External Evaluation and Review Report

Native Institute of Digital Technology Ltd

Date of report: 26 June 2025

About Native Institute of Digital Technology Ltd

Native Institute of Digital Technology Limited provides creative digital learning opportunities underpinned by kaupapa Māori values. Programmes are designed primarily to re-engage youth who are not in education, employment or training, and provide pathways for further education.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	1251 Fenton Street, Rotorua, Bay of Plenty
Eligible to enrol international students:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 2025 – 31 equivalent full-time students; Māori 20, Pasifika three, special needs six
	International: nil
Number of staff:	Six full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	[Native Institute of Digital Technology](#) link to provider page on NZQA website.
	Native Institute of Digital Technology limited (Native Tech) was established in 2023 as the education arm of Digital Natives Academy, a non-profit organisation founded in 2014 to provide creative digital learning opportunities.
Last EER outcome:	This is Native Institute of Digital Technology's first EER.
Scope of evaluation:	• Tauwhiriwhiri 1: Foundations in Digital & Creative Tech – New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1) ID: 128117-2 [ref 2861-3]
	• Tauwhiriwhiri 2: Introduction to Digital & Creative Tech – New Zealand Certificate which leads to New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2) ID: 128121-2 [ref 2862-2]
MoE number:	7028
NZQA reference:	C60391
Dates of EER visit:	4 and 5 March 2025

Summary of results

Native Tech effectively supports students who were not engaged with or were previously challenged by the education system, to successful achievement of valued skills and knowledge. Training programmes are fulfilling their core purpose, and benefit students and their communities. Self-assessment processes are sound and are informing ongoing improvements.

Confident in educational performance

- A strong purpose, cultural values and solutions underpin the PTE's strategic direction. Native Tech is focussed on providing disengaged and at-risk youth a pathway of learning to thrive. The strong purpose and ethos are well understood and inform practice across the PTE. A highly engaged and collaborative senior leadership team drives strategic goals through regular review and improvement.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Native Tech has had consistently high student completions over the last two years. Students gain important digital skills and knowledge about strategies to maintain mental and physical wellbeing.

- Native Tech uses its strong community engagement to inform ongoing programme review and development. Teaching staff effectively engage students and provide a structured and inclusive learning environment.

- Navigators (youth workers) work alongside teaching staff to provide strong, supportive systems and wrap-around services that motivate the students to persevere with their learning and help them overcome personal learning obstacles/barriers. Students develop strong bonds and establish good friendships among their peers.

- Some compliance accountabilities are not being managed well. Some teaching staff have not met consent to assess requirements, and poor external moderation results and late credit reporting have led to non-compliances. Native Tech is taking steps to address these issues; however, any impact of improvements is still to be seen.

Key evaluation question findings[1]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Overall student achievement was strong during 2023 and 2024 for the training delivered.[2] Ninety-two per cent (11/12) of Tauwhiriwhiri 1 students successfully completed the programme in 2023, and 95 per cent (19/20) completed the programme in 2024. Tauwhiriwhiri 2 was first delivered in 2024, and 80 per cent (16/20) of students successfully completed the programme. These completions meet the 80 per cent target for completions set by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).[3]
	Māori students are the predominant demographic undertaking training. They are achieving at a similar rate to other student groups, with an overall completion of 93 per cent. The one Pasifika student who enrolled (prior to 2025) successfully completed.
	A high overall attendance rate of 89 per cent is evidence that students are encouraged and stay motivated in their learning. This is also a form of achievement for these students who have previously disengaged from secondary school education.
	Student also grow their personal attributes and transferable skills. These include skills to develop emotional understanding and self-awareness, enhance their social interactions, build self-confidence, and grow their independence. Many students have specific learning

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

[2] In 2023, the PTE delivered a non-accredited pre-foundation course for youth not in education, employment or training, and the New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1). In 2024, the New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2) was added to the delivery portfolio.

[3] Refer to Appendix 1 for details on yearly completions.

	needs that were not supported in mainstream schooling and led to early exit of the school system. Students can recognise and connect with individuals who had similar struggles.

The supportive environment allows the students to flourish and achieve their goals without the social barriers that may hinder learning. Exposure to positive role models and a real working digital environment allows students to see best practices and view working in the IT industry as an achievable reality. This leads to higher-level opportunities, as most students remain engaged in education.

Native Tech is filling a gap in the market as the only digital training PTE in Rotorua, and is providing much-needed educational uplift for the youth in this community.

Native Tech uses different sources and systems for tracking achievement data, which has resulted in a more granular understanding of individuals' achievement for monitoring progress rather than an understanding of long-term, overall achievement. A new student management system has recently been implemented to improve and streamline the monitoring process for accurate reporting of achievement results and to improve overall reporting.

Data collection could be more focused on understanding the value of each programme level and the gains made by the students post-graduation. The organisation does not fully understand the extent to which the programmes enable students to achieve at the next level of education, or within their communities and with whānau. Some information is collected; however, collation and analysis of this data may provide further insights into the value and gains for students and stakeholders. |
| Conclusion: | Value is high for stakeholders. Students' wellbeing and their abilities are enhanced. The PTE is contributing to the wider community by providing training for disengaged and marginalised youth. Collation and analysis of stakeholder and achievement data could be strengthened to understand the extent of the transformative impact and stakeholder needs. |

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Native Tech has developed programmes to address community needs and the aspirations of rangatahi (youth) who previously lacked positive learning experiences. A strong mātauranga Māori kaupapa and community engagements supports culturally relevant and appropriate design and delivery. Native Tech's strategy is to continue to build a suite of digital learning programmes to pathway rangatahi into higher levels of digital study and provide opportunities for rangatahi to realise their full working potential.
	The PTE regularly engages with IT industry stakeholders to understand trends and develop industry-related design and delivery. Programme changes are based on appropriate review of key industry feedback to align programmes to industry best practice and better prepare the students for industry.
	The learning environment provides a safe and encouraging space fully equipped with digital equipment and software to expose students to industry tools. Lessons are well planned, and tutors ensure the training is flexible and responsive to the diverse and evolving needs of the students. Literacy and numeracy classes each day support students to develop the skills to create in a digital environment while developing life skills. Students engage with online learning materials, participate in field trips, and take part in other physical activities to ensure that social and physical engagement informs their overall development.
	Students are encouraged to show their creativity and individuality, promoting academic integrity. Assessment preparation scaffolds learning, ensuring students are ready to take assessments.
	Assessments are check-marked by two senior staff before results are released. Internal moderation is completed annually for all unit standards, which may need revisiting as more programmes are developed and delivered.

	External moderation with the workforce development council suggests that more authentic student feedback is required in assessment; however, moderation validates assessor decisions.
	NZQA external moderation of the literacy and numeracy unit standards raised areas for improvement. In response, Native Tech employed expertise in literacy and numeracy training design and delivery to address the issues. Moderation findings are effectively used to change or develop further tutor guidance in assessment practice; however, the impact of the changes is still to be seen.
Conclusion:	Effective programme design and delivery aligns with student and industry needs. Programme review is completed on an as-needs basis. However, a more systematic approach to overall review of all information collected at specific periods will ensure that ongoing improvements and informed decision-making occur at a strategic level. Assessment policies and support for staff in assessment practices need strengthening to ensure robust academic practices are ongoing.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The PTE employs navigators who recruit students using a comprehensive interview process focused on understanding each student's personal and learning needs, as well as previous barriers to learning. The student profile and wellbeing assessment guide the adaptation of learning support to individual needs. A detailed orientation provides students with programme requirements and information on available support mechanisms.
	Rangatahi navigators use student pathway matrix records and regular advisory sessions to gain insights into student progress and identify any challenges that need to be addressed. Staff are well experienced in supporting and understanding student neurodiversity and other learning challenges. Overall, these approaches enable staff to determine the appropriate wrap-around academic and wellbeing support, and to provide the necessary

	encouragement for students to persevere. Native Tech also uses a network of strong community partnerships to refer students to when more professional support services are required.

The learning environment provides facilities that ensure students are comfortable and feel safe, fostering cultural connectedness. Social networks are encouraged, allowing students to develop strong bonds and establish meaningful friendships with their peers. This supportive atmosphere further promotes personal development, which is essential for maintaining motivation and ongoing commitment to learning.

Students participate in various activities that allow them to apply their learning to real-world business projects within the Native Digital Industries business unit. This hands-on experience broadens the students' exposure and deepens their understanding of the type of work they could engage in once qualified.

Staff are well informed and skilled at managing the requirements of the Code of Practice for pastoral care. The support system is robust. Feedback and progress data is regularly used to inform decisions. Native Tech could broaden its understanding by further analysis of the data to determine recurring challenges and develop more formalised support strategies for students with disabilities and other challenges. |
| Conclusion: | Native Tech's student-centred approach ensures students gain multiple opportunities to achieve their goals and aspirations. Self-assessment effectively informs decisions for improvement and positive change for students. |

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Native Tech has a sound purpose that focuses on empowering rangatahi to thrive while learning about digital technology. This purpose drives the actions and operation of this PTE and is informed by Māori kaupapa and experience within local communities. The PTE's business model is well supported by a few funding agencies. The significant part of the chief executive officer role is to maintain current and source further funding to enable further opportunities and advocacy for the students.

Senior leadership is effective in making decisions mutually informed by the educational and business sustainability drivers. Management lacks some knowledge and skills on maintaining the PTE's conformity with NZQA registration and consent to assess rules.

There is strong evidence of a well-connected team approach with intentional management objectives, prioritised to the most important needs. The team is developing new leaders and there is a maturity and confidence in the senior leadership team which continues to deepen insights, respond to developments, and proactively review processes for improvement. Staff feel valued and understand that their contributions are welcomed and useful to decision-making.

The well-considered and relevant technological resources and materials are managed by the tutors and navigators and made available through an effective student management system.

Staff are recruited for their expertise and capability in supporting health and wellbeing and digital expertise. Academic management works closely with teaching staff to mentor and support the development of academic practices, while peer mentoring supports staff wellbeing and growth. However, there has been a lack of focus on acquiring staff with adult teaching experience and training. This not only affects the tutors' meeting of consent to |

	assess and moderation requirements, it also means that explicit use of different teaching methodologies is limited. Data is reviewed at a granular level and self-assessment is ongoing to inform everyday operational needs and impacts. There is an opportunity for Native Tech to strengthen self-assessment by aggregating data to understand overall and programme-level impacts on educational performance. This will support understanding to inform overall decisions and strategic direction.
Conclusion:	A strategic and innovative governance and management team supports the experienced teaching team to ensure student and organisational goals are being met. Self-assessment is fit for purpose, and systems and processes continue to develop.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Systems are in place to track and monitor compliance reporting. However, Native Tech needs to better familiarise themselves with NZQA rules and regulations. The PTE's reporting mechanisms to the TEC require strengthening to ensure compliances are met. Native Tech is only meeting some of its compliance requirements such as annual attestations to NZQA, monitoring of programme delivery as approved, and completing external moderation requirements to the workforce development council. Self-review of the Code of Practice[4] is sound, involving relevant staff. Relevant annual goals are informed through the activity of the dedicated navigators, monitoring of the disability action plan, and a strong student voice. Complaints and critical incidents are reported within the Code review, and Native Tech has used its investigation processes to inform review of related procedures. Self-reviews are published on the PTE's student services website.

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[4] Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

	As Native Tech enrol students under 18 years of age, all staff are police-vetted and staff records are updated every three years to meet requirements under the Children's Act 2014 and the Education and Training Act 2020.
	In 2024, 34 per cent of student results were reported outside the 90-day requirement. This impacts 31, or 62 per cent of students. Native Tech was not aware that this was an issue. However, management has responded and taken steps to ensure systems are developed to meet the required timeframe for reporting.
	Native Tech did not meet national external moderation requirements for literacy and numeracy systems (completed with NZQA in 2024[5]). NZQA required the PTE to develop an action plan to address assessment issues. Assessment practices are being strengthened, and an application to NZQA for a programme change is currently underway to replace the literacy and numeracy standards with alternate unit standards.
	At the time of the EER, Native Tech was not meeting industry consent and moderation requirements (CMR). Most tutors did not hold the unit standard 4098 to conduct assessments. Although staff are receiving internal training, these unit standards need to be prioritised.
	Native Tech has a comprehensive quality management system. However, policies and procedures need updating regularly, and some policies do not align with current practices and roles. Some procedures also require more clarity to be effective guidance for operational activities.
Conclusion:	A system of monitoring compliance accountabilities ensures that Native Tech meets some compliances, but a greater working knowledge of NZQA, TEC and CMR rules and requirements is required. Self-assessment is supporting reviews of the Code and certain policies and procedures; however, a more extensive review of the quality management system is required to ensure policies and procedures mirror current practices and roles.

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[5] Tauwhiriwhiri 1 - Foundations in Digital & Creative Tech (Level 1) includes two unit standards, of which four samples for each unit standard were externally moderated. This moderation finding impacts 19 graduates in the 2024 cohort.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Tauwhiriwhiri 1 - Foundations in Digital & Creative Tech – New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1)

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Qualification completions have been consistently high since the commencement of delivery. However, 2024 moderation findings (NZQA) undermine the validity of some results. The PTE has engaged the assistance of NZQA and made an application to change the two unit standards.
Conclusion:	NZQA required a formal review of assessment practices to address specific assessment issues. Native Tech has begun to address the problems. Ongoing staff development in assessment and moderation practices will further strengthen these areas.

2.2 Tauwhiriwhiri 2 - Introduction to Digital & Creative Tech New Zealand Certificate which leads to New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2)

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Student achievement is strong for the first year of delivery. Students gain important knowledge and transferable skills; however, Native Tech would benefit from understanding the extent of these gains post-graduation. Further analysis would provide understanding of the value of learning beyond achievement.
Conclusion:	There is strong evidence of the value Native Tech provides to students and relevant stakeholders. Self-assessment could be strengthened through further analysis of data.

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Native Institute of Digital Technology Ltd:

- Strengthen understanding of NZQA rules and requirements and reporting to the TEC, to ensure Native Tech meets its compliance obligations. Maintain stronger processes to monitor, review and respond to important compliance requirements.

- Consider formalised professional development for all tutorial staff to include adult teaching, training and assessment skills.

- Systematically collect, analyse and use feedback from key sources to understand the value and contribution of the organisation to student, community and industry outcomes.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

NZQA requires Native Institute of Digital Technology Ltd to:

- Ensure credits for students are reported to NZQA within three months following assessment, as per Section 10(1)(b) of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022.

- Ensure staff engaged in assessment meet Criterion 3 of the consent and moderation requirements (CMR) for the unit standards being delivered.

Appendix 1

2023-2024 Learner Data						
Year	Intake	Enrolled	Completed	% Completed	Retained	Withdrawn
2023	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 1	12	11	92%	8	1
2024	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 1	20	19	95%	12	1
2024	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 2	24	21	88%	12	3
	Total	**56**	**51**	**91%**	**32**	**5**

Total Māori Learners across all Levels & Years						
Year	Intake	Enrolled	Completed	% Completed	Retained	Withdrawn
2023	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 1	10	9	90%	6	1
2024	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 1	19	19	100%	15	1
2024	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 2	15	13	87%	6	2
	Total	**44**	**41**	**93%**	**27**	**4**

Total Pasifika Learners across all Levels & Years						
Year	Intake	Enrolled	Completed	% Completed	Retained	Withdrawn
2024	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 1	1	1	100%	1	0
	Total	**1**	**1**	**100%**	**1**	**0**

Total Special Needs Learners across all Levels & Years						
Year	Intake	Enrolled	Completed	% Completed	Retained	Withdrawn
2023	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 1	4	4	100%	1	0
2024	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 1	8	7	88%	6	1
2024	Tauwhiriwhiri Level 2	6	4	67%	1	2
	Total	**18**	**15**	**83%**	**8**	**3**

Data supplied by Native Tech.

Final

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

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

- *Identify organisational fraud[6]*

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

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

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

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*

- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*

- *maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

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

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

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

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/.

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