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External Evaluation and Review Report

ICL Education Limited trading as ICL
Graduate Business School

Date of report: 17 October 2018

About ICL Education Limited trading as ICL Graduate Business School

ICL Graduate Business School is part of the ICL Education Group. It delivers programmes in business, computing and early childhood education at levels 5–9.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	10-14 Lorne Street, Auckland Central
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	966 enrolments in 2017; 588 EFTS; 944 or 98 per cent were international students
Number of staff:	29 full-time, 21 part-time
TEO profile:	https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/details.do?providerId=754840001
Last EER outcome:	At ICL Graduate Business School's (ICLGBS') previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2014, NZQA was Confident in the PTE's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The EER looked at the following focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Students: support and wellbeing• Postgraduate Diploma in Business (Level 8)• Diploma in Computing (Level 7)• New Zealand Diplomas in Early Childhood Education and Care (Levels 5 and 6)
MoE number:	7548
NZQA reference:	C30517
Dates of EER visit:	21 and 22 August 2018

Summary of Results

Since the previous evaluation, ICLGBS has shifted its provision to predominantly Level 7–9 programmes and has invested in strengthening academic leadership and building teaching and research capability.

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| Highly Confident in educational performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ICLGBS has maintained high-quality educational provision during a period of steady growth, programme development and strategic repositioning of the PTE.• Strengths across programmes include improved learner achievement rates, underpinned by robust academic processes, and proactive and effective systems for academic and pastoral support. |
| Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most graduates gain employment or move onto further study. ICLGBS is formalising stakeholder networks and improving information on graduate outcomes.• Academic leadership has been strengthened, to support the delivery of higher level programmes, enhance teaching and maintain academic standards and integrity.• ICLGBS is building a research culture and supports staff research activity and capability.• Administrative and student support teams are effective in meeting student needs and ensuring compliance with the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016.• Self-assessment activities are regular, comprehensive and use good quality information. Improvements are documented and reviewed for effectiveness. |

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Overall course completion rates have improved across the PTE during the period 2014-2017. This is attributed to programme design, teaching practice and a changing student population. Robust assessment and moderation practices provide assurance of the validity of the achievement data.</p> <p>The PGDipBus has high qualification completion rates, ranging between 90 and 100 per cent across the intakes (overall average of 94 per cent) (refer Table 1).</p> <p>Qualification completion rates for the Diploma in Computing have improved significantly (refer Table 2). Contributing factors are improving rates of student attendance and the changing student population. The number of assessment attempts has reduced over the last year, following redesign of assessments.</p> <p>Overall student achievement data for the ECE programmes is good but shows some variation across cohorts (refer Table 3). The performance of individual students is well understood; however, there is little formal evidence of analysis.</p> <p>All final results are reviewed by the Programme Committee and are ratified by the Academic Board. ICLGBS identifies and discusses trends and issues and notes follow-up actions.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Overall student achievement is strong. Data is reviewed and analysed regularly for ongoing improvements (including trends over time and across cohorts, and number of assessment attempts); information on processes relating to achievement, such as support for students at risk, and moderation outcomes are also closely monitored. From 2018, ECE results will also be analysed and reviewed in the same way.</p>

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

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>ICLGBS graduates are gaining qualifications, skills and knowledge which prepare them for employment in New Zealand; 62 per cent of graduates in the alumni database are in employment.²</p> <p>Thirteen per cent of graduates have progressed to further study. There is good evidence of their success in universities.</p> <p>Work placements and practicums are valued by students for providing experience in a New Zealand workplace. In some cases they lead to permanent employment.</p> <p>Some evidence is available of value for employers arising from students completing projects or placements in their workplaces.</p> <p>ICLGBS provides students with support for employment and study pathways. The PTE recently introduced a dedicated role for strengthening stakeholder networks. ICLGBS conducts exit interviews and some tutors maintain informal contact with graduates. This feedback is not yet formally captured.</p> <p>ICLGBS gathers information on the value and relevance of its programmes through advisory group meetings and market research (as part of new programme development). However, ICLGBS reports challenges in gathering feedback from employers on graduate skills and knowledge. Stakeholders spoken to during the EER confirmed students' work readiness.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for discipline-led research to contribute to the New Zealand business sector, such as a recent research project on cybersecurity.</p>
Conclusion:	ICLGBS is strengthening and formalising networks and processes for facilitating graduate pathways. There are various approaches and initiatives for gathering and capturing information to increase understanding of the value and relevance of outcomes, for graduates and employers.

² As at 31 July 2018, outcomes data was available for 259 graduates on the alumni database.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Market research, focus groups and advisory board feedback inform programme development to ensure relevance. Regular programme reviews draw on teacher reflections, student feedback and student achievement data.</p> <p>The Diploma in Computing curriculum will be aligned with industry standards and university pathway programmes. Greater focus on practical aspects is expected to improve the match between student needs and programme outcomes.</p> <p>Learning activities and resources are varied and appropriate. ICLGBS is building staff capability and standard use of the learning management system for blended learning.</p> <p>ICLGBS supports staff to develop teaching strategies and assessments which enhance students' experience of 'real world' learning (i.e. New Zealand case studies and guest lecturers, projects, simulated business challenges). ECE students see a variety of early childhood settings and philosophies.</p> <p>Staff support students and communicate with workplace supervisors during work placements. ECE students receive useful feedback from associate teachers. Moderation is used to review and improve assessments. Staff have access to professional development.</p> <p>New academic leadership has strengthened quality assurance processes. Teachers are well qualified and experienced; an increasing number are researchers. Programme Committee and staff meeting minutes show wide-ranging and in-depth discussions on teaching, learning and ways to improve.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Effective academic processes and systems maintain academic standards and integrity and ensure programmes match student and stakeholder needs. Further improvements include consolidating the programme review framework, evaluating work placements, and guidelines for group assessments. ICLGBS resources and actively supports a developing research culture.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>ICLGBS is proactive and effective in providing academic and pastoral support. There are a range of support services and staff, introduced to students at orientation - a good introduction to academic study in New Zealand. Planned improvements include interactive elements to explain the graduate learning environment and learning management system.</p> <p>Students receive timely feedback on their progress. There are effective systems to prevent and detect plagiarism. Rubrics are being developed to set out standards and structure feedback. At-risk students are identified early in their programme, through routine processes for monitoring attendance, academic integrity and student wellbeing. A Learning Advisor provides individual support and guidance, and generic workshops. This service could be extended across all programmes.</p> <p>Students benefit from small classes and an inclusive learning environment. They enjoy the cultural diversity at ICLGBS and welcome opportunities to engage in group activities and discussion. Students also learn about the New Zealand cultural context, and some classes visit a local marae. Feedback from end-of-course surveys shows students are highly satisfied with their study experience. ICLGBS is considering alternative methods for gathering feedback, including mid-semester surveys (trialled during 2018, useful for identifying improvements for modifying delivery) and online survey tools. ICLGBS analyses feedback, discusses it with staff and at Programme Committee, and identifies and track actions for improvement.</p> <p>ICLGBS operates a seven-day timetable, including evening classes. Students appreciate the flexibility this provides. A pastoral support staff member is available on Sundays. IT support for the weekend is under review.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Students are well-supported from enrolment to graduation. Teaching, administration and support staff work closely together to help students achieve their academic and personal goals. Student feedback is valued and acted upon. Ongoing reviews of student services are embedding improvements.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Since the previous EER, ICLGBS has enjoyed steady growth and re-positioned itself as a graduate business school. Most students are now enrolled at Level 7 and above.</p> <p>ICLGBS has maintained strong educational performance across programmes. Contributing factors include recruiting and developing qualified and experienced teaching staff and academic leaders, and an effective and comprehensive framework for review and improvement.</p> <p>ICLGBS is developing a research culture to underpin its higher qualifications: i.e. an active research advisory board, a discipline-based research strategy, and support for emerging researchers (a part-time research professor, research seminars and release from teaching duties.³</p> <p>ICLGBS has new facilities. It has strengthened administrative capability and implemented new systems for learning and student management. ICLGBS has effective systems and processes for understanding and matching student and stakeholder needs. The six-monthly reports presented to governance by each department provide evidence of insightful analysis of outcomes and meaningful improvement plans. Staff at all levels are engaging with self-assessment activities.</p> <p>Staff feel valued and participate in regular performance meetings. Support and professional development is available for teams implementing new New Zealand qualifications. ICLGBS are responding to the results of a staff survey and considering how to further engage and support staff, including part-timers.</p>
Conclusion:	Governance, marketing, administration and support services are shared across the ICL Education Group. Management is effective, and recently appointed academic leadership is adding value by maintaining quality and academic standards for higher-level programmes.

³ In 2018 ICLGBS is participating in the TEC Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF).

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Common processes for managing compliance apply across the ICL Education Group.</p> <p>As noted in EER reports for the three other schools in the Group, there are effective processes to ensure compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 – ICLGBS undertakes regular and robust reviews and reports to the board and management • with the changing requirements of NZQA and Immigration New Zealand – ICLGBS establishes and regularly reviews policies and procedures • with legislative obligations (specifically Health and Safety and Human Resources) – ICLGBS meets these through appropriate staff or consultancy services and policies and procedures. <p>Off-shore visa approval rates for ICLGBS continue to be monitored. As at July, ICLGBS is tracking well to achieve the 2018 target rate of 60 per cent approval.</p> <p>2017 TEC audits against the investment plan and funding rules identified minor errors relating to enrolment processing. ICLGBS has addressed these matters.</p>
Conclusion:	No concerns with the management of compliance accountabilities emerged during the evaluation of ICLGBS.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: International student - support and wellbeing

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	Support services are shared with the wider ICL Education Group. Regular reviews of the Code of Practice are robust and focussed on improvement.
Conclusion:	ICLGBS students receive proactive pastoral care and support to stay engaged and succeed in their studies.

2.2 Focus area: Postgraduate Diploma in Business (Level 8)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	A 2018 monitoring report by NZQA (of this programme and the Graduate Diploma in Business) commended ICLGBS on the steps taken to support delivery of postgraduate education. ICLGBS is considering suggestions made regarding weekend delivery of the PGDipBus.
Conclusion:	This is the largest programme at ICLGBS. Students are generally highly motivated and bring a variety of cultural, educational and employment backgrounds to the programme. ICLGBS is focussing on the delivery of real world learning in a New Zealand context, by teachers who are also active in research. Learner achievement across the nine completed intakes is very strong.

2.3 Focus area: Diploma in Computing (Level 7)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learner achievement has improved in 2014-2017. Work placements are valued by students for providing real world practical experience in an otherwise theory-based programme. The nature and relevance of the placements varies, including the extent to which they match the learning outcomes.</p> <p>A 2017 monitoring report by NZQA recommended a review of the programme scope, content and assessment methods to better match stakeholder needs.</p>
Conclusion:	ICLGBS has completed a thorough review of the Diploma in Computing. Proposed revisions are likely to improve the match between student needs and programme outcomes.

2.4 Focus area: New Zealand Diplomas in ECE (Levels 5 and 6)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The students are a mix of international and domestic, across two sites. They are supported to attend and achieve in a learning environment which is family-friendly and culturally sensitive. Students who fall behind receive individual education plans. Practicums are well supported and provide students with opportunities for reflection and goal setting.</p> <p>ICLGBS has a strong connection with the Pasifika community, particularly at its West Auckland delivery site. Teachers are delivering New Zealand diplomas for the first time in 2018. ICLGBS is planning for further professional development in achievement-based assessment.</p> <p>The PTE has contacted several other providers regarding pathways to level 7 for ICLGBS graduates and agreement has been reached with one provider for credit transfer to their Bachelor of Teaching.</p>
Conclusion:	In 2018 ICLGBS is integrating the ECE programme into the mainstream processes and systems for academic quality and administration. This will help the PTE to better understand the overall student achievement data.

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. Qualification completion data for the PGDipBus 2016–2018 (completed intakes only)

Intake	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
# enrolled	12	17	33	27	18	12	17	33	21
# withdrew	-	3	-	2	2	1	2	-	2
Qualification completion %	100	85	100	93	84	95	93	99	90

Table 2. Qualification completion data for the DipComp 2014–2017

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017
# enrolled	37	32	40	31
Qualification completion %	32	58	88	91

Table 3. Course completion (CC) and qualification completion (QC) data for ECE diplomas (Levels 5 and 6)* 2014–2017

Year	# enrolled	Overall CC %	Int' CC %	Māori CC %	Pasifika CC %	Overall QC %
2014	60	85	92	59	90	55
2015	69	78	82	79	81	78
2016	45	79	86	54	79	86
2017	46	82	84	75	100	74

*National Certificates in Early Childhood Education and Care

Appendix 2

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-eeer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.*

Disclaimer

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

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

- *Identify organisational fraud⁴*
- *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.*

⁴ 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 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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