

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Duke Institute of Studies Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 19 September 2012

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MoE Number: 7449
NZQA Reference: C06820
Date of EER visit: 21 and 22 February 2012

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) 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 TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name	Duke Institute of Studies Limited (Duke Institute)
Location:	12 Huron St, Takapuna, Auckland
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	2001
Number of students:	Domestic (TEC-funded): nil International: 40-50 (average); 21 at the time of the external evaluation and review as February is traditionally a quiet month for Duke Institute.
Number of staff:	Ten (full-time and part-time)
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in English for College Preparation, including IELTS preparation (Level 3)• Certificate in Academic English for IELTS preparation (Level 4)• Certificate in General English Proficiency, including IELTS preparation (Level 3)• Holiday programmes – various
Sites:	Head office and training centre as above
Distinctive characteristics:	Duke Institute's target market is international students from Korea, Japan, or China wanting a short-term English course.
Recent significant changes:	Duke Institute has recently downsized its operation in response to the general downturn in demand for English language courses in New Zealand.

Previous quality assurance history:	This is Duke Institute's first EER. A previous quality assurance report by NZQA in 2009 found Duke Institute to be compliant with NZQA requirements.
Other:	Duke Institute is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students including students under the age of 18 years.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope for the external evaluation and review (EER) consisted of the mandatory focus areas:

- Governance, management, and strategy
- Student support including international students.

In addition, the following focus area was selected:

- English programmes

The focus area above includes the suite of English programmes that constitutes all of the courses provided by the TEO.

3. 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 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.

The EER was conducted in February 2012. Prior to the EER visit, the lead evaluator visited the site and met with the owners and the director of studies. A one and a half-day EER visit was made to the Duke Institute site in Takapuna, where the evaluation team, consisting of the lead evaluator and one other evaluator, met with the owners, management staff, teaching staff, administration staff, and students, and viewed a range of documents and database information. The lead evaluator also spoke by telephone with a sample of external stakeholders.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Duke Institute**.

Students at Duke Institute are achieving good results as a consequence of effective teaching and student support. The data collected by Duke Institute from 2008 to 2010 shows that, on average, students are achieving well in IELTS (International English Language Testing System) programmes in comparison with international achievement rates. For example, in 2011 the 14 Duke Institute students who sat IELTS all achieved a score of 5.5 or higher.

The organisation has a student support structure which is appropriate to the needs of its students and lowers barriers to achieving their goals successfully.

The EER team found consistent evidence of effective teaching throughout the organisation. Feedback from students indicates that programmes are delivered in a manner that enables them to understand the material being presented, and teachers and students relate well to each other.

Feedback from organisations where graduates are referred to was that Duke Institute graduates are well prepared for further study in New Zealand.

The organisation has a long history of involvement with the Korean community in Auckland and makes a valuable and positive contribution to that community.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Duke Institute**.

Duke Institute has established a reflective organisation which has embraced the self-assessment process and is using it effectively. Duke Institute records and analyses information on students' progress and achievement on an ongoing basis. This information is then used to make organisational improvements as well as to inform course content and delivery which ultimately results in improved outcomes for students.

Duke Institute has comprehensive systems to gather and collate feedback from learners which is then continuously and systematically used to inform improvements to teaching practice and course delivery.

Staff at Duke Institute demonstrate a good understanding of the factors that lead to student achievement and analyse and discuss ideas for maintaining achievement and making the courses more useful and enjoyable for students. Processes for the continuous and ongoing review of student achievement are systematic and robust and are expected to continue to produce good outcomes.

Although Duke Institute has regular informal contact with the majority of its graduates, the TEO would benefit from strengthening the analysis and communication of graduate outcomes so that it can use the information gained to make further improvements.

Findings¹

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 **Good**.

Students at Duke Institute are achieving good results as a consequence of effective teaching and student support. All English Language students are tested on entry and their progress measured every week by way of formative testing.

The TEO was able to provide a comprehensive overview of student progression over time, demonstrating that Duke Institute students are progressing through levels at a satisfactory rate. At any point, Duke Institute is able to show the starting level and subsequent achievement for any given student or group of students in each facet of listening, speaking, grammar, reading, and writing.

The TEO has a good student management system which provides student performance data that is readily accessible and used continuously and systematically to inform improvements to teaching practice and course delivery.

Duke Institute has identified that there is a significant correlation between achievement and the living circumstances of students. Students who live in an English-only environment, such as homestay where they are the only student, learn English more quickly. Duke Institute staff therefore regard the homestay as an integral part of the learning experience, and not simply as accommodation. The homestay staff are in close communication with academic staff when matching homestays and students.

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**.

Most students who come to Duke Institute are international students on short-term visas who study for between one week and one year. The graduates may return to their country of origin, go travelling in New Zealand or elsewhere, or engage in further study either at another tertiary institution or in a New Zealand secondary school. The three secondary schools and one institute of technology spoken to as

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

part of the EER all reported a positive relationship with Duke Institute and that its graduates were well prepared for further study. Although all spoke positively about Duke Institute, none were aware of any formal enquiry by Duke Institute as to the progress of its graduates.

Classroom teaching at Duke Institute aims to foster a knowledge of New Zealand culture and traditions in the student, ranging from an understanding of the spirit of tinorangitiratanga, to knowledge of local sporting and other leisure and community activities, to New Zealand geography and history. This local knowledge contributes to the students' ability to integrate into the country and prepares them for extending their study at other teaching institutions in New Zealand.

Students' goals and motivation are identified when they start and regularly assessed by staff to see whether those goals are being met. Most students enrol to improve their speaking and listening skills and to prepare themselves for IELTS.

Although Duke Institute could not formally demonstrate the long-term benefits its courses provide to all of its graduates, the organisation has anecdotal information about most of its graduates and the positive way in which the programmes have contributed to their lives. Through exit interviews, staff know the immediate destination of every graduate; graduates are also encouraged to keep in touch with the organisation via email. Because many graduates go on to study locally, they often "drop in" to report their progress or to seek further support, which is freely given.

From time to time the principal also offers free classes in community English to members of the local Korean community. These classes, which are offered for two mornings per week for a term, are of considerable value to the Korean community. When asked about his motivation for doing so, the principal said, "there is a need, and I have the resources, the skill, and the passion [to meet that need]". This is an example of how Duke Institute adds value to its community.

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**.

Duke Institute's efforts to meet the personal and academic goals of every student are a feature of the organisation. Students are asked what they want at the beginning of the course and this information is made available to teachers who use it in their planning to ensure that course content is matched to the needs of the students.

Duke Institute seeks feedback from learners through a variety of mechanisms. As well as the formal student feedback process, staff have an open-door policy and it is clear that students approach them with problems and issues. Staff were able to

cite examples of how course content and delivery methodology had been changed as a result of feedback from learners or external stakeholders. For instance, although teachers follow a prescribed syllabus, they supplement this with material based on the stated goals and aspirations of the students.

Duke Institute has a comprehensive process for surveying homestays and agents at least annually. The information is then summarised and analysed and used to inform improvements.

Duke Institute is not a member of any professional educational body, although it has recently inquired about membership of the New Zealand Association of Private Education Providers as part of its commitment to extend its links with other education providers. It is important that Duke Institute engages with its professional community in order to keep up with developments in the sector.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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**.

There is clear evidence of effective teaching practice taking place at Duke Institute. Staff are enthusiastic and passionate about their curriculum and teaching and they are well supported by management. Every staff member at Duke Institute has a role in student learning and they take a collegial, whole-of-organisation approach to ensuring that all students achieve. Teachers and students relate well to each other and students spoke highly of Duke Institute's teaching staff. They liked the open, friendly style and have good access to the teaching staff outside of class hours. Students noted that staff were responsive to concerns or issues raised. The strong rapport between students and staff was evident from discussions and evaluation survey outcomes. The low staff-to-student ratio allows for personal attention when appropriate.

Duke Institute teaching staff are well qualified in their respective disciplines and all teaching staff hold an appropriate teaching qualification. The organisation has quarterly teacher development sessions which staff are paid to attend. These sessions are topical and are often facilitated by an external expert. Some staff have also attended regional English teacher development days.

There was evidence of Duke Institute purposefully providing opportunities for staff to participate in meaningful discussion about teaching practice and student progress. Teaching staff spoke about how they share ideas, experiences, and knowledge through their daily interactions, staff meetings, and professional development activities.

Duke Institute has a thorough system for students to provide feedback on teaching and other aspects of their programme. This feedback is then analysed, discussed, acted upon as appropriate, and reported back to students in a timely manner. The

formal feedback from students, as well as the wealth of informal comments they receive, provides teaching and management staff with valuable information which is used effectively to identify new and improved teaching and learning strategies.

Duke Institute has a teaching observation procedure in which all teaching staff participate on at least two occasions per year. The observations are done by an external expert, who is in fact the former director of studies. The staff are given a written report as well as an extensive debriefing. Teaching staff commented on the value of the teaching observation process and were able to cite examples of how they had improved teaching delivery as a result.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

Duke Institute has robust and client-friendly systems for the pastoral care of its students. The organisation is providing a safe and supportive learning environment for its students and is in close contact outside of the normal hours of tuition. The results and conclusions drawn from the regular student questionnaires provide information for Duke Institute to use in its assessment and continuous improvement of support structures.

Three staff are involved in student support. They are Korean, Japanese, and Chinese, which appropriately reflects the predominant nationalities of the student population.

There is a designated support staff member with 24-hour phone contact should the students require assistance when away from the site. Duke Institute has produced a useful pocket card with contact information and the student's address. Homestay accommodation for international students is managed in-house by the homestay coordinator. The coordinator visits all homestay providers on a regular cycle to inspect and evaluate suitability. Those providing accommodation for under 18-year-old students are visited at least once every three months, as required by the Code of Practice.

The marketing manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that Code of Practice requirements are met, and she and other staff regularly attend professional development offered by the Ministry of Education's Code Office. The organisation periodically (at least once per year) thoroughly self-reviews its compliance with the code, using the self-review tool provided on the Ministry of Education website.

Duke Institute regularly accepts international students under the age of 18 years and staff are fully aware of their Code of Practice obligations for these students and ensure that they are meeting them. Duke Institute's practice is to communicate with parents of under 18-year-olds at least once per month.

Duke Institute has introduced a process for monitoring punctuality and attendance in the belief that students who attend classes regularly have a greater chance of success. The system, while strictly enforced, is supportive and seeks to identify and address the reasons why students may not be attending classes.

Students receive sound pre-enrolment guidance, and a comprehensive orientation programme is available to them in their first week of study.

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**.

Duke Institute has developed and embedded effective systems for monitoring student achievement and actively supporting staff to improve educational outcomes. Monitoring of performance at all levels of the organisation is regular, transparent, and open. It was evident that the monitoring of performance, while often challenging, is always supportive and focused on improvement.

The owners have created an organisation that encourages opportunities for reflection on its role and how to better meet student and other stakeholder needs. This has led to a reflective environment and culture throughout. Evidence indicates that the owners actively seek feedback from many sources to use as a learning and improvement tool. The organisation is focussed on its core business and is driven by a strong educational purpose. For instance, two years ago Duke Institute considered offering the NZ Diploma in Business, but upon reflection decided that this was not its core business. There was a concern that adding a qualification might have a negative effect on the quality of delivery of the organisation's other programmes.

The organisation has, over time, employed, developed, and retained a competent, well-qualified, and dedicated group of staff. Staff said they enjoyed the environment and that they worked hard but felt valued. The evaluation team observed coherence across all staff, whether management, teaching, or support, in their focus on giving students the best experience possible to equip them to perform and achieve.

The campus is adequately supplied with physical and learning resources for the number of students that it currently has. Effective resourcing is planned and provided for all courses, and repairs and maintenance of resources is well budgeted for. Duke Institute is currently planning upgrades to computers, internet access, and other technology.

Duke Institute has embraced the self-assessment process and is using it effectively. Records indicate that self-assessment is well embedded and will continue to lead to worthwhile improvements of benefit to the students.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

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

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

2.2 Focus area: Student support including international students

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

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

Duke Institute is providing a supportive learning environment for its international students and is keeping in contact outside of the normal hours of tuition. The students interviewed at this evaluation were very positive about their experience at Duke Institute, and it was evident that they regularly recommend the organisation to their friends and colleagues.

2.3 Focus Area: English programmes

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

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

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of programme approval and accreditation (under sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the Criteria for Approval and Accreditation of Programmes established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act and published in the Gazette of 28 July 2011 at page 3207. These policies and criteria are deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under the new section 253.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual programmes they own or provide. These criteria and policies are also deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under section 253. Section 233B(1) of the Act requires registered PTEs to comply with these rules.

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 EER process approved by the NZQA 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 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).

*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.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eeer/introduction/>*

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