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# External Evaluation and Review Report

Community Colleges New Zealand  
Limited

Date of report: 1 May 2020

# About Community Colleges New Zealand Limited (ComCol)

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*ComCol's main focus is on the provision of education and support for foundation learners. The organisation offers Youth Guarantee, work transition and placement programmes, and a range of support, funded under the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) Youth Service scheme.*

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Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	140 East Belt Road, Rangiora <sup>1</sup>
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) 238 (2019); MSD 269 (2019)  22 per cent Māori, 0.8 per cent Pasifika, 74 per cent New Zealand European, 3.2 per cent Other  International: nil
Number of staff:	56 full-time and 26 part-time
TEO profile:	See <a href="#">NZQA - Community Colleges New Zealand Limited</a>
Last EER outcome:	ComCol's previous EER outcome in 2016 was Highly Confident in educational performance and Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The current EER looked at the following focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Levels 1 and 2)</li><li>• New Zealand Certificate in Equine Skills (Level 3)</li></ul> Together these focus areas are a representative cross-section of programmes offered by ComCol.

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<sup>1</sup> ComCol also has campuses in Nelson, Blenheim, Timaru, Dunedin and Invercargill.

MoE number: 7428  
NZQA reference: C38414  
Dates of EER visit: 10-12 March 2020

# Summary of Results

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*There is clear and comprehensive evidence that ComCol is providing quality education and training leading to positive outcomes for its students, their families and the community.*

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## **Highly Confident in educational performance**

- Students are highly engaged in their learning and are well supported to succeed in gaining both confidence and interpersonal skills while achieving formal qualifications.
- Education is delivered in contexts appropriate to student and community needs. Stakeholders confirm that students and graduates are making positive changes in their lives and the lives of their families and communities as a result of the education and learning they gain at ComCol.
- ComCol is using its professional networks and community relationships effectively to develop and deliver programmes that meet student and stakeholder needs.

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

- The organisation is well managed and has a clear philosophy and purpose that is reflected throughout its campuses. The activities are well resourced and ComCol uses its resources effectively. Important compliance accountabilities are being well managed.
- The practice of self-assessment is not new at ComCol. Records and discussions indicate that self-assessment is well embedded and has been practised for many years.
- Self-assessment at ComCol is comprehensive, authentic and transparent. NZQA is highly confident that ComCol will continue to use findings insightfully to bring about worthwhile and ongoing improvements.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>2</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 are improving their well-being and acquiring useful skills and knowledge, including 'soft skills' such as teamwork, communication and confidence. Most importantly, students' strengths are validated, and they can plan for their future education and other priorities.</p> <p>Youth Guarantee course completions are over 80 per cent<sup>3</sup>, which is commendable and well above national averages for these types of programmes and students. The students are also achieving credits towards NCEA, a benefit that was appreciated by students interviewed at the EER. Māori make up approximately 22 per cent of the student cohort. Completion rates for Māori students since 2018 have been at the same level as the cohort as a whole.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Approximately 75 per cent of the Youth Guarantee graduates move on to higher education either at ComCol or other providers.</p> <p>All Youth Guarantee programmes include embedded literacy and numeracy. Students are assessed at the beginning, mid-way and the end of their enrolment in the programme. Approximately half of ComCol learners show a significant improvement in their writing ability.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>Valued outcomes are also being realised across all</p>

<sup>2</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>3</sup> Refer Appendix 1

<sup>4</sup> Refer Appendix 1

<sup>5</sup> As measured by Gain Reports using the TEC Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool.

	<p>programmes through improved family and community life. Outcomes often lie outside the scope of traditional educational measures. For instance, local criminal justice agencies report significantly less engagement with students once they have enrolled with ComCol.</p> <p>Staff at ComCol demonstrate a good understanding of, and commitment to, the factors that lead to student achievement and regularly analyse and discuss ideas for improving achievement. Every campus has weekly staff meetings where ideas for improving course delivery and student achievement are discussed and agreed.</p>
Conclusion:	Students are consistently achieving courses and qualifications as well as achieving substantial personal benefit and growth. In both scenarios, students, families and communities gain significant value.

### 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>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>ComCol's efforts to meet the personal and academic goals of every student is a standout feature of the organisation. The mix of programmes offered and the delivery style are relevant to the students, stakeholders and the communities they serve. The organisation is well attuned to the needs of the students through years of experience in the same market and through constantly seeking feedback from students, schools and other agencies.</p> <p>Teachers identify the aspirations and interests of their students and, where possible, structure their teaching to align with those aspirations. This ensures that student learning needs are being well met.</p> <p>There was evidence of the teaching staff regularly engaging in meaningful discussion about teaching practice and sharing ideas, experiences and knowledge through their daily interactions and staff meetings. This is driven by the passion of the teachers but also well supported within a whole-of-organisation approach to continuously improving educational performance. Academic standards are clear, understood and</p>

	maintained across all campuses. Programmes are regularly reviewed and updated and there was evidence of strong internal and external moderation processes leading to valid and reliable assessment practices.
Conclusion:	ComCol's regular and ongoing interaction with its students and stakeholders – ensuring that programmes and activities meet the existing and emerging needs of students, families and community – is a compelling feature of the organisation.

#### 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>Students at ComCol receive active, integrated and ongoing social and academic support from staff at all levels of the organisation. Intending students are well guided into courses that are appropriate to their aspirations and capabilities. Teachers and students described numerous activities and initiatives that motivate, engage and encourage students to get the full benefit from their time at ComCol.</p> <p>There was clear evidence of good teaching practice at ComCol and a robust structure which will ensure good teaching continues. All staff are enthusiastic and passionate about their teaching and are well supported by management. The strong rapport between students and staff was evident from discussions and evaluation survey outcomes. Student feedback about the organisation and teaching was all positive.</p> <p>Staff have strong cultural competency which enables robust educational support for students and a very inclusive environment. The community developmental nature of the organisation means that its staff go above and beyond the scope of a traditional education organisation to provide social and community support.</p>
Conclusion:	Students at ComCol are experiencing a strongly supportive and caring learning environment, which is well reviewed within a reflective organisational culture, ensuring its ongoing effectiveness.

## 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>ComCol is a not-for-profit charitable company<sup>6</sup> governed by a simple board of two members who between them have strong educational, financial and governance expertise and several decades of successfully leading this organisation. Currently, careful thought, consultation and planning has been going into succession planning as both members are approaching retirement.</p> <p>The organisation is well managed and has a clear philosophy, purpose and values which are evident throughout the organisation. ComCol uses its resources effectively within a sustainable business model. Staff are valued for their expertise and are provided with the right support and opportunities for professional development to support them in their roles.</p> <p>ComCol has well-established administration and management systems and procedures in place, with ethical practices. The head office in Rangiora is referred to as the 'Service Centre' as it provides services, structure and accountability to the regional campuses.</p> <p>The organisation encourages reflection on its role and how to continue to make ongoing and continuous improvements to how it meets the needs of students and other stakeholders. Self-assessment is being well led by management and is comprehensively understood and adopted throughout the organisation.</p>
Conclusion:	ComCol has a clear vision and understanding of its enterprise, and strong leadership committed to providing effective support for educational achievement. Monitoring of performance within ComCol is regular and transparent and effective.

<sup>6</sup> It is possible to be registered both as a limited liability company in New Zealand under the Companies Act 1993 and as a charity under the Charities Act, so long as the company's constitution contains certain safeguards against distribution of income or assets to the shareholders, and the company observes the requirements under the Charities Act 2005.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>ComCol has a clear understanding of its compliance accountabilities and manages effectively to ensure obligations are met. Compliance is overseen by 'Quality Central' using proprietary software to identify, schedule, monitor and report on compliance obligations and risk. A monthly newsletter is produced by Quality Central contextualised to each level of the organisation.</p> <p>Indications of effective compliance management include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NZQA attestations and returns have been submitted within required timeframes. There is no recent 'risk' history with NZQA.</li> <li>• The courses at ComCol are being delivered consistent with their NZQA-approved programmes and training schemes.</li> <li>• The organisation has a number of funding partners, all of whom require regular evaluation and reporting. ComCol has effective systems to ensure that these reporting accountabilities are met in a timely and accurate manner.</li> <li>• ComCol has charitable status, so financial auditing is strict and up to date to comply with the Charities Act 2005.</li> <li>• ComCol has met its compliance obligations associated with NZQA moderation.</li> </ul>
Conclusion:	ComCol has effective systems in place to ensure that compliance accountabilities are managed well.

# Focus Areas

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

## 2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Levels 1 and 2)

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

## 2.2 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Equine Skills (Levels 2 and 3)

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.*

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 1

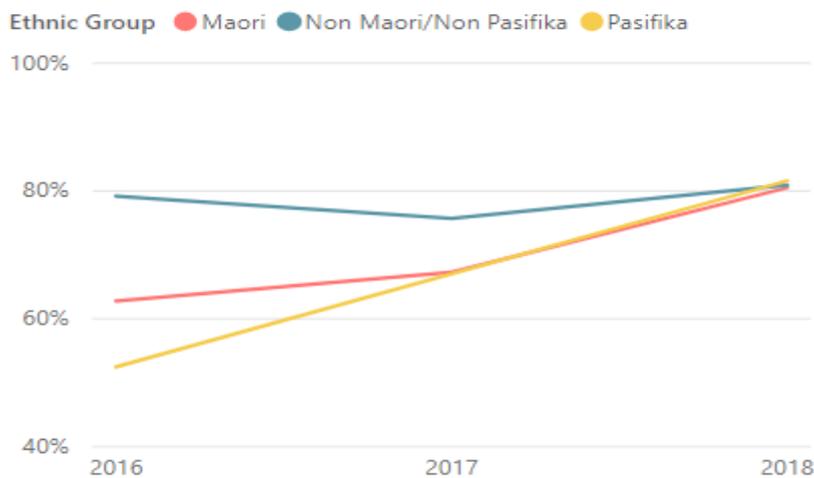
**Table 1<sup>7</sup>**

YG Course Completion and Qualification Completion 2016-18



**Table 2**

Course Completion by Year and Ethnic Group



<sup>7</sup> Course completion rates increased in 2018 but qualification rates showed a decline. In 2018, ComCol increased the number of enrolments accepted throughout the year, resulting in an increasing number of students splitting their enrolments over two calendar years. Course completion rates are a better indicator of success in these cases.

# 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<sup>8</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>8</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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