Report of External Evaluation and Review

New Zealand Institute of Science and Technology Limited

Not Yet Confident in educational performance

Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 18 August 2017

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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 of TEO:	New Zealand Institute of Science and Technology Limited (NZIST)
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	25 July 2002
Location:	Level 9 and 10, 87 Albert Street, Auckland
Courses currently delivered:	• General English (Levels 2 and 4) • NZIST Diploma in Business (Level 6)
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Around 200 students enrolled at any one time. English language students are said to enrol for an average of 12 weeks. Learners aged under 18 years can enrol. No domestic students.
Number of staff:	19 full-time, two part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	• General English (Level 2) • General English plus Examination Preparation (Level 4) • New Zealand Diploma in Business (Leadership and Management) (Level 5) • New Zealand Diploma in Business (Leadership

	and Management) (Level 6)
	• NZIST Diploma in Business (Level 5)
	• NZIST Diploma in Business (Level 6)
Distinctive characteristics:	NZIST delivers predominantly general English language programmes, and also offers programmes in business education.
Recent significant changes:	NZIST is phasing out its current business diploma programmes and has fewer than 10 students still to conclude these studies. NZIST plans to commence delivery of New Zealand Diplomas in Business later this year, having gained NZQA approval earlier this year.
Previous quality assurance history:	The last external evaluation and review (EER) of NZIST by NZQA was conducted in 2016. NZQA was Not Yet Confident in NZIST's educational performance and Not Yet Confident in the PTE's capability in self-assessment.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER was:

- Governance, management and strategy

- English language programmes

- International students: support and wellbeing.

This selection ensured coverage of matters arising at the last EER, and the main provision offered by NZIST.

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 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.

The evaluation team consisted of two evaluators. The team visited NZIST on 23 and 24 May 2017.

Interviews (in person, groups, or via telephone) were held with:

- The director and centre manager

- Two external consultants engaged by NZIST to improve quality systems

- Five members of the academic staff

- Five members of auxiliary staff (including student counsellors)

- 24 students/graduates from a mix of classes with general English programmes.

The evaluation team is confident that sufficient staff, stakeholders and students were interviewed for evaluation and review purposes.

During the site visit, NZIST provided the evaluation team with a range of operational documentation, including planning materials, management meeting minutes, quality management policies, enrolment information and policies, and course design, delivery and assessment materials. This documentation complemented the self-assessment information that had been submitted prior to the site visit. The evaluators undertook a sample review of all materials tabled.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Not Yet Confident** in the educational performance and **Not Yet Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **New Zealand Institute of Science and Technology Limited.**

Individual learners are gaining greater English language proficiency through their studies at NZIST. There is also some evidence of self-assessment practices that focus on how well individual learners are achieving and progressing through their studies. However, there is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that NZIST has implemented a robust organisation-wide means of tracking learning outcomes for cohorts of learners. The organisation gathers student progress data but does not analyse it to improve student outcomes.

There is evidence that learners – as the key stakeholder group – gain value from the general English programmes offered by NZIST. Self-assessment could be extended to better understand learner destinations post-study. There is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that NZIST has undertaken self-assessment on whether it ought to engage further with other education providers, sector groups or external experts to support its English language programmes.

Programme design and delivery is well matched with the needs of learners, and students are supported and involved in their learning. NZIST has considered the type of support its learners require and how this can best be delivered in the context of short-term programmes for learners from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

There is limited evidence that governance and management is effective in supporting educational achievement. There is no evidence that NZIST has engaged fully in self-assessment led by senior management. At the time of the EER, NZIST did not fully understand the importance of reflective educational practice as part of tertiary education.

There is no systematic process in place to ensure compliance accountabilities are fully understood and well managed. Because of this, there is also no evidence that NZIST has self-assessed its performance thoroughly in relation to ensuring compliance accountabilities are adequately managed. There may be a significant compliance matter in relation to student numbers on the main campus floor, and urgent attention is needed to address this.

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Findings[1]

1.1 How well do students 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 **Adequate.**

In evaluating how well learners achieve, this evaluation has taken into consideration the extent to which learners complete their studies, acquire useful skills and knowledge (developing their cognitive abilities), and improve their overall wellbeing with enhanced abilities and attributes.

Education attainments, useful skills and wellbeing

The core educational service on offer at NZIST is general English education for international learners. These level 2 and level 4 programmes are offered via training schemes, and accordingly do not lead to formally recognised qualifications.[2]

NZIST collects entry information from all learners – up to 200 learners at any given time – about both their English language proficiency and their personal study objectives. Exit data on proficiency gains made are also captured by NZIST when individual learners leave. Learners determine their preferred length of study, which can be between four and 47 weeks duration.

For this reviewer, NZIST made available the progress records of learners enrolled in general English. These individual records demonstrated that the vast majority of learners had made English language proficiency gains through their studies with NZIST.[3] There was also evidence of personal study goal achievement of learners in these files.

This finding aligned with discussions with learners and graduates who said NZIST had helped them improve their English language. Learners felt they had improved their wellbeing, skills and work opportunities. Some students gave examples of how their improved English had helped in employment. Student surveys show that for 2016, 88 per cent of students considered NZIST to be 'good' or 'very good' in

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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] NZIST also offers a Diploma in Business programme. However, results were not assessed for this EER as the programme is presently being concluded, with few students remaining.

[3] The evaluators reviewed a sample from 2016 records.

the delivery of the programmes. The manager and tuition staff also submitted information on the processes they use to track individual learners and classes, to monitor learner progress and achievement. A robust attendance management system forms a key part of this.

In the summary of self-assessment for this EER, NZIST advised that 17 per cent of learners progress to higher-level study, with other learners gaining visas for work or further study or returning to their home countries. The evaluation team was not able to verify this figure or see any direct causal link with study at NZIST. During the site visit, NZIST also tabled further data on student progress overall, which did not align with or fully explain the above percentage. The data presented during the site visit had not been used for the PTE's main academic or business management decisions to guide NZIST, and was presented without clear analytical interpretation. For these reasons, the evaluation team does not have sufficient confidence to rely on, or report on, aggregate data presented by NZIST at this time.

Accordingly, from the information presented the evaluation team finds:

- there is strong evidence (from individual records triangulated with interviews and survey data) that learners are gaining greater English language proficiency through their studies at NZIST

- there is some evidence of self-assessment practices that focus on how well individual learners are achieving and progressing through their studies

- there is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that NZIST has yet understood and implemented an organisation-wide means of tracking learning outcomes for cohorts of learners – data is gathered more as a compliance-based activity than as embedded self-reflection on outcomes.

NZIST staff said it was difficult to track student progress at the group/cohort level. This is because there is no formal qualification achievement in general English, and because learners study for different periods of time and enter the organisation at different points in time (weekly intakes). However, the evaluation team considers that this task, while challenging, is necessary for NZIST to have a better overall understanding of learner achievement over time. For example, learning outcomes could have average differences across gender or ethnic groupings. Without such analysis, the self-reflective practices necessary to maintaining or improving educational quality are incomplete.

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

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 **Adequate.**

In evaluating the value of outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners, this evaluation has taken into consideration the quality of learning and how NZIST engages with communities and identifies relevant stakeholder groups.

NZIST identified learners and their families as its core stakeholder grouping. Accordingly, evidence and findings articulated in Findings 1.1 are applicable, in that the students and graduates interviewed said they valued the English language outcomes they gained at NZIST. They said they used their English language skills for social activities, employment and further study. This is important as the majority of learners also expressed a desire to stay in New Zealand after studying with NZIST, if circumstances permit. In this regard, the preparation for the IELTS (International English Testing System) programme offered by NZIST has high value for learners. Some learners also said they considered the programme was good value for money, and that they gained useful New Zealand cultural knowledge. These are positive outcomes. However, self-assessment materials submitted for this EER do not clearly explain this. NZIST has not yet considered whether it may be beneficial to survey graduates a few months after completion to better understand outcomes and destinations, particularly for graduates who elect to remain in New Zealand.

NZIST has limited engagements with other educational providers or the wider English language sector. While an advisory group is to be established for an incoming diploma programme (it is a requirement), no external or sector feedback is sought for the general English stream. There is no evidence that NZIST has self-reflected on this to determine whether broadening its range of inputs, via expert advisors, sector groupings and/or industry engagements could strengthen its delivery.

Accordingly from the information presented the evaluation team finds:

- there is evidence that learners – as the key stakeholder group – gain value from the general English programmes offered by NZIST

- there is some evidence of self-assessment practices that focus on learner value, but this could be extended to better understand destinations post-study (before the present exit interview form)

- there is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that as part of its self-assessment NZIST has analysed whether engagement with other relevant

education providers, sector groups or external experts is of value to support its English language programmes.

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

In evaluating the matching of programmes and activities with the needs of learners and stakeholders, this evaluation has taken into consideration the extent of ongoing needs analysis, the maintaining of relevance, developments in subject content, the incorporation of relevant teaching practice and technologies, and the adequacy and appropriateness of resources.

NZIST English language programmes draw upon industry-standard English language resources to guide student learning. This includes use of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages to gauge learners' English language proficiency, use of the Cambridge University English language assessment tool for learner entry assessment, IELTS preparation, and standard sector textbooks. Other resources are also available to staff, and some tuition staff said they also develop their own teaching materials.

NZIST English language programmes have a clear structure, as demonstrated within course outline materials. The programmes also dovetail to allow students to progress smoothly from basic English to higher levels if they choose to do so. Assessments are held six-weekly to allow for progression, but these are not co-ordinated between levels, meaning it is possible for a learner to move up a level and then have near-immediate assessment.

Programmes are delivered in blocks of four hours of learning per day, for five days each week. There is no time allowance for short breaks within this teaching schedule, although breaks are in fact held to benefit students. As a result, further time for teaching is probably needed to ensure 24 hours of actual delivery, particularly for those learners who are enrolled via a student visa.

Classrooms are well organised with suitable resources – although the evaluators identified a building compliance matter, as discussed in Findings 1.6. The maximum class size was reported to be one tutor to 22 students. There is a computer suite available for learners. However, learners said this was rarely used as they have their own devices (smart phones, tablets and laptops).

The NZIST delivery method remains a largely paper-based system (with some audio and video resources). NZIST said they had considered using new

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information technology-based interactive learning materials, but the evaluation team could not find reference to such discussions in any academic meeting minutes. NZIST could not readily demonstrate a working knowledge of new technology approaches to the delivery of English language programmes. Limited engagement with the broader education sector hinders NZIST's considerations in this regard.

All tuition staff interviewed held appropriate tertiary education qualifications, and had at least five years' experience in teaching. These staff were able to discuss their methods for meeting the needs of learners, including those with special learning needs.

Academic staff were also able to discuss the learner assessment method used, and advised that some peer observations and moderation activities are in place. These activities are new to NZIST, having commenced within the last 12 months. The evaluation team was able to review assessed student work and, based on staff comments and documents reviewed, the team is confident that assessment of general English programmes is fair, valid and transparent.

Accordingly, from the information presented the evaluation team finds:

- there is good evidence that programme design and delivery is well matched with the needs of learners as the primary stakeholders

- there is some evidence of self-assessment practices for programme design and delivery. However, this applies only to present delivery methods, and even in this regard self-assessment is not well demonstrated through the evidence submitted, such as records of academic meetings. For example, there has been no clear consideration as to whether four hours of classroom-based teaching is fully delivered for all learners, or discussion on how best to engage learners (for example, no consideration of new technologies).

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

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.**

In evaluating how well learners are supported and involved in their learning, this evaluation has taken into consideration whether learners are provided with comprehensive and timely study information, continued support appropriate to their needs, an inclusive learning environment, and minimal barriers to learning.

As outlined in Findings 1.3, NZIST staff are experienced educators. Supplementing this team is the marketing and counselling team, who are assigned to pastoral care and support roles within the organisation. There are five staff in this grouping, and

NZIST has taken a considered approach of recruiting individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to best support the needs of learners. This means the organisation has bilingual staff who collectively speak at least five languages. Where required, counsellors liaise with tuition staff to address any concerns raised by learners.

NZIST is aware of the diverse cultural considerations of learners, and seeks to accommodate learners in this regard. For example, a prayer room is available for Muslim (and other) learners. Social events are also arranged periodically (typically every five weeks) to support learners. Supplementary tuition is also provided (beyond regular classes) at no cost to students who seek that support.

NZIST has a clear attendance tracking system and monitors attendance on a daily basis, noting that full participation is a key to educational success in language learning and is a requirement for students on a student visa.[4]

The manager maintains an 'open-door' policy for any students to discuss issues, and a clear complaints policy is set out in the student handbook. In addition, a 'quick response' form is available to also gather feedback from learners, to ensure they can be supported. Students said they were aware of these support mechanisms, and that they would be comfortable to talk with the manager if a need arose.

The senior marketing manager is responsible for organising homestays for some learners. The manager visits homestay hosts before engagement. As required, a 24-hour support telephone contact line is maintained. Both tuition and counselling staff indicated familiarity with the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016, and documentation submitted showed two staff seminars on this topic had been held within the last 12 months.

Accordingly, from the information presented the evaluation team finds:

- there is good evidence that students are supported and involved in their learning

- there is evidence that NZIST has reflected on what type of support its learners require, and how this can best be delivered in the context of short-term programmes for learners from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

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[4] A study visa is not required for all learners; this depends on the length of study.

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

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Adequate.**

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Poor.**

This evaluation has considered how well managers and governors respond to change, use the results of self-assessment for improvements, have a clear organisational purpose, balance innovation and continuity, provide effective leadership, allocate resources, ensure policies are legal and ethical, and value staffing contributions.

As part of the EER, NZIST management made a PowerPoint presentation setting out their educational vision with an associated set of four educational goals. However, the centre manager was unable to show how she had used this vision and goals in her work. There was also no evidence from staff discussions or documentation reviews that these goals were embedded in programme delivery.

Since mid-2016, NZIST has engaged expert consultants to help improve quality management processes and educational performance. At the time of the EER visit this work had yet to be concluded, and it is unclear from interview discussions exactly what is to be achieved by when. The centre manager advised, however, that the existing quality management document continues to guide NZIST.

Following the previous (2016) EER, the organisation has sought to make performance improvements against the 20 recommendations made at that time. Information submitted for this EER shows steady progress against these recommendations. Notwithstanding, the NZIST summary of self-assessment submitted did not effectively show evidence of reflective practices since the last EER.

NZIST staff said they felt valued and supported in their roles. There is a professional development budget available for academic staff, which is used sporadically. There is no overarching academic development plan for general English provision. Staff are paid only for tuition teaching time. There is no recorded self-reflection on the potential impact of this approach on the organisation's educational provision.

Accordingly, from the information presented the evaluation team finds:

- there is limited evidence that governance and management is effective in supporting educational achievement – rather, there is a culture of reactive compliance and limited educational sector knowledge

- there is no evidence that NZIST has engaged fully in self-assessment processes led and driven by senior management. There is no evidence of understanding the importance of self-assessment for tertiary education.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Poor.**

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Poor.**

This evaluation has considered how well staff, particularly key managers, effectively manage important compliance and accountability matters.

NZIST does not have an overall quality management policy in place to manage compliance accountabilities. Because of this, there are no planned reviews of accountability requirements.

The centre manager is responsible for compliance. For this EER she has advised that there are no legal or ethical matters arising. The evaluation team asked sample questions in three areas with specific compliance requirements: homestay management, the Code of Practice, and health and safety (building compliance in regards to student numbers). The evaluation team finds that:

- in regard to homestays, NZIST staff were able to discuss clear practices which align with requirements, and in particular understood the special arrangements required for learners aged 16 to 17 years

- in regard to the Code of Practice, NZIST had held staff seminars and there was a good understanding of requirements across management, academic and support staff

- in regard to building compliance, the centre manager had no knowledge of legal requirements in this area, and there were no systems in place for her to draw upon to ensure ongoing compliance.

As a result of evaluator queries in relation to building compliance matters, the centre manager advised that there were up to 190 learners on the main floor of NZIST, but that from her inquiries to the building manager only 69 people are allowed. In a subsequent interview, she said her inquiries were still ongoing. NZIST must determine whether significant overcrowding is occurring and, if so, take immediate action to resolve the matter.

Accordingly, from the information presented the evaluation team finds that:

- there is not a systematic process in place at NZIST that ensure compliance accountabilities are understood and managed

- there is no evidence that NZIST has self-assessed its performance thoroughly to ensure compliance accountabilities are understood and managed

- urgent attention is needed to ensure building code requirements are continuously upheld.

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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 **Adequate.**

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

Refer to information in the Findings, particularly 1.5 and 1.6.

2.2 Focus area: English Language Programmes

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

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

Refer to information in the Findings, particularly 1.1 and 1.2.

2.3 Focus area: International Students: Support and Wellbeing

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

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

Refer to information in the Findings, particularly 1.3 and 1.4.

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that NZIST:

- Undertake self-assessment for improving methods for collecting and interpreting data relating to cohorts of learners; so that NZIST better understands its own performance over time and any patterns of learner progress.

- Undertake self-assessment to determine whether NZIST could gain educational depth from greater input from other education providers, external experts and/or sector groups to support educational delivery.

- Extend programme self-assessment to include consideration of the sufficiency of delivery (including hours of delivery) and broader consideration of new technology options for language learning.

- Extend governance and management self-assessment to ensure a culture of reflective educational practice is embedded, including measuring educational goals and using academic meetings to reflect on educational outcomes; and ensure a suitable compliance framework is developed and adhered to.

- Address any building compliance issues raised through this EER.

Appendix

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/.

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