposes.

Bay of Plenty Polytechnic in Context

Location:	Windermere Drive, Tauranga
Type:	Institute of Technology/Polytechnic
Size:	2952 EFTS (from 2008 Annual Report)
Sites:	The main campus is at Windermere Drive, with business and computer programmes offered at the Bongard Centre, Cameron Road, Tauranga.

Characteristics of Bay of Plenty Polytechnic

The Bay of Plenty Polytechnic"s primary purpose is to ensure that the people of the Western Bay of Plenty have access to relevant, comprehensive, quality tertiary education and training opportunities, with appropriate pathways and learner support services that reflect the modes of delivery.

The Polytechnic has built productive partnerships with other providers, particularly the University of Waikato, through which the Polytechnic teaches all levels of degrees, enabling students to complete their degrees in Tauranga. This strategy provides degree-level teaching and fosters research activity without adverse effect on the Polytechnic"s provision of a diverse range of trades training and professional education. This is consistent with the Polytechnic"s commitment to working with agencies and businesses in the region to implement the strategic goals and actions of „SmartGrowth" – the region"s growth management strategy, and „Smart Economy" – the region"s economic strategy, both developed jointly by Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty (the regional Council).

Quality Assurance History

ITP Quality conducted a full audit of Bay of Plenty Polytechnic in March 2006, awarding Quality Assured status for four years. No non-compliances were issued, 13 examples of good practice were identified and 12 recommendations were made. A subsequent Mid- Term Quality Review was conducted in August 2008, which endorsed the Polytechnic"s Quality Assured status and made three recommendations.

General Conclusion

Statement of confidence on educational performance

> *ITP Quality is **highly confident** in the educational performance of Bay of Plenty Polytechnic.*

The commitment of the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic to providing programmes that are valued by industry and community is outstanding. Development of effective links with industry was apparent in every programme evaluated and productive educational links to other educational providers has enabled the Polytechnic to provide learning opportunities for students up to degree level without their having to leave the Bay. This is but one example of the Polytechnic"s notion of "Eke Panuku – Reaching our potential together" in action. Another is the innovative and forward-looking approach to lifting Māori achievement, specifically in the Ngā Okawa a Tangaroa programme and more generally in the dual heritage Te Waka Hourua concept which pervades the campus and its programmes. Students are highly valued as stakeholders and are supported in their learning by competent industry-wise tutors and an effective student support system (Kahurangi). In turn they generally speak highly of the Polytechnic. All these factors contribute to high retention and completion rates for the programmes. There is clear evidence from external stakeholders that graduates are work-ready, both with specific skills and knowledge appropriate for employment and a wider suite of skills and attitudes that are appropriate for employment and citizenship.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

> *ITP Quality is **confident** in the capability in self-assessment of Bay of Plenty Polytechnic.*

The Bay of Plenty Polytechnic participated in the trial of the self-assessment and external evaluation review process, and within a short time has made a strong beginning in implementing the concept across its programmes and business units (more commonly described as „service units" in the tertiary sector). The existing Annual Programme Review (APR) process provided an opportunity to review the approach to and effectiveness of academic programmes and to develop action plans for improvements. Although many examples of experimental and programmed continuous improvement initiatives were evident, adapting the APR process to the more evaluative self-assessment regime was variable. There were signs too of a self-assessment approach to the effectiveness of relationships with industry and the community, and in ways of maintaining contact with graduates. Of the business units Pikiarero, which fosters good teaching practice; Kahurangi, which provides well monitored and delivered student support; and Taiorangahau, the research unit, have particularly risen to the challenge of assessing the

relevance of their own activities and how their services to staff and students can be further improved.

ITP Response

Bay of Plenty Polytechnic has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

Basis for External Evaluation and Review

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

NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance of the polytechnic sector, and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors" Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities. This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the guidelines approved by the ITP Quality Board.

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

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions through the investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the ITP Quality website (www.itpq.ac.nz).

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: http://www.itpq.ac.nz/index.php/external-evaluation-review/eer-guidelines

Scope of External Evaluation and Review

Identification of Focus Areas

Programme focus areas were selected by the Lead Evaluator at the scoping meeting attended by the Chief Executive, Director Academic, Academic Manager, and Director Māori and Community Development from Bay of Plenty Polytechnic, and, representing ITP Quality, the Lead Evaluator and Principal Advisor. Prior to the scoping meeting, the Lead Evaluator and Principal Advisor had been provided with retention and completion data for all programmes.

The programmes were representative of; NZQA levels of programmes (from certificates to degrees); the Polytechnic"s four Schools, and comprised a significant proportion of the Polytechnic"s students. In addition to sampling new or redeveloped programmes, several attributes identified by the Polytechnic as of strategic relevance were represented in the selection, all of which are explicit in the current investment plan. These were retention/completion successes or areas of concern (both for all students and for Māori students): partnership involvement and multi-modal delivery. The programmes selected, and their attributes, are shown in the table below.

School	Programme	Type of award	NZQA level	No. of students (2009)	Attribute*				
					A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**
Applied Science	Customary fishing†	Certificate	3	289	●	●	●	●	
	Marine Studies	Diploma, leading to degree	6-7	30		●	●	●	●
Business	NZ Diploma in Business	Diploma	6	2116	●	●	●	●	
	Computing (cluster)	Cert, Dip, Degree	3, 5-6, 6-7	181					●
Design and Humanities	Health care	Certificate	4	174	●		●		
	Te Timatanga	Certificate	2	81	●		●	●	
Applied Technology	Automotive (cluster)	Certificates	2, 3, 4	81		●			●
	Carpentry	Certificates	3, 4, 5	35		●	●	●	●

*Attributes: **A**, Retention and completion (all students), **B**, Multi-modal delivery; **C**, Partnership with other providers;
D, Retention and completion by Māori students; **E**, New developments
†Te Waka Hourua was also evaluated as an element of this programme

Service Focus Areas

Activities that have a polytechnic-wide focus deemed appropriate for inclusion were Student Support and Te Waka Hourua (Dual heritage – symbolized by "a twin-hulled waka moving in one direction with shared commitment and understanding").

Mandatory Focus Areas

These had been pre-determined as: Governance and management, and the Support for International Students. It was subsequently agreed that the area of Student Learning Support (Kahurangi) would be evaluated at the same time as support for international students.

Recent Developments at Bay of Plenty Polytechnic

The Strategic Directions (2007-2010) document draws attention to a commitment to the concept of dual heritage – Te Waka Hourua, through which "Te Ao Māori is integral to enhancing the dual heritage of our nation"s identity". This has received continuing prominence in the Polytechnic"s activities and programmes, the latter particularly through an impact assessment of proposed programmes to determine the extent of iwi connectedness, the extent to which a Māori world-view is reflected in products and practices, the commitment to Te Reo and Kaupapa rejuvenation, the interventions and practices to mitigate Māori learner outcome disparity, and the extent of staff capability to respond and enhance the characteristics of Māori learners to succeed while continuing to identify as Māori.

The Bay of Plenty Polytechnic has long had a strategy of collaboration with other education providers, including relationships for degree-level education with Unitec, Auckland University of Technology and the University of Waikato. The recent investment plan signalled an enhancement of the relationship with the University of Waikato, which by 2010 had manifested itself in a shared facility on the Windermere campus and the opportunity to study in Tauranga for seven degrees across a range of disciplines (as described in the 2010 *Prospectus*, p. 3). This development had particular relevance for the External Evaluation and Review in respect of the restructuring of computing programmes.

As have other polytechnic councils, the Council of the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic has been reconstituted by the Government. The external evaluation and review visit coincided with the last meeting of the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic Council under its pre-reform constitution.

Findings

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

1.0 Key Evaluation Questions

1.1 How well do learners achieve? The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**. The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

Explanation

There is excellent student achievement, with 98% retention and 70% completion rates for full-time students and 91% retention and 77% completion for part-time students across the Polytechnic‴s programmes. This level of achievement occurs in nearly all of the sample programmes that were evaluated, with a real commitment from staff to provide the learners with the skills and knowledge required in order to gain employment in an industry to which teaching staff were invariably well connected, and in which they were generally highly regarded. The Annual Programme Review is the principal tool in the self-assessment of programmes, frequently being developed collaboratively and invariably being the source of actions planned and implemented.

High retention and completion rates – which are a feature of most programmes – attest to this commitment of staff. In addition, there was abundant evidence of a culture of review of student achievement, and attempts to make improvements either in what might be described as „experimental‴ ways or as part of a more comprehensive strategy. The recognition that attendance at classes is an almost universal determinant of successful completion has prompted the common use of text messaging or telephone prompts as an intervention when students are not attending. There is a widespread effort to address learning issues, either as part of the classroom activities or through the sensitive referral of students to Kahurangi. In some programmes diagnostic tools are used by programme staff either prior to, at, or post-enrolment in order to identify learning needs promptly.

It is apparent that the commitment to foster and enhance student engagement and hence completion is pervasive through Schools and business units that support learners (i.e., Kahurangi) and their teachers (i.e., Pikiarero). Schools set ambitious targets for retention and completion of courses and qualifications and staff work hard to achieve – and often exceed – them.

> **1.2   What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?**
>
> The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.
> The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Explanation

Members of advisory committees and employers confirmed that they value the opportunity to interact with staff of the polytechnic. In most cases that interaction is more than merely receiving information about the performance of the students, or the prospect of new programmes, rather it shows willingness for the industry voice to be listened to and for its advice to be heard and acted on. Moreover, the strong links to industry enable the staff to continually determine the attributes of programmes that employers particularly value.

Those students who had been on industry placements invariably commented on how this experience had cemented their perceptions of the value of their programme to them. Graduates were invariably described as „work-ready" by stakeholders, frequently both in terms of relevant industry skills and experience and in terms of having good attitudes to work. Student stakeholders affirmed the value of the Polytechnic"s pathways to higher qualifications, both within the Polytechnic and to other providers, particularly those to the University of Waikato.

The difficulties of initiating and maintaining contact with graduates – „graduate intelligence" were mentioned in several discussions. Although the staff-members in some programmes have been assiduous in determining the destinations of graduates, and in a few programmes the graduates themselves have taken the initiative through social networking sites, there is more work required by the Polytechnic to be effective in gaining evidence from graduates of the industry relevance of qualifications.

> **1.3   How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?**
>
> The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.
> The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Explanation

The Polytechnic"s programmes have been developed with the needs of the learner, industry and the community firmly in mind. There has been extensive research into stakeholder needs, and this has informed programme development. As a result, students appear satisfied that

learning is relevant to the workplace. The effectiveness of local advisory committees in this regard has been analysed, and in some programmes other forms of networking with industry are being tried.

Information about students" perceptions of programmes is acquired prior to enrolment; through the „first impressions survey", conducted early in the semester; and periodic satisfaction surveys. Staff and students confirmed that on-going communication with students and the students" strong rapport with teaching staff informed the identification and meeting of student needs. Similarly, industry surveys, liaison during work experience, and industry networking ensured continual monitoring and understanding of industry needs. Programme improvement is on-going and changes are made quickly if possible, based on teacher and student feedback. While the Annual Programme Review process provides a measured approach to programme enhancements that continues to meet stakeholders" needs, there remain opportunities to better embed an evaluative approach in this process.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

Explanation

The excellent student outcomes in terms of retentions and completions are achieved by highly effective teaching, complemented in many cases by a friendly and caring learning culture. Diagnostic tools are frequently used to identify learning needs at enrolment, from which strategies are developed to meet individual learning needs. Assessment always has a formative aspect with clear feedback provided to students. Tutors are proactive in providing support to students. Although, tutors sometimes experience difficulties with learners who have issues with numeracy required to complete their courses, they are working with the Foundation Learning Advisors in each School and a Foundation Learning Co-ordinator in Pikiarero to develop specific strategies to support learners. Members of staff keep in contact with industry and keep up to date on developments through reading relevant literature.

Effectiveness of teaching practice is often informed through student evaluations and informal feedback shared teaching of papers, with staff in some programmes reporting that they work collaboratively to improve practice. The Polytechnic is also in the process of developing quantitative measures of teaching performance. Access by staff to postgraduate qualifications in education is included in the agreement with the University of Waikato.

In recognising that research informs teaching at all levels, those tutors that wish to do so are encouraged to undertake research. Most research projects are small, but collaborative research has involved other polytechnics, and may involve the University of Waikato in the future. Some research has been funded through Ako Aotearoa. Professional development   of

staff is managed through the Schools and through the performance development system, and supported by Pikiarero which builds capability in teaching. The establishment of a research centre (Taiorangahau), and the intention to further develop Pikiarero (as indicated by the capability plan provided) and Kahurangi (as explained by the centre"s manager) augur well for continued improvements in teachers" ability to support their learners.

1.5   How well are learners guided and supported?

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

Explanation

The Review team was left in no doubt that students were clear about where they were heading and that in most cases were well supported as they progressed towards achievement. On several occasions, students used the word "brilliant" to describe the support they received in their learning The Review team was also satisfied that good processes for self assessment in this area are being implemented across the programme areas and in Kahurangi.

Within many programmes there is a culture of sharing knowledge: most staff-members have sufficient experience to know what interventions are effective and how to lessen barriers to learning. Many teaching staff interviewed expressed the importance of forming early relationships with students to foster attendance and engagement. These strategies to improve attendance demonstrably reduce attrition. In their monitoring of work placements, tutors seek and receive feedback from the workplace experience providers as well as students. Learning needs are identified early and support provided to minimise barriers to learning. However, greater clarity is needed between the division of responsibility for learning between staff in some subject areas and learning support staff.

Kahurangi provides informal feedback to tutors about supporting students within the class, but has identified the need to provide more structured feedback to programme staff, especially where there are a number of students coming from a particular course/programme. From evaluative conversations elsewhere in the Polytechnic, it is apparent that staff value the services provided by Kahurangi in support of their learners.

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

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

Explanation

Polytechnic management support at the highest level is clearly evident in the capital investment made in teaching and research facilities. The building of partnerships with other educational providers at all levels is a clear strength of the Polytechnic‟s senior management team. Overall management structure is relatively „flat‟, and encourage co-operation between Schools.

Not only are governance and management focused on addressing issues as they arise, by implementing the self-assessment process within the business units as well as teaching areas they are fostering a polytechnic-wide culture of self-assessment. There is evidence that these methodologies are in use in many areas of the Polytechnic, and given the relatively short time in which this has been done, the commitment and effectiveness in doing so has been impressive.

The Council has been well informed of aspirations and performance, and is provided with an iwi perspective through Te Kaunihera Māori. The retiring chair of Council commented, "We‟ve always wanted a good staff environment so that staff are happy to be here. Staff add a lot of value to our Council. We are very proud of what has been achieved. We believe it‟s about working together. We‟ve worked hard to have credible programmes"

2.0 Focus Areas

2.1   Focus Area 1: Automotive

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

Educational Performance

The Automotive programme has been recently redeveloped with comprehensive stakeholder engagement. Industry representatives interviewed spoke highly of the programmes, the polytechnic staff and the calibre of students undertaking work-experience – in terms of both skills and personal attributes. Although success rates have not been as satisfactory as the School would like, the high retention rate is particularly noteworthy given the type of programme and typical student profile. The workshop facilities are exceptional which, together with the work experience component of the automotive programmes, provide students with a highly effective learning environment. The use of innovative delivery methods is also noteworthy. Students held teaching and support staff in high regard and the students‟ enthusiasm and sense of "ownership" of the automotive workshop was evident.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Self assessment is undertaken on an on-going basis using a number of formal and informal mechanisms. Programme staff see the informal exchange of ideas in the staff-room as a useful means of sharing ideas and experiences and from which improvement opportunities arise. The Annual Programme Review provides the mechanism to synthesise this on-going evaluation in order to capture what is working well and areas where improvements are needed. Early indications appear positive in terms of supporting higher student achievement rates but further implementation time is required before staff can evaluate if these have been effective.

2.2 Focus Area 2: Carpentry, Levels 3, 4, 5

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

Educational Performance

The Carpentry programmes have had low completions, recently addressed by a range of strategies to engage learners, including using diagnostic tools to assess learning needs at enrolment. Tutors have a strong learner focus, they provide clear feedback to students and are proactive in identifying and providing learning support. Numeracy has been identified as an area in which students require more one-on-one support. Tutors are working with Foundation Learning Advisors to develop strategies for teaching and learning numeracy. This is an area that will need to be monitored closely to ensure strategies positively impact on learner achievement. Programme staff-members use a range of formal and informal strategies to engage stakeholders. Feedback suggests that students have basic skills needed to do the job but they also have a good work ethic and a positive attitude.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Staff monitor the impact of changes in their industry on student retention and completion, with good formal and informal mechanisms for testing relevance with industry and students. Although there are formal processes in place for evaluating programme and teaching effectiveness, strategies to assess and improve teaching effectiveness appear to be areas in need of further development. The staff utilise diagnostic tools at pre-enrolment to identify any barriers that might affect successful completion. The School is also assessing the effectiveness of support for learners. Programme redevelopment includes the introduction of building a house as an on-site practical component. The Annual Programme Report is used as a mechanism for self assessing performance and identifying improvements by programme management; however, the extent to which it is developed with programme staff and used to ensure continuous self assessment and improvement appears to be limited.

> **2.3   Focus Area 3: Te Timatanga - Certificate in Tertiary Study, Level 2**
>
> The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**. The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Educational Performance

Te Timatanga is one of the few Level 2 programmes currently being offered by the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic to bridge the gap for learners who have not been in formal education for some time and who have a range of life-backgrounds and learning abilities. The staff utilise diagnostic tools and individual learning plans to identify and minimise any barriers to learning and are clearly learner-focused. They work well as a team utilising their mix of skills and actively engaging student support services to support learners. Graduates who transition into higher level programmes demonstrate good study skills, engage positively in their learning and achieve well. That said, the programme has had low completions especially for males. However, programme staff are constantly reflecting on, and adjusting programme delivery and content and their teaching practice to raise learner achievement. Some changes to programme delivery have been made this year the success of which will be noted once the semester is complete.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Self-assessment of this programme is an organic process reinforced through ongoing and regular team communication, and a strong team culture that is focused on learner achievement. Programme staff work well together and regularly reflect on teaching effectiveness through student feedback, and team teaching. Assessing the effectiveness of support for learners is an area to develop.

> **2.4   Focus Area 4: Certificate in Health Care Assistance, Level 4**
>
> The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**. The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

Educational Performance

This programme achieves very high retention and completion results. In the team"s view this can be attributed to a multitude of factors, all of which centre on meeting the needs of students and stakeholders alike. Highlights include a substantial practical component to the programme, the setting of clear expectations at the outset and the use of a range of teaching methods and assessment types. A close partnership with sector stakeholders has led to the development of new courses that will meet the ongoing needs of both the students and the sector.

Capability in Self-Assessment

The self-assessment practices in relation to the course, and the School as a whole, are collaborative, comprehensive, and robust. The tracking of students post-qualification was exemplary.

2.5   Focus Area 5: Diploma in Marine Studies, Level 6

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

Educational Performance

Educational performance across all key evaluation areas is exemplary. The passion of the staff and the students was clearly evident and is reflected in the success of the programme and the graduates. Staff-members have sound knowledge of graduate destinations and employment opportunities and this good practice is worthy of dissemination across the Polytechnic. Facilities are impressive, as are the outcomes of students" project work which benefit the community, both locally and nationally.

Capability in Self-Assessment

On-going self assessment is integral to the culture of the School. The collegiality of the teaching team was evident. Members of staff use formal and informal feedback from students and stakeholders effectively to enhance teaching practices and programme delivery. All staff were actively involved in conducting on-going self-evaluation activities within the Annual Programme Review process and in preparing the Action Plan, indicating that the process was a good tool for both reflection and to map "where to from here".

2.6   Focus area 6: Ngā Okawa a Tangaroa – Certificate in Customary Fishing, Level 3 *and* Te Waka Hourua

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

Educational Performance

This is a highly innovative and very successful programme. Extending the educational reach of the Polytechnic by delivering the course to the students on marae in an environment where students are comfortable, supportive, and which encourages collective learning across generations, is to be commended. This is a programme where the value derived is more than the content of the courses in the programme, providing educational achievements and   social

benefits for many who would not otherwise have been exposed to the tertiary education sector.

Capability in Self-Assessment

The self-assessment practices adopted by this programme team are excellent. They assess frequently and collectively using multiple inputs to determine whether the course is achieving the best possible result. Continuous quality improvement is reflected in the results achieved.

2.7   Focus Area 7: New Zealand Diploma of Business

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

Educational Performance

The New Zealand Diploma in Business is a national diploma that has strong relevance and is perceived of high value to students and in the business community. The programme has high retention and completion rates for domestic students. However, the low completion rates for international students has been identified as an area to work on. Students value the Diploma as a pathway to degree programmes, particularly business degrees offered through the University of Waikato that enables them to continue their study in Tauranga. Students have high praise for tutors and centralised learning support services.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Staff were involved in a team evaluative conversation exercise which informed the development of the APR. This resulted in actions for improvement, including focusing on internal moderation, information sharing and training, and a greater level of communication and information sharing within the team which will be monitored throughout the year. However, there is still a need for self-assessment to be fully implemented as an opportunity for continuous reflection and improvement.

2.8   Focus Area 8: Computer cluster, Levels 3, 5, 6, 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**.

Educational Performance

The performance across programmes within the Computing cluster is variable with low retention and completion rates for some courses.   The challenges associated with   these

courses have been apparent for some time. The team considers there could have been much better analysis of the cause of the issues identified and that the modifications implemented to date are insufficient to effect improvements. The review team gained a sense of disengagement between the teaching staff and the students. There was evidence of unresolved student dissatisfaction.

Capability in Self-Assessment

The approach to self-assessment across the computing cluster is rather unstructured and inconsistent. The measurement of teaching effectiveness or indeed satisfactory analysis of data to determine ways in which student outcomes could be improved can be described as only adequate.

2.9   Focus Area 9: Governance and Management

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

Educational Performance

The team was impressed with the way in which the Chief Executive and the senior managers of the Polytechnic have fostered relationships outside the Polytechnic. The strong relationships with iwi, which are, for example, manifest in the Customary Fishing programme, with its origins in Te Waka Hourua, are strengthened by the existence and activities of Te Kaunihera Māori, with its representation from iwi, management and Council. The determination to remain focused on providing tertiary education in such a way that those embarking on study with the Polytechnic can staircase to degrees offered by providers from outside the region, in particular the University of Waikato, but do their study in the familiar environment of the Bay of Plenty is an appropriate strategy. This approach has ensured continuing support from industry and the community, while providing opportunities for an increasing diversity of qualifications at all levels and fostering research and development that is relevant to the Bay"s needs and aspirations. Within the organisation there is clear evidence of the Polytechnic management working to well established procedures for becoming informed of issues and developing action plans and strategies to resolve them.

Capability in Self-Assessment

There is no doubt of a commitment to engagement with the self-assessment regime at the most senior level at the Polytechnic, and clear evidence that this will be sustained.

> **2.10   Focus Area 10: International Student Support, including Kahurangi**
>
> The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**. The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is   **Excellent**.

Educational Performance

The student support services provided by Kahurangi staff foster learning achievement extremely well, especially for international students. While students are the obvious recipients of these excellent services it has become apparent that a number of members of the teaching staff also use the service of Kahurangi staff to augment their own practice. The team was particularly impressed with the tracking system implemented to identify the use made of the services by students and staff, as this provides the basis for knowing how the staff can most effectively support the teaching activities within the teaching programmes. To that end the team became aware that Kahurangi staff-members are currently in discussion with Heads of Schools to provide a more integrated service, and commends that initiative.

Capability in Self-Assessment

There is a commitment in Kahurangi to a self-assessment regime that builds on existing strengths of service provision to international students as well as other staff and students. The use of the „tracking" system will be instrumental in assessing whether and where resources associated with the centre are deployed to best   effect.

Recommendations

No specific recommendations are made in this external evaluation and   review.

Further Actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with ITP Quality"s regular scheduling policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this   report.

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Waiariki Institute of Technology –

Whare Takiura

Date of Report: 7 October 2010

Contents

Purpose

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Institute of Technology or Polytechnic"s (ITP) 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 ITP itself for quality improvement purposes.

Waiariki Institute of Technology – Whare Takiura in Context

Location: Mokoia Drive, Rotorua

Type: Institute of Technology

Size: 3718 EFTS in 2009

Sites: Waiariki offers courses at the Mokoia (Rotorua), Taupo, Tokoroa,
                         Whakatāne sites, and (in conjunction with the Bay of Plenty
                         Polytechnic) at the Windemere campus in Tauranga. The Institute
                         also offers courses from premises in Kawerau and a sawmill and
                         timber manufacturing plant at Waipa.

Characteristics of Waiariki Institute of Technology

In the 2010 year Waiariki is offering 93 qualifications to a student body of approximately 3400
Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funded Equivalent Full Time Students (EFTS) as well as
approximately 640 International students. There are six Schools under the academic structure
of the Institute. The Schools are:
- Nursing and Health Studies
- Computing, Technology & Communications
- Te Wānanga a Īhenga
- Business & Tourism
- Trade Training
- Forestry & Primary Industries

Approximately 62% of the total student population is enrolled on programmes at Level 4 or
above. In recent years Waiariki has placed emphasis on reviewing and developing courses at
levels 4 to 7 and has received TEC funding specifically for this   purpose.

Eleven qualifications at degree or graduate level are offered. Waiariki also delivers a number
of qualifications that pathway into higher-level courses and offer some degree programmes
that are delivered in conjunction with other tertiary   institutions.

Waiariki has a policy of offering fee free courses for the first year of study to school leavers and
this has been successful in attracting students from this market segment.

The bi-cultural emphasis of Waiariki is evident throughout the Institute. Management stressed
the importance of both Māori and Pakeha cultures equally. A range of initiatives to introduce
students to all cultural activities is provided. The significance of bi-culturalism at Waiariki is also
reflected in the joint governance roles of both the Waiariki Council and Te Mana Mātauranga,
a relationship which is defined in a Deed of Understanding.

Quality Assurance History

A full academic audit was conducted at the Waiariki Institute of Technology in May 2006 and resulted in „Quality Assured Status" being granted by the ITP Quality Board for a period of four years - subject to a limited scope audit and Mid-term Quality Review being carried out.

A limited scope audit and Mid-term Quality Review was carried out in June 2008 and recommended that Waiariki Institute of Technology retain its „Quality Assured Status" until an External Evaluation and Review be carried out in 2010. Two recommendations were made.

General Conclusion

Statement of confidence on educational performance

> ITP Quality is **confident** in the *educational performance* of Waiariki Institute of Technology.

Waiariki Institute of Technology offers a range of qualifications that meet the needs of its stakeholders across the rohe (region). It has undergone substantial growth in both domestic and international student numbers in a very short space of time[1]. This increase in student numbers is a positive outcome but the effect of this rapid growth has put pressure on some resources and systems. Data shows, and Waiariki Institute of Technology senior management acknowledge, that the educational performance of its students has been low on some courses when compared against other ITPs[2]. However, to focus on performance statistics in isolation would not provide an accurate account of the many positive aspects of student learning and development that were evident during the review.

The review highlighted that at all levels of Waiariki the focus on lifting educational performance is being actively pursued through a broad array of initiatives. There is evidence that many of these strategies are having the desired effect. Examples include an emphasis on increasing the accountability for teaching performance at the course, School and Academic Board levels; an on-going commitment to the professional development of staff; an investment in technologies and teaching resources; improved information and reporting systems and a substantial capital expenditure programme on new facilities.

Māori students make up approximately 48% of the student population and this is higher than the regional figure of 35%. Specific completion and success targets are set for this group and the results demonstrate that Māori students are achieving as well as other Waiariki students. Māori students are also supported by the Manaakitanga programme where kaitautoko (support staff) work with staff in each school to provide additional support.

The major programme „refresh" that has occurred in recent years, and is now nearing completion, will ensure that graduates are adequately equipped to move in to the workforce with the necessary skills and relevant learning.

Of particular note is the quality of support students receive during their course of study at Waiariki. A comprehensive range of assistance is offered to all students and dedicated support is available to international students in particular.

Waiariki"s bicultural commitment is evident throughout the institution. The concept is evident in promulgated policies and processes, and appears to be embraced and treasured

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[1] Waiariki Institute of Technology had a total student population of: 2006: 2362 EFTS; 2007: 2942 EFTS; 2008: 3,353 total EFTS; 2009: 3718 EFTS.

[2] Using the TEC Educational Performance Indicators, Waiariki Institute of Technology in total achieved a successful course completion rate of 50% in 2009 (up from 47.41% in 2008), and a Qualification completion rate of 32.1% in 2009 (up from 29.52% in 2008).

by staff. There are specific strategies to increase the number of Māori students and Māori staff.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

> ITP Quality is **confident** in the *capability in self-assessment* of
> Waiariki Institute of Technology.

Waiariki has developed and promulgated internal Quality Assurance, Self-Assessment and Review frameworks that are supported by defined processes and annual review cycles. Educational performance is the focal point of Waiariki"s comprehensive self-assessment programme that comprises both formal and informal activities at course, School and institution levels. At the core is the Annual Course Improvement (ACIF) process, prepared with input from staff teams at the end of each course that covers the following aspects: student outcomes, student feedback, stakeholder consultation/feedback, delivery, staffing, moderation, changes made and further actions needed. The ACIFs inform the Annual Qualification Improvement Form, which is reviewed at School Academic Committee level   and endorsed by the Academic Board. For those courses where educational performance does not meet the targets set, improvement action plans are developed and monitored by the School and/or Academic Board. This level of monitoring reflects a robust   process.

Student feedback is a fundamental element of the self-assessment programme, and this was confirmed by those interviewed. Courses are evaluated regularly with summaries produced for discussion amongst teams. Any courses with a student satisfaction rating of less than 80% positive (or response rate of less than 50%) are referred to the Academic Board for further discussion and/or monitoring.

Staff performance and development processes have been modified and improved significantly in recent years. There is an educational performance component in the performance plans of all teaching staff.

Graduate destination surveys and data analysis are carried out by some Schools and provide valuable information to develop courses further however there is opportunity for their use to be more widespread. The extensive use of Advisory Committees also provides input and guidance to course relevancy and development.

A group of staff have been trained and are mentoring others in the evaluative review of internal focus areas and this review process   results in course improvement action plans   being generated and monitored.

It is evident to the EER team that Waiariki have commenced on the self-assessment and continuous improvement journey. There are some courses that have responded to the concept of self-assessment well and are using the results of analysis to modify course design, content and teaching practice. However, some of the practices, supporting systems and processes are relatively new and their use varies across the Institute.   The   expectation

is that over time the use of self-assessment practices and tools will become universal and that educational performance will rise as a result.

ITP Response

Waiariki Institute of Technology has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

Basis for External Evaluation and Review

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

NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance of the polytechnic sector, and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors" Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities. This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the guidelines approved by the ITP Quality Board.

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

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions through the investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the ITP Quality website (www.itpq.ac.nz).

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: http://www.itpq.ac.nz/index.php/external-evaluation-review/eer-guidelines

Scope of External Evaluation and Review

Identification of Focus Areas

In order to provide a representative cross-section of the Institute"s operations and the programmes offered, the focus areas chosen should, where possible comprise:

- courses delivered from each of the faculties and subject areas;

- courses delivered at a number of levels, including certificates, diplomas and degrees;

- a sample from each of the Institute"s campuses;

- a significant proportion of the Institute"s students and EFTS;

- a range or courses with high and low retention, completion and success rates or concerns;

- a sample of those that have a partnership component;

- a sample of courses that comprise different delivery modes.

The programmes reviewed during the EER and the criteria for their selection are listed in the following table.

When reviewing focus areas the EER Team met with Directors of Schools / Course Coordinators, other teaching staff, external Advisory Group members / employers / industry representatives, and students. It was agreed that Support Services would be included as a focus area as it provides service across all Waiariki campuses. Discussions were held with the Director and Support Services teams. The EER team also met with staff in the International office and a cohort of international students to determine levels of support and confirm that the obligations under the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students are being met.

In reviewing the Governance and Management functions of Waiariki the EER team met with the Senior Management team, the Academic Board and representatives of both Waiariki and Te Mana Matauranga Councils.

School	Programme	Type of award	NZQA level	EFTS (2009)	Delivery	Rationale
Nursing and Health Studies	Bachelor of Nursing	Degree	7	302	Mokoia campus, Windemere campus (BoP Polytechnic) plus clinical component at hospitals and health centres.	Flagship programme for Waiariki Sustained growth Popular with International students High retention and success
Te Wananga a Ihenga	Bachelor of Applied Social Sciences (Social Work)	Degree	7	37	Mokoia	High community demand Compliance issues resolved Delivered in partnership with Wintec
	Certificate in Smart Study	Certificate	4	52	Mokoia	Foundation course Pathway to higher study Recently modified to introduce Literacy & numeracy emphasis
Business & Tourism	New Zealand Diploma in Business	Diploma	6	114	Mokoia, Tokoroa, Taupo, Whakatane	Cornerstone programme High percentage of international students
Trade Training	Certificate in Automotive Entry	Certificate	2	108	Mokoia	Foundation automotive qualification Entry programme for predominantly young, unqualified males into vocational training
Forestry & Primary Industries	Certificate in Forestry Operations	Certificate	3	214	Mokoia, Whakatane	Delivered in partnership with Iwi Forest Owners Large % of in-field training Strong connections to sector Reviewed at Whakatane campus
Computing, Technology and Communications	Certificates in Computing Studies	Certificate	2	181	Mokoia, Tokoroa, Taupo, Whakatane	Some distance learning Problems encountered in the past Numbers intentionally reduced in 2010 Students interviewed at the Kawerau facility
	Diploma in Computing Systems	Diploma	5	43	Mokoia	Some blended delivery High no. of international students Provides pathway to Bach. of Computer Studies with some courses shared

Findings

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

1.0 Key Evaluation Questions

> **1.1   How well do learners achieve?**
>
> The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good.** The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

Explanation

Student achievement across the focus areas reviewed is varied. Some qualifications clearly demonstrate excellent educational performance and others, wher e it is universally recognised that performance, as determined by the common course and qualification metrics of completion and success, need to improve.

The varied performance results can be attributed in some instances to Waiariki"s highly successful growth strategy where resources, systems and capabilities have often struggled to keep pace with significant increases in student numbers. These issues have been recognised and are being actively managed at all levels of the Institute.

However, to assess the educational performance of Waiariki purely on historical statistics alone would discredit the many positive aspects and initiatives that have been implemented.

Waiariki has recently developed a number of monitoring processes focussed on improving the learning experience for students as well as lifting educational performance. These tools are used extensively, and continue to evolve. For example, the development of, and focus on, the qualification dashboards are evidence of measuring performance against key indicators. A number of initiatives at the course level have been identified, implemented and the impact monitored.

In some programmes, improved results were observed that can be directly attributed to this focus and the initiatives implemented. For example, one of the computing courses where student achievement has historically been problematic provided evidence of improved results that could be directly attributed to structure and delivery modifications arising from self-assessment activities.

The review team is satisfied that weaknesses relating to educational performance have been identified and are being effectively managed through a variety of improvement and monitoring mechanisms.

> **1.2   What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?**
>
> The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.
>
> The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question   is **Good**.

Explanation

In the programmes reviewed, there was evidence of a real commitment from staff to provide learners with the skills and knowledge that they require to gain employment in their chosen field. Students, tutors, employers and whanau frequently commented on the life changes achieved by students as a result of embarking on tertiary study at Waiariki. Many students are able to secure employment based on the skills learnt even though they may not necessarily have been successful in attaining the qualification. Some graduate destination tracking does occur although it is not always systematic or consistent across qualifications. Explicit pathways directing students from lower-level to higher level qualifications   exist.

External stakeholders are frequently involved and provide valuable input and confirmed the relevancy, quality and value of the qualifications offered. Numerous external Advisory Committees exist and members considered they were typically able to influence course content to reflect work-related requirements. There is a high level of engagement by teaching staff with their relevant sectors and   communities.

> **1.3   How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?**
>
> The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.
> The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Explanation

Waiariki is aware of, and responsive to, the different needs of the various stakeholder groups. There are numerous, well-engaged Advisory Committees. Overall, course coordinators have generally been responsive to adapting programmes where possible to meet the changing needs of stakeholders or where educational performance needs to improve. Tutors are typically aware of issues and respond with initiatives for improvement. For example, some courses have been discontinued or the structure modified in direct response to low student performance. In some instances information is gathered from non- successful students although this practice is not universal. In other instances courses have introduced an elective structure to provide students with the opportunity to learn or specialise in evolving technologies and practices. Feedback following work placement is

occurring in most cases but the rigour of the process has struggled to keep pace with growing student numbers.

From 2010 all courses will be required to complete the Annual Quality Review process. This process is an integral component of Waiariki"s self-assessment programme. Engagement in the process will ensure quality improvement standards are maintained and that courses continue to meet the needs of all stakeholders. Some courses have been using the process to good effect with some shorter courses conducting the review at the conclusion of the course rather than annually in order to measure the effect of course modifications.

The major programme "refresh" that has occurred in recent years, and is now nearing completion, will ensure that graduates are adequately equipped to move in to the workforce with the necessary skills and relevant learning.

Student satisfaction is an important consideration at Waiariki. All courses with less than an 80% student satisfaction rating are automatically referred to the Academic Board and require action plans to be developed to address the issues identified. This mechanism ensures that the needs of learners are identified and that action is taken in those instances where the course is not meeting expectations.

1.4   How effective is the teaching?

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

Explanation

The quality and effectiveness of teaching across Waiariki are excellent. Tutors demonstrate a focus on student learning that is typically contextualised to assimilate a vocational environment with a good balance between practical and theory.

There is a strong emphasis on staff performance at Waiariki and development processes have improved significantly in recent years. The Individual Performance Plans of staff reinforce the significance of Tutors maintaining their professional development and to complement their knowledge of subject content. A programme to improve tutor skills in adult/tertiary educator training is a good example of this commitment. There is a high uptake of adult education courses, and Waiariki now offers the Certificate of Tertiary Teaching on site. The policy is that all staff will complete initial training within 12 months of appointment. Evidence sighted within the Focus areas indicates that this is the case, with most staff continuing their professional development in both teaching and their relevant discipline.

Staff performance appraisal is completed on a six-monthly basis and includes individual discussion with the immediate manager and incorporates student evaluations, peer- appraisal of teaching effectiveness, and student performance. This appraisal forms the

basis for professional development and (where appropriate) research plans. The process is well established in each of the Focus areas reviewed.

Excellent survey mechanisms are in place to gather data on student satisfaction with both courses and tutors and these data are analysed to produce improvement action plans that are then monitored. Tutor appraisals commonly occur within, and across, qualification teams and Schools but are not universal. This is an important element of the self - assessment process and a broader use could be expected to enhance the learning environment for students. Students are generally positive about assessment and feedback mechanisms. Where issues have been identified, they have been or are being adequately addressed.

The embedding of literacy and numeracy elements has occurred within most courses. Many courses have implemented the use of diagnostic tools, but their use could be more widespread and in some instances introduced earlier within the course.

Assessing teaching effectiveness could be more systematic on some courses. While some courses have applied lessons learnt from the more successful courses, in some instances teaching effectiveness has only been analysed if performance issues were identified. For example, some on-line learning has been discontinued as a result.

Good systems provide course and qualification statistics as well as the volume and effect of support interactions. However, the rapid growth in student enrolments has placed stress on teaching resources and for some courses the response to the issues identified has been varied. Waiariki has developed a comprehensive range of self-assessment processes and activities. At this stage although the application of the various activities across schools is inconsistent, the overall approach to self-assessment is positive. Significant benefits are expected if applied systematically.

1.5	**How well are learners guided and supported?**
	The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**. The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Explanation

A broad and comprehensive array of support mechanisms for students is in use across Waiariki campuses which include Library Learning Advisors, Literacy & Numeracy projects, Manaakitanga targeting Māori students (pastoral care focus), International student advisers, Foundation Learning, Health Centre (and support for students with disabilities). Good data are captured on the incidence and effect of the various support interactions.

Most students are aware and complimentary of the support services available and felt they received excellent guidance and support.

There is a strong emphasis on student retention on those courses where retention has historically been poor. A variety of methods is used to contact those students "at risk" of withdrawal.

Rapidly increasing student numbers have had an effect on the demand for support services, particularly from international students. This increased demand has resulted in modifications to the way in which support services are delivered but with no apparent adverse effect. There has also been a significant increase in the use of diagnostic tools by learning support staff to identify student learning difficulties and measure pre and post intervention effect.

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

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

Explanation

Senior management take a focused approach to monitoring, reporting, and improving educational performance as well as student satisfaction. Priorities and targets are set, and appropriate processes are in place. This emphasis on quality improvement is in response to the variability of educational performance which the relatively new Council of Waiariki is clearly aware of, and committed to addressing. The Audit and Risk Committee of Council is about to review key performance indicators.

Staff interviewed reported being involved in decision-making at various stages in each process and feel supported by management. Tutors consider that funding for teaching resources and equipment is accessible where justified and there are many instances where recent investment has been made.

Delivery in the different regions is supported with appropriate staffing, facilities, communication systems and management contact.

Although not used in a systematic way in every Focus area, it is obvious that self-assessment tools such as the Course Improvement Forms (culminating in the Annual Qualification Improvement Forms and action plans) are "an essential tool for the effective management of programmes". Six-monthly performance appraisals, student achievement / destination data and student evaluations are also used effectively by staff and School level managers.

There are also examples of a focussed approach to fostering teaching excellence, eg the new Certificate in Tertiary Teaching, annual Teaching Excellence Conference and Awards, redefining allied staff positions in relation to how they support teaching and lunch time Brown Bag seminars to share good practice. In addition, a performance aspect is built into staff collective contracts and two percent of the total budget is allocated to Professional Development.

Many Waiariki courses have an open-entry policy and tutors and students consider this has contributed to a common occurrence of students enrolling but who have not followed through on their commitment to study. Changes to the registration process are currently being explored by Management to address this issue, which is having a negative impact on retention and completion statistics. Staff also felt that the open entry policy on some courses has resulted in the enrolment of students who had little chance of success. The use of diagnostic tools (which is becoming more widespread, frequent, and occurring earlier in the learning cycle) may address this concern.

In part to address issues arising, Waiariki has embraced the concept of evaluative assessment and this is evidenced by the tools in use such as the dashboards and the revised Annual Qualification Improvement Report (incorporating the six Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs)) which is being adopted for all courses. The use of annual satisfaction surveys of students such as „First Impressions‟ are also valuable tools. The progress made in relation to the concept of self-assessment has been achieved in a relatively short time. While considerable progress has been made, there is still work to do to formalise and apply these principles in a systematic, and universal way.

The Westpac Rotorua Business Excellence Award was awarded to Waiariki in 2009. The criteria follow the Baldrige system and include several aspects relevant to the KEQs.

2.0 Focus Areas

2.1   Focus Area 1: Certificate in Automotive Entry

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

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

Educational Performance

Course success and qualification completion rates for the Certificate in Automotive Entry   are high, and Destination Survey data confirm almost all graduates secure employment and/or continue on to further education or apprenticeships.   Adjustments have been made   to the programme structure to allow early departure if students are offered employment.   The School of Trade Training operates an accredited Retail Workshop used for practical workshop training as part of this programme. Staff ensure students have learning opportunities that mirror the industry environment and achieve „work readiness".

The programme is taught by a competent, professional, close-knit group who keep up to   date in teaching practice as well as their industry.   They have regular, meaningful contact with industry through work placements, the Advisory Committee, conferences and trade associations.   The entire team was chosen for Waiariki"s 2009 Teaching Excellence Award   in recognition of their high standards, obvious pride in students" achievement and commitment to quality.   Their approach is encapsulated in the School"s Mission   Statement:

„The School of Trade Training produces practical skilled graduates, with high self esteem, through quality vocational education in a positive and encouraging environment."

Students confirmed they are acquiring useful skills, feel motivated and that staff   are „focussed on achievement" and provide them with „positive role models". Student evaluations are very positive, although the response rate is low in some   courses.

Capability in Self-Assessment

The approach to self-assessment applied in relation to this qualification is comprehensive and systematic. Staff commented that their approach to review and improvement is similar to their approach as trades people "If something needs fixing or can be improved, then do it, but first find out what the problem is and why it occurs". This philosophy was evident in several ways, including how staff identify barriers to success and   then   respond   with   changes to the programme structure, assessment and teaching styles (eg „working from the known to unknown so students experience success at the start of the course" and strategies to address difficulties caused by „use of jargon"). Specific actions also were taken at School and Institution level when, for some students, the introduction of no fees   unexpectedly affected enrolment patterns.

A variety of self-assessment tools is used to identify what works well and what needs improvement (e.g. letters from past students, families, student evaluations, work placement and employer feedback, Tribal benchmarking, ITO contact, industry involvement, destination data collected by the School).   Staff are actively and regularly involved in   the

completion and analysis of the Course Improvement Forms and the consolidated Annual Qualification Improvement report, described by the Director as an essential tool for the effective management of the programme.

A consistent, clear picture of exemplary performance at staff, student and management level was evident, with full support from industry stakeholders. Advisory Committee representatives described this programme; including the staff and students, graduates as a "jewel in the crown" at Waiariki. Many will only employ Waiariki graduates because of Waiariki"s commitment to quality.

2.2   Focus Area 2: Certificates in Computing Studies

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

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

Educational Performance

Extensive consultation indicated an obvious need for IT literacy in all regions and the value of entry-level computing courses. Initial delivery was through Adult Community Education provision, with a dramatic increase in numbers each year. The courses were replaced with an assessed certificate in 2007, but without full consideration to the educational impact.

For various reasons, course success and completion for this Certificate has in the past been very poor, and Waiariki did not take remedial action as quickly as would be expected. In recent times however there has been a concerted, targeted effort to improve achievement and better meet student needs. Improvement initiatives targeted at improving educational performance include introducing a Short Course Award for students who do not want to complete the full qualification, an initial 15-credit course requiring mandatory completion before progressing, an introductory session for each student, updated eCampus and workbook material, and the provision of more assistance (including literacy support).

The number of students enrolled has been scaled back and the Tutorial Assistant role upgraded. Results from the first course of 2010 demonstrate that the improvement strategies have been effective and have resulted in increased completion and success rates. It is anticipated that student achievement results will continue to improve if the current focus on performance is maintained.

Students are positive about the courses, the assistance provided, assessment feedback and the materials and facilities. They are particularly appreciative of the individualised approach and accessibility in the various regions.

As with other programmes at Waiariki, the bicultural commitment is evident at all levels.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Staff have started to use data more effectively to identify reasons for non-completion as well as strategies for improvement. Greater effort also has been made to identify the various reasons student enrol and to use this to assist with course design and interpretation

of results. Ways of tracking and monitoring student engagement and progress have been implemented, e.g. Tutorial Assistants phone, email or text each student who does not progress within the first two weeks to offer face-to-face assistance or a refresher session. They are contacted again at one month and sent a withdrawal form if not intending to continue. Staff reported it already is „making a huge difference" to retention. Steps have been taken to make it easier for students to provide feedback, with improved response rate and useful comments that have been acted on.

Staff have input into the Course Improvement Forms and use the gathered information to make decisions. All have a six-monthly performance appraisal, with associated monitored Professional Development plans.

The changes made are impressive, but another year is needed to confirm the effect of the improvements.

2.3   Focus Area 3: Certificate in Smart Study

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

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

Educational Performance

Smart Study is a level 4 qualification designed to give learners the skills needed to succeed in higher-level tertiary study. Quantitative information provided indicates that a sizable proportion of learners do not complete this qualification. Staff indicated that this was due, in part, to some students enrolling online but never attending, and other students finding the programme did not meet their needs and therefore exiting early. While the programme is an entry qualification into degree-level study, it is at level four and Waiariki staff acknowledged that the expectations of this level may not be well understood by some learners at the outset. No initial assessments or diagnostic tests are in place, with an „open entry" policy being described by tutors as a contributor to student withdrawals.

The compulsory components of the programme are staffed by two experienced and well-qualified tutors. Learners that were engaged with the programme, or had successfully completed it, commented positively on the capabilities of both educators, in articulating subject content and on teaching practices and general classroom rapport.

However, Learners also noted that class-sizes were often large and that the personalised support required from a „gateway" type programme was not necessarily available. In addition, there was a sense that some resources were not necessarily well-matched, resulting in the purchasing of texts which had only moderate use in supporting learning outcomes.

Over recent years there has also been a change in focus for this programme – from a feeder into nursing to a focus on students across Waiariki. This shift in emphasis is creating some challenges around the relevance to stakeholders who are the other schools within Waiariki. The value of the qualification to some stakeholder schools was not clear,

with the majority of learners indicating the primary focus was still solely on entry into the Bachelor of Nursing degree.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Staff and management considered Self-Assessment to be an area of development for this qualification. Although key staff had a sense of how the qualification contributed to entry and success in degree level study, systematic tracking or analysis of this data is not yet in place.

At the classroom level, some self-assessment practices occur, although this was not consistent throughout courses. As an example, in one compulsory course an international reflective practitioner"s „critical incidence" tool is being applied to inform practice. Standard Waiariki teaching peer-review processes are also in place.

Waiariki is aware of the challenges that this programme faces arising from its role as a feeder programme to courses beyond the Bachelor of Nursing degree. A level 2 foundation programme has been successfully piloted to reflect this extended role.

Going forward the challenge is to embed self-assessment as standard operating practice. This will require completing activities such as tracking and analysing student achievement results more fully, and validating the relevancy and quality of the programme with the other stakeholder Schools within Waiariki.

2.4   Focus Area 4: Bachelor of Nursing

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

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

Educational Performance

Achievement, retention and completion results are consistently high across all years of the degree. In the Evaluation Team"s view these results can be attributed to a multitude if factors, all of which centre around meeting the needs of students and health sector stakeholders alike. Robust systems to evaluate learner success are in place. Highlights include a substantial practical component to the programme, the setting of clear expectations, the full use of school and institute student support and the use of a range of teaching methods and assessment types. The ability to offer a substantial practical component is enabled through the strong relationships and networks established in the health sector. The programme reinforces learning outcomes by requiring students to develop and deliver practical educational programmes within local communities, who value these highly. A number of staff are serving on national committees and professional bodies eg National College of Nurses and National College of Midwives.

A research programme is in place with some tutors more actively involved in research activities than others. This was identified as a potential opportunity to develop and/or maintain the clinical expertise of tutors.

Capability in Self-Assessment

The performance of the programme is effectively assessed through good use of the local advisory committee and input from other industry stakeholders and students, as well as frequent on-going conversations amongst staff at all levels. Student performance on national Nursing Council examinations are closely scrutinised to ensure that the consistently high levels of success are maintained. The destination results of graduates are also captured.

Strong health and community networks and relationships are in place and this encourages stakeholder feedback. These networks are supported by robust systems which includes preceptor feedback on students following clinical placement and the capturing of broader issues relating to the programme. The ongoing growth in student numbers will impact the practical component and needs to be monitored. Advisory committee members considered that Waiariki is listening and has modified practices based on this feedback.

Evidence from student satisfaction surveys attest that the qualification is clearly meeting student needs.

2.5 Focus Area 5: Certificate in Forestry Operations

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

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

Educational Performance

Management emphasised the importance of forestry to the region and the significant role Waiariki plays. Courses are over-subscribed, with marketing primarily „word of mouth". Current and past students confirmed this, adding that "Waiariki"s course is highly thought of in our area". They also said the course provides good preparation at introductory level, with higher-level skills learned on the job. The course success rate is high (usually over 60%).

Although the qualification completion rates are lower than desirable, it is clear from discussions with staff, students and management that this programme achieves „life -shift" outcomes as well as vocational ones. Both need consideration when judging the value to students and the community. Letters and other feedback from family members attest to this, e.g. improved literacy, confidence, time management, social skills and motivation. A former student wrote to staff telling them of his „Keep it Safe" awards and thanking them for the emphasis on safety throughout the course. Current students described the support (educational and personal) provided by staff, including home visits prior to enrolment to ensure they and their families have relevant information, are aware of the requirements (including alcohol and drug testing) and that all paperwork is completed. Each student is also collected in the van each morning and returned at night, which mirrors job expectations and gets them in the habit of being on time.

Staff described various ways they match their teaching to the students" starting point and the steps taken to build rapport. All staff have completed adult education courses and

continue to up-skill in both teaching and the trade. Students are complimentary about the learning environment („treated with respect" and „feel cared about") and the teaching methods („tutor breaks the information down so it"s understandable"). Extra help is available if needed, particularly with literacy and re-sits.

Waiariki"s positive reputation in Forestry is partly attributable to effective course design and management support, but is primarily due to the commitment and calibre of the teaching staff based within their communities.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Staff and management have implemented numerous strategies to improve completion rates and achieve a better fit with the expectations of industry and other stakeholders. This includes even greater engagement with students" whanau (eg powhiri for each intake with whanau invited, followed by a Chainsaw Skills Race demonstration), moving to achievement-based assessment, providing more targeted support for students and addressing the perverse incentive of enrolling „to obtain a chainsaw". They also identified ways to minimise barriers to learning included primarily pastoral care and the literacy and numeracy project. Students added other reasons for non-completion, including injury, partly addressed by an increased emphasis on health and safety in the course. One iwi landowner said the course took students only so far, and that on-job training with government subsidies are required to address the training gap.

Although staff „keep informal tabs" on destination outcomes through their close contact in the respective regions, this is not formally collated in a way that makes it easy to identify overall patterns. The team is currently working on a Student Profile approach to building up a fuller picture of all aspects related to student achievement (academi c, personal and vocational).

2.6   Focus Area 6: Diploma in Computing Systems

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

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

Educational Performance

There is a lack of robust quantitative evidence relating to this qualification. Management acknowledged this is an issue to be addressed. Restructuring and vacancies within the School also require careful interim management. Teacher to student (class-size) ratios are an emerging issue and management strategies in this area are required to safeguard opportunities for learners. Despite the above, the evidence gathered demonstrates that learners currently enrolled are satisfied they are receiving a quality learning experience within this qualification. There is evidence of effective teaching practices, including reflective practices, industry knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. This is complemented with quality resources and a relevant, engaging curriculum. Waiariki has now reached a point whereby this qualification can be offered by the Institution in its own right, and such changes will allow for further customisation of learning outcomes.

Capability in Self-Assessment

This programme is being redeveloped, and as such has been subject to much internal assessment and consideration. Overall Waiariki is confident that it is a useful stepping- stone programme into either entry-level computer-based employment (such as retail), or as the first stage of degree study. Evidence from learners and stakeholders support this confidence.

Management have acknowledged, however, that systems to track outcomes from the qualification are not adequate. It is essential that completion information is considered in self-assessment processes, to form more conclusive views on the outcomes of this programme for learners and other stakeholders.

2.7 Focus Area 7: New Zealand Diploma in Business

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

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

Educational Performance

This programme has recently experienced significant growth in enrolments arising from the concerted effort and success by the Waiariki to attract school leavers and international students. There is an acknowledgement that the rapid growth in student numbers is creating some resourcing challenges relating to delivery and student support.

The qualification is a nationally recognised qualification on the NZQF, administered by NZQA. This means Waiariki is subject to external moderation and advisory processes. For this reason there is a level of assurance that the qualification does have high relevance, and is consistent in design with other Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics and providers.

The programme is valued by students who consider it provides useful workplace skills, and as a pathway qualification to a degree. Articulation with Waikato University enables a smooth transition should students wish. Internal statistics support this conclusion, although destination tracking is not carried out, as yet. The programme has a professional and well - equipped group of lecturer/tutors, who are valued by learners.

The advisory committee is active, provides the business community focus and appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the Diploma.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Standard Waiariki self-assessment processes are in place within the Diploma, including peer teaching reviews and student evaluation. This is positive. Additionally, management shows an awareness of particular issues facing specific groups of learners, and there is evidence that this self reflection has led to additional resources being applied at times. Teaching methodologies are being adapted to meet the different student needs both on the Mokoia and outlying campuses.

Evidence of external qualification moderation processes was provided. In the main this evidence shows a robust approach at Waiariki to the delivery of this qualification, although

some challenges in relation to particular course areas have been identified these are now being addressed.   Further systematic tracking of students through this qualification and on   to employment or further study will also assist self-assessment   practices.

2.8   Focus Area 8: Bachelor of Applied Social Science (Social Work)

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

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

Educational Performance

The Bachelor of Applied Social Science (Social Work) is a sought after degree of value to   the community, sector and, in particular, Māori. Over 60% of enrolments are Māori, and the programme attracts experienced social workers wishing to upgrade their qualifications, second-chance students who first complete an entry-level qualification and younger full time students. Attrition between Years 1 and 2 of the degree is higher than desirable (which the School is addressing in a variety of ways), however course success and qualification completion are high. The vast majority of graduates are successful in securing employment. Destination data confirm the degree and graduates are respected by agencies. Students indicated the recent growth in enrolments may cause problems (eg access to resources, effective group work), but this is also being   addressed.

Two 60-day placements provide strong links with the profession, for both staff and students. Effective support is provided throughout each placement, with formal evaluations by the agency and student at the end. The Advisory Committee is representative, meets regularly and provides professional advice on a variety of aspects.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is used at programme, school and institution levels, with different „layers" to build up a complete picture. At the core are the Course Improvement Forms, prepared with input from staff at the end of each course. These inform the Annual Qualification Improvement Form which provides management and staff with a comprehensive overview   of all relevant aspects. Both are used to make improvements, with appropriate reporting and monitoring functions built in. Some minor gaps were identified that should be addressed. For example, the tracking of student performance from entry-level certificate through the degree does not occur and could provide useful information. Similarly, the systematic identification of themes arising from placement feedback could also prove beneficial.

Four ITPs deliver this degree, which provides an additional forum for discussion and support, as well as an overarching management structure for aspects such as   moderation.

There is a comprehensive six-monthly staff performance appraisal process that both staff and management agree is effective and meaningful. Te Wananga a Ihenga staff have worked hard to re-connect with the community after problems related to   the   previous   degree were identified. They spoke openly and positively about various senior management initiatives and improved accountability.

2.9	Focus Area 9: Governance and Management

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

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

Educational Performance

Although the Council has only recently been appointed, it is clearly focussed on Waiariki priorities such as educational performance and has endorsed the strategic direction being taken. Reflecting Waiariki"s bicultural emphasis, the dual Governance arrangement with Te Mana Matauranga is given effect through a Tangata Whenua Deed of Agreement.

There is evidence of good management practices across Waiariki, for example through the setting and monitoring of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Audit and Risk Committee of Council are currently reviewing these KPIs.

Considerable emphasis has been placed on the professional development of Tutors. Identifying development is one element of individual yearly reviews that also incorporate measures of success and performance specific to the course being taught by the Tutor.

The approach to academic assessment and moderation is consistent across all campuses in those instances where the same course is delivered in multiple locations. There is also a growing use of diagnostic tools to assess and monitor student capabilities[3].

The EER team were impressed by the collective responsibility of the Academic Board members, who are clearly focussed on ensuring that educational quality standards are maintained and with improving educational performance. The Academic Board requires that action plans be developed for any courses with less than 80% student satisfaction and this reinforces the message that the needs of Waiariki students are paramount. All courses with a success rate of <30% are also subject to review by the Academic Board.

Between 2007 and 2010 Waiariki has carried out a comprehensive qualification "refresh" and this exercise is now largely complete. As a result, good processes and structure for course review and modification have been developed.

Capability in Self-Assessment

A comprehensive self-assessment framework and accompanying processes have been defined and implemented. Excellent survey mechanisms are in place to gather data on student satisfaction with both courses and tutors, and these data are analysed to produce improvement action plans that are then monitored. Some graduate destination data are also gathered, providing further information against key metrics.

It is also evident that considerable effort has gone in to developing systems that report on educational performance. The new Programme dashboards are an excellent tool to determine the progress being made and the effect that improvement initiatives are having.

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[3] In 2009, 9 courses used diagnostic tools and in 2010 35 courses were using this functionality.

The existence of the AQIR template (and its revision) is a valuable tool and it is encouraging to see it being used at course completion to report the impact of improvement strategies.

Numerous Local Advisory Committees are in place and provide sector input to ensure course relevancy and development.

2.10 Focus Area 10: Support Services

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

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

Educational Performance

Waiariki provides a „Comprehensive Tapestry of Support" across the institution, including a variety of services and special projects: International, Library Learning Centre, Health Centre, Foundation Learning Support, Literacy and Numeracy and Manaakitanga. There is a high FTE staffing to EFT ratio, indicating how committed senior management is to ensuring students are supported throughout the study and the perceive value of services offered.

Support is offered in different modes and implemented in different ways, eg 1:1 for individual students, in groups, by team teaching and mentoring. There is an obvious commitment to tailoring services to meet the diverse range of needs, and the support teams are both proactive and reactive. These teams look for any and all opportunities to engage with students and staff are proactive in obtaining external grants for special projects, eg developing a pastoral care model for the sector (Manaakitanga, with a special focus on Māori learners). The „indigenising" of the Curriculum project is another example of Waiariki"s bicultural commitment.

Students in the selected focus areas are aware of the available services and positive about what is offered. The greater number of students at Waiariki and the increased use of the services have challenged staff to develop different ways of working and to identify priority areas.

Waiariki"s „Smart Study" and Certificate in Tertiary Learning Skills (for students without NCEA credits) also provide support for students who may not otherwise be able to undertake tertiary study.

Capability in Self-Assessment

Support Services staff and management collect and use meaningful data from a variety of sources to evaluate their own effectiveness and the impact of the services offered (eg pivot tables, pre and post assessments, reports from other areas in the institution, user evaluations, diagnostics and team teaching feedback). The information is used to identify additional approaches, make changes and target programmes and groups as priority areas.

Internal customer surveys are used to determine the value and effectiveness of the various services, with the results used to make improvements. Students clearly benefit from the

support services provided, as demonstrated by the increase in those using the services and the follow-up data on student achievement.

From the impressive amount of evidence including statistics available, the services are operating at a very high standard.

2.11 Pastoral Care of International Students

The growth in International students at Waiariki Institute of Technology over the last few years has been significant and this reflects the success of the strategy being adopted. International students are achieving high levels of academic success with little or no variation from their domestic counterparts.

The pastoral care and support for these students to assist them in their adjustment to student life in Rotorua and New Zealand is outstanding. The concept of buddying those international students who require support with a Kiwi mate is one example of this.

International students interviewed consider they are very well supported by teaching and support staff as they pursue their learning goals. They were complimentary of the quality of education received and of their Waiariki experience overall.

Waiariki meets its obligations under the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students and submits annual statements to the Ministry of Education as required.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.

Further Actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with ITP Quality"s regular scheduling policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this   report.