



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

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

External Evaluation and Review Report

Orbit Helicopters Limited (trading as
North Shore Helicopter Training)

Date of report: 22 January 2019

About Orbit Helicopters Limited trading as North Shore Helicopter Training

North Shore Helicopter Training (NSHT) delivers helicopter flight training courses and NZQA-approved aviation diploma programmes. Students come to NSHT to obtain their Private, Commercial and/or Instructional Pilot Licence. The diploma programmes are eligible for student loan funding.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	North Shore Airfield, Postman Road, Albany, Auckland RD4
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: five (level 5 diploma); 13 (private flying courses); Māori – 22 per cent International: nil
Number of staff:	Two full-time and two part-time
TEO profile:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Helicopter) (General Aviation) (Level 5)• New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Helicopter) (Flight Instruction) (Level 6) See Orbit Helicopters Limited
Last EER outcome:	Highly Confident in educational performance Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Helicopter) (General Aviation) (Level 5)
MoE number:	7123
NZQA reference:	C31987
Date of EER visit:	31 October 2018

Summary of Results

North Shore Helicopter Training has a strong focus on self-assessment and on ensuring that its various compliance responsibilities are met. Achievement is high and the organisation culture is inclusive.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Twelve out of 13 participants from 2015-2017 successfully completed the NZQA-approved level 5 diploma.
- NSHT's 'first attempt' pass rate is higher than the national average and shows an increase from its previous pass rate.
- Māori students' participation rate in the level 5 diploma is high at 80 per cent in 2018; the achievement rate in the past three years was 100 per cent.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Students gain valuable transferable skills that they easily put into practice in their day-to-day lives.
- Instructors are well qualified and registered flight instructors who are active in the aviation community and provide excellent guidance to prepare students for employment in aviation.
- NSHT monitors and analyses student achievement, seeks to understand root causes of achievement concerns, and proactively finds appropriate solutions.
- NSHT maintains contact with graduates and keeps track of their employment destinations. In some cases, NSHT paves the way for graduates' employment through recommendations.
- The PTE continuously reviews all of its programmes to ensure alignment to Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) requirements.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?	
Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NSHT’s educational performance is strong. Since the previous EER (2014), 12 out of 13 level 5 diploma students have obtained the qualification and are now commercial pilots. Students enrolled in other courses such as the Private Pilot Licence (PPL), Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL), and Flight Instructor Rating courses also have high achievement rates in the CAA examinations.</p> <p>An important measure of achievement for aviation providers is the number of attempts students make to pass the theory and practical flight examinations. NSHT’s first attempt pass rate is consistently high – 92 per cent in 2015, 91 per cent in 2016, and 92 per cent in 2017. The PTE’s performance is higher than the national aviation average (68 per cent in 2017).</p> <p>Māori students represent 80 per cent of the current diploma students (four out of five). Since the previous evaluation in 2014, four out of 12 students (33 per cent) were Māori, and their achievement rate was 100 per cent.</p> <p>These high achievement rates show that NSHT is offering quality teaching.</p> <p>NSHT understands and reflects on its achievement data, especially outcomes that are not positive. For instance, in 2016, when the PTE experienced a higher than normal failure rate (for its privately funded PPL and CPL students), it identified the problem and possible solutions.</p>
Conclusion:	NSHT’s first attempt achievement rate is consistently high and is above the national average. Māori participation and achievement is high. Students gain skills and knowledge to pass the CAA theory and practical flight examinations to become private and/or commercial pilots.

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

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Nine out of 12 graduates are currently employed as commercial pilots. NSHT keeps track of the graduates and their destination and knows why some graduates are not currently flying commercially.</p> <p>Industry stakeholders confirmed that NSHT graduates are employment-ready and come to them with solid competencies. Students gain valuable skills at NSHT, such as the development of their mental attitude to recognise trigger points and make safe decisions, which is crucial in aviation. Other transferable skills are learned, such as navigation and people skills. In addition, the discipline, teamwork, time management and health and safety that students acquire in the programme carry through to their personal lives.</p> <p>The programme, with its outcomes, was described by the students and graduates as 'good value for money' and a 'good investment'.</p> <p>The industry holds NSHT in high regard. It is not uncommon for the PTE to be contacted by helicopter companies looking for commercial pilots.</p>
Conclusion:	Students have solid competencies to enable them to work in a commercial flying environment. Skills learned are applied to other aspects of the students' lives. The industry acknowledges the benefit of hiring graduates who are employment-ready.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The level 5 diploma programme meets all NZQA and CAA requirements. The programme is continuously reviewed to ensure that it is relevant and meets stakeholder needs, especially any CAA directives.</p> <p>Courses undergo mid- and end-reviews to ensure delivery is appropriate. Staff meet fortnightly to discuss operations and academic matters, and this regular meeting enables the PTE to address any urgent concerns in a timely manner.</p> <p>Regular post-flight test debriefs, student feedback questionnaires, and discussions with external stakeholders all contribute to informing the PTE that the programme design and delivery match the needs of students and relevant stakeholders. Students' end-of-course feedback also informs the PTE on the effectiveness of the teaching.</p> <p>Through its commercial arm and through collaboration with other aviation companies, NSHT provides opportunities for students to be exposed to real-world aviation scenarios/situations. Students get to observe and participate in tasks in a commercial flying environment. This is an extra advantage provided to students on top of the structured programme activities.</p> <p>Assessment and moderation practices are sound and reviewed both internally and externally. Assessments are marked by CAA as per their rules, contributing to validating achievement.</p> <p>The PTE was given a satisfactory rating at the level 5 diploma consistency review.</p>
Conclusion:	NSHT has strong processes to ensure that the programme content and delivery meet the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The PTE provides a positive environment for the instructors and students to interact with each other and enhance their learning. This open-door policy is appreciated by the students, as they can easily approach their instructor or the management for any concerns and/or feedback. Students feel they are listened to, and management takes steps to address any concerns brought to their attention. A regular monthly meeting occurs between the students and the management/instructors, and actions as a result of these meetings are followed up.</p> <p>Feedback on students' performance is timely and useful as remedial actions can be implemented. Aside from the mid- and end-course reviews, monthly progress checks ensure students are progressing well on tasks and highlight any areas for extra support.</p> <p>Policies and procedures minimise barriers to learning. A good example of this is the robust screening of applicants upfront and ensuring those who enrol in the programme have met the entry requirements. In addition, the organisation checks students are the right fit in terms of their goals, attitude and aptitude for the programme.</p> <p>Information provided to students and prospective enrolees is comprehensive and accurate, including the student handbook and website. This manages students' expectations and minimises risks.</p>
Conclusion:	Strong support is provided to students, and all students are actively engaged in their learning.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The PTE's organisational purpose and direction is clear. Its main focus is to provide comprehensive helicopter training to carefully selected learners and prepare them to be competent pilots.</p> <p>The chief executive and the training manager hold prominent roles in various aviation organisations. This keeps them updated on new developments in the industry, which informs the delivery and review of the programmes.</p> <p>To inform their teaching and explore better practices, instructors attend a monthly 'continuing education' workshop with another aviation school.</p> <p>There is a comprehensive induction plan for new instructors, with the first six months under direct supervision of the senior instructor, and formal performance evaluation occurs regularly. As well as the fortnightly staff meeting, the small size of the organisation allows staff to provide feedback informally on a regular basis.</p> <p>The PTE undergoes a six-monthly internal audit of the whole organisation and its processes. The outcome of the audit is well documented, along with the institution's risk register, complaints register, health and safety database, and various other aviation compliance documents.</p> <p>NSHT has comprehensive and well-documented self-assessment practices using student and industry data which informs their day-to-day management of the programme and students' progress.</p>
Conclusion:	NSHT is a reflective, well-planned and organised education provider focused on student achievement.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The chief executive and other members of the management team share responsibility for monitoring NSHT's compliance accountabilities.</p> <p>Compliance is very exact in the aviation industry. NSHT ensures that it remains compliant not only with CAA and health and safety requirements, but with other organisations relevant to their operation as a PTE (i.e. the Tertiary Education Commission, NZQA, the relevant industry training organisation).</p> <p>In some instances, NSHT goes above and beyond minimum requirements. For instance, it has already subjected itself to a CAA audit on safety management systems compliance, albeit compliance is not required until 2021. NSHT also consistently reviews its policies and procedures relating to the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice, to ensure systems will be in place when the PTE enrolls international students.</p> <p>Individually, NSHT instructors need to comply with CAA requirements to maintain their permit (i.e. individual examinations, required flying times, medical examinations). They do this on a regular basis, and the PTE consistently monitors staff compliance.</p> <p>The PTE-owned helicopters are regularly maintained in accordance with the manufacturers' maintenance programme and in line with CAA rules.</p>
Conclusion:	NSHT is on top of the myriad of requirements to maintain compliance not only as a PTE but also as an aviation company. The organisation has effective processes in place to manage its compliance accountabilities.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Helicopter) (General Aviation) Level 5

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

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.

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

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.

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

Appendix

Conduct of external evaluation and review

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document *Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review* available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.*

Disclaimer

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

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

- *Identify organisational fraud²*
- *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.*

² NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission 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 according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

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

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

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

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

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

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

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz