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# External Evaluation and Review Report



New Zealand Skydiving School  
Limited

Date of report: 12 October 2022

# About New Zealand Skydiving School Limited

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*The New Zealand Skydiving School (NZSS) offers the New Zealand Diploma in Skydiving for those looking to have a globally recognised skydiving qualification and licence. NZSS is affiliated to the New Zealand Parachute Industry Association, Civil Aviation Authority and New Zealand Parachute Federation through its partnership with Skydive Auckland.*

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Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	73 Green Road, Parakai, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 19 equivalent full-time students including two Māori students in 2022 International: one equivalent full-time student
Number of staff:	Full time: one; part-time: six
TEO profile:	See NZQA: <a href="#">New Zealand Skydiving School Limited</a>
Last EER outcome:	Highly Confident in educational performance and capability in self-assessment in 2018
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Commercial Skydiving (Level 5) ID: 125113</li><li>• International student support and wellbeing</li></ul>
MoE number:	7380
NZQA reference:	C48358
Dates of EER visit:	7 and 8 June 2022 (virtual)

# Summary of results

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*NZSS is a high-performing provider with effective self-assessment informing improvement. The diploma programme maintains relevance, and staff are closely involved with industry. Students are well supported to complete the programme and develop the skills needed for employment. Highly competent leadership guides the organisation.*

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## **Highly Confident in educational performance**

Students achieve well. Data is collected and analysed, and used meaningfully to inform decisions and make changes where appropriate.

The value of outcomes is clear. Self-development, including growth in confidence and trust in working with teams, is also an apparent area of value.

## **Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment**

The diploma programme is effectively meeting the needs of students and stakeholders, and maintaining currency in response to industry demand. The programme is relevant and current because it is informed by industry, reflection, and experience and challenges such as the pandemic.

Academic and pastoral support is strong, fostered by the supportive culture of the school and the conscious appointment of instructor staff. There is an opportunity for further staff development in diverse learner needs, to equip staff with all the tools they might need.

NZSS has a clear purpose and direction, with strong connections to industry. Staff are experienced and highly qualified and are valued by the school. The competent and capable leadership team leads effective self-assessment practice, including appropriate analysis of student achievement.

NZSS effectively manages its compliance responsibilities, such as monitoring of NZQA rules and regulations.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students achieve well, with a high number of completions averaging 92.5 per cent across the past four graduate years since the previous evaluation.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Some withdrawals have occurred over this period, generally for personal reasons or change of mind. Updated enrolment processes, including a candidate suitability interview, will help to ensure students can complete the programme successfully.</p> <p>Students achieve in-depth knowledge and understanding of the industry, and most graduates gain related and meaningful employment.</p> <p>Self-assessment of student achievement and progression is fit for purpose. Student feedback is collated, analysed and discussed between staff and informs change where necessary. Meetings focussed on student achievement highlight the need for any intervention.</p> <p>NZSS provides the New Zealand skydiving industry with work-ready graduates who have the required certification to operate in a compliant and safe manner in a high-risk industry.</p> <p>Students highly regard the value of outcomes beyond attainment of the qualification, including the development of</p>

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

<sup>2</sup> Note the small number of students in each cohort across the years of delivery, i.e. 30 in 2018, 33 in 2019, 27 in 2020, 26 in 2021, 19 in 2022.

Completion Rate*					Employment Rate*				
	2018	2019	2020	2021		2018	2019	2020	2021
Māori	100%	100%	100%	75%	Māori	100%	50%	0%	100%
Pasifika	NA	NA	NA	100%	Pasifika	NA	NA	NA	100%
U-25	90%	100%	88%	94%	U-25	100%	100%	88%	59%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>70%</b>

\* Based on graduate year

	<p>skills and knowledge such as: communication, teamwork, health and safety, confidence in self and leadership, which are transferable to any workplace.</p> <p>Graduates go on to work all over the world; skydiving jobs are in demand globally. There is equally strong demand to employ graduates in the New Zealand industry. The programme enables students to enter the industry with a variety of skills relevant to different roles in a skydiving drop zone. This means they have several pathways to enter the industry. Over 85 per cent of graduates gain relevant employment.</p> <p>NZSS maintains close connections with industry. For example, the New Zealand Parachute Industry Association requests advice from and collaboration with the school as they have daily operational industry experience. NZSS also has positive relationships with work placement providers; this is a small, niche industry.</p> <p>The school regularly stays in touch with graduates three and six months after graduation to gather progression and destination data.</p> <p>Data reflects graduates gaining relevant employment all over the world. International stakeholders hold New Zealand graduates in high regard. Success stories of graduates are posted on the school's social media and website to inspire future students.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Students achieve at a consistently high rate and develop relevant skills which are in demand in industry. The value of outcomes is highly regarded by students and stakeholders. NZSS is developing capable skydiving practitioners who are work-ready for the national and international adventure sports job market.</p>

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students are guided by clear learning expectations through the use of modules and marking criteria used by all tutors. Clear understanding of moderation activities and expectations are supported by peer discussions.</p> <p>Resourcing meets the needs of the learners in the different phases of their progression in skydiving. Students have access to a range of appropriate resources to enable practical and theoretical learning, including equipment for purchase.</p> <p>Moderation practice is fit for purpose, with internal post-assessment and external review mechanisms, ensuring experienced and specialist input into assessment practice and judgements. The internal moderation process has recently changed to focus on key competency assessments. NZQA is satisfied that NZSS has fulfilled the requirements of the action plan, as well as NZQA's approval and accreditation criteria, arising from the recent monitoring visit.</p> <p>Self-assessment activities are effective in ensuring the currency of learning content and connection to industry. Instructors are involved in curriculum design and assessment as well as self-assessment activities. Any changes to programme design and delivery are discussed in monthly staff meetings. Employers are also engaged in curriculum review and improvements. Health and safety are integral to the curriculum, processes and resource maintenance, as expected and required by the New Zealand Parachute Association (NZPIA) and the Civil Aviation Authority.</p> <p>NZSS has several memorandums of understanding for student placements with accredited workplace providers in New Zealand and Australia. For those students who choose to complete their</p>

	<p>work placement overseas<sup>3</sup>, the provider must still go through a health and safety assessment with the school to meet relevant criteria before students are placed.</p> <p>Recent self-assessment of the workplace module identified the need to collect more feedback from the workplace provider over the duration of the student's placement to ensure development of skills assessment. NZSS has analysed more completions in the last five years as a result.</p> <p>Workplace assessors must have a relevant assessor qualification or demonstration of equivalent knowledge of assessment and moderation. NZQA understands that workplace assessors meet the criteria of NZPIA for moderation and assessment purposes. However, NZQA recommends NZSS consider strengthening assurance in this area to ensure the equivalency of assessor requirements between NZPIA and Unit Standard 4098.</p> <p>Students benefit from group and individual debriefs after each jump, where they regularly discuss their progression with the instructors, receive real-time feedback, and identify areas to be improved by watching video footage of each jump. Students benefit further from the close working relationship with and shared resourcing between NZSS and Skydive Auckland. For example, students can interact with paying tandem customers and practise camera person responsibilities during jumps. NZSS pays the NZPIA fee for students to achieve their Levels A and B licensing through the programme.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Programme design and delivery meets the needs of students and industry stakeholders well. Self-assessment of programme design, delivery and moderation practice is effective and strong, leading to clear improvements.</p>

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<sup>3</sup> Students have three top preferences of placement and can choose anywhere in the world. Current students have confirmed work placements in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the Netherlands.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Staff have the required attributes and knowledge to provide learning environments and support that helps learners to achieve and progress in their learning. The strategic plan emphasises a holistic wellness focus which is embedded and implemented across the school.</p> <p>Enrolment processes support both international and domestic learners to integrate into Auckland and life at the school. Students are provided with relevant and timely information about the course, assessments and financial commitments, as well as learning and behavioural expectations. Consistently small class sizes facilitate a supportive learning environment. Students are well supported during their work placement.</p> <p>Student goals are identified through an interview-based candidate suitability enrolment process, and then followed up at individual check-in meetings. Staff development in diverse learners' needs will further support staff to identify and appropriately address learning and pastoral needs.</p> <p>Self-assessment of student support is effective, with the recent review of the Code of Practice identifying areas for development. For example, a section for student goals has recently been added to the informative student handbook. Ongoing assessment of necessary skills and knowledge with effective feedback systems further supports educational achievement and student wellbeing.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Student support is appropriately tailored to ensure students are supported and involved in their learning. Support processes are effective in ensuring readiness for the programme. Ongoing monitoring of student wellbeing is meaningful and useful to determine the need for intervention.</p>



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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZSS maintains clear organisational oversight, with effective reporting and analysis of outcomes against expectations. Clear communication exists between governance, management and industry. A reflective leadership team is well connected to industry advisors and employers, who are involved with and inform future developments of the school.</p> <p>NZSS is reflective in their data collection and analysis processes to ensure useful information is gathered. For example, the academic management team is effective in monitoring learner achievement, supported by a strong understanding of school operations and industry activities. Planning is based on reflections on the pandemic, achievement and employment rates, and industry changes.</p> <p>The school has appropriate resourcing to meet the needs of the learners, and benefits from shared resourcing in the partnership with Skydive Auckland. Staff reported being valued by management and supported to further develop themselves in their skydiving careers. Future planning is apparent to ensure sustainability of the business as well as staff. Further to this, there are appropriate enrolment processes to ensure the suitability of students for the programme.</p> <p>NZQA recommends further exploration of training for instructors around learner support to gain a deeper understanding of different learning needs in adult teaching. Further consideration of succession planning may also benefit the school.</p>
Conclusion:	Strongly effective leadership guides the school, with a positive culture aligned across the PTE, which supports educational achievement.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZSS uses a systematic approach to monitoring its compliance responsibilities. Relevant NZQA compliance documentation is up to date and has been submitted.</p> <p>There is an embedded culture and processes supporting health and safety; this is a critical component of working in the context of adventure sports.</p> <p>Many regulatory functions and requirements are expected of the school and Skydive Auckland. All staff and students are breath tested every morning before anyone can operate machinery, handle gear, or skydive.</p> <p>NZSS collects accurate data and is monitoring relevant enrolment activities for international students. Self-review of the Code<sup>4</sup> has been an effective exercise to identify what is working well and what could be strengthened.</p> <p>No significant legal or ethical matters were reported by the PTE to the evaluation team. The PTE confirmed its financial viability.</p>
Conclusion:	NZSS effectively manages all of its compliance accountabilities, including NZQA rules, based on all available evidence.

<sup>4</sup> [The Education \(Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners\) Code of Practice 2021 \(the Code\)](#) supports the wellbeing of tertiary and international learners enrolled with New Zealand education providers.

# 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 Commercial Skydiving (Level 5) ID: 125113

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>

## 2.2 Focus area: International student support and wellbeing

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>

# 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 New Zealand Skydiving School Limited:

- explore training for instructors around learner support to gain a deeper understanding of different learning needs in adult teaching
- consider strengthening assurance in this area by cross-checking Unit Standard 4098 with NZPIA assessor requirements.

# 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 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<sup>5</sup>
- 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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<sup>5</sup> 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 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.*

*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 including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

*The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.*

*In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes 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 2016. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

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

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