



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

EF International Language Schools
Limited

Date of report: 22 October 2024

About EF International Language Schools Limited

EF International is part of an international group of English language schools. EF International (Auckland) provides English language learning to international students looking to develop their English and experience life in New Zealand.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	56 Fort Street, Auckland
Eligible to enrol international students:	Yes
Number of students:	International: 51.17 equivalent full-time students (684 students in 2023 financial year)
Number of staff:	Full time eight; part-time 21
TEO profile:	EF International Language Schools Limited
Last EER outcome:	Highly Confident in educational performance Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General English (Beginners - Academic Proficiency) (Level 3)• International Students: Support and Wellbeing
MoE number:	7560
NZQA reference:	C57088
Dates of EER visit:	4 and 5 September 2024 (via Zoom)

Summary of results

Students develop their English language skills as expected and highly value their experience. Teaching and learning resources are of high quality and fit for purpose. Leadership is effective, and continuous review is used to inform and drive change. Gaps in the knowledge of NZQA compliance need to be managed.

Highly Confident in educational performance

Students gain useful skills, progress through language levels and meet their language goals. The main motivation for students is making friends and having an international experience while developing their language skills.

Internal evaluations validate student wellbeing and satisfaction with their experience.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

EF tailors the programme to meet student needs, using fit-for-purpose materials quality assured by central office.

The most recent English New Zealand audit confirmed the quality and validity of curriculum design and delivery.

EF supports the students well, and they can ask for help when needed. Students described their relationship with staff as open and friendly.

EF uses its data analysis effectively. The school takes a sophisticated approach to data, supported by effective (and continuously improving) systems.

The leadership is effective and appropriately qualified. Management prioritises a focus on a strong and cohesive team aligned with the global EF values and brand.

There is a need to focus on systematically responding to NZQA guidelines for maintaining registration now that operations are running as desired.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students gain useful skills and progress through language levels in the NZQA-accredited programme. Academic staff track student achievement and progression. They know where the students are in their language learning journey through weekly and six-weekly testing across all skills. Students can move up a level when they are ready after skills testing (or down, upon request).</p> <p>Further data tracking and analysis includes the percentage of students sitting at each language level, overall student body achievement, and tracking individual progress. The validity of testing is evident in success and achievement rates.</p> <p>Weekly graduations celebrate student success and the achievement of language acquisition.</p> <p>The main goal for students is to make friends and have an international experience while developing their language skills. Key measures for the school include a range of evaluation tools to measure student satisfaction with their educational experience. Internal evaluations show high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the learning experience, as the measures include the total experience such as activities, teaching quality and support.</p> <p>Activities are of key value to the students and participation levels are high, adding to this experience of studying abroad. EF International recruits students from a range of countries so there is a cross-cultural experience.</p> <p>Evaluations of host families also confirmed majority satisfaction with the homestay experience. Feedback</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.

	from students indicates varied experiences in homestay. The school is proactive in responding to any issues raised, tracks the evaluative rating of homestay satisfaction, and intervenes when the score is below the median. This helps to ensure a quality homestay experience for both the student and stakeholder.
Conclusion:	Students achieve their language learning goals. Effective tracking of student progression and regular testing inform academic support. Students highly value their language learning and cultural experience studying abroad.

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>EF International (Auckland) met all standards in the most recent English New Zealand Audit. The school was commended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction of the student management system and its use in recording and analysing data, resulting in responsive actions • the PTE's quality formal observations of academic staff, to the extent the evidence was considered above average good practice that can be role modelled to other schools. <p>The programme is tailored to meet the goals of the students (see 1.2) using fit-for-purpose materials quality assured by central office. The recent English New Zealand audit also confirms the quality and validity of curriculum design and delivery.</p> <p>Teaching staff are encouraged to add local flavour to curriculum design and delivery where appropriate. For example, recent offerings included te ao and te reo Māori modules to ensure students had exposure to New Zealand culture in the classroom.</p> <p>EF uses appropriate guidelines and a grading system for marking. Where automated marking is used on digital</p>

	<p>assessments, teachers moderate the overall marks given. Assessment is regular in the skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking, and students receive effective feedback about their progress.</p> <p>Students and stakeholders confirmed the relevance and applicability of the learning material. Facilities and teaching and learning resources are of high quality and fit for purpose.</p>
Conclusion:	Design and delivery of the centralised curriculum is fit for purpose, and flexibility allows students to experience English language learning in the New Zealand context. Resources are appropriate and quality assured.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students reported that they are comfortable asking for help when needed, and described staff as open and friendly. EF International does not use agents; rather, the PTE's own staff support the students through the enrolment process. This means the student relationship with the school is fostered right from pre-enrolment, which ensures students receive relevant information prior to arrival in Auckland. The Auckland staff speak the languages of a number of students, which enables open communication.</p> <p>The programme is designed to enhance the student experience through extra-curricular activities such as clubs and education outside of the classroom. Students have an opportunity to meet people and make friends in the shared common areas. Students commented on their satisfaction with and the comfort of the common and study areas. A comprehensive induction orientates students on their first day. The school effectively uses technology to keep students connected and included.</p> <p>Pastoral care is a clear focus for staff. The student management system includes medical details and dietary requirements, and easily identifies any students under the</p>

	<p>age of 18. This level of detail allows all staff to understand the wellbeing needs of all students.</p> <p>One-to-one meetings between teaching staff and students occur on a regularly scheduled basis. This is another opportunity for students and their teachers to discuss any welfare and wellbeing issues.</p> <p>A thorough evaluation process validates student wellbeing and satisfaction with their experience. Evaluation data is used to inform staff meetings and to provide additional support or intervention as needed. Attendance is monitored for both immigration and wellbeing purposes. Appropriate systems are in place to monitor under-18-year-old students (curfew, whereabouts, wellbeing). A 24/7 emergency number is available to all students.</p>
Conclusion:	Evaluation and survey data confirms that students are very well supported, are involved in their learning journey, and enjoy their student experience.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The organisational purpose is clear and underpinned by a strong focus on quality performance. EF International (Auckland PTE) is a high-performing organisation with clear expectations of all staff. Data analysis is used effectively, and the school has a sophisticated approach to data supported by effective (and continuously improving) systems.</p> <p>The PTE is fully resourced and supported effectively by central office. Strong central systems maintain ongoing quality and accountability, and the school operates in a framework which enables effective self-assessment practice.</p> <p>The reopening of the school presented challenges after voluntary hibernation during the pandemic, including a loss of knowledge in NZQA processes. The appointment of the director enabled rapid improvement in the school's quality, with a renewed focus on rebuilding a strong, cohesive</p>

	<p>team culture. Academic leadership has ensured an appropriately qualified leadership team and staff. The Asia-Pacific vice-president also supports integration and the management structure.</p> <p>Staff are very well supported. Scheduled observations of teaching ensure the quality of teaching and accountability. This culture informs encouragement of professional development opportunities.</p>
Conclusion:	Academic leadership focuses on student success and operates in a quality assurance framework for business, teaching and learning. Systematic reviews are a priority and effectively inform improvements.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English New Zealand confirmed that the PTE has systematic processes to ensure compliance with the English New Zealand standards. The most recent English New Zealand audit report (2024) met all standard requirements.</p> <p>The PTE is delivering the NZQA programme as approved, and is meeting expectations for safe homestay placements, including use of police vetting. Immigration requirements are understood well and managed effectively in the student management system. The NZQA Code of Practice self-review is comprehensive and reflects a culture of ongoing self-review.</p> <p>The school reopened with high student numbers and a new staff team. This resulted in some gaps in NZQA knowledge and created some challenges for management regarding compliance activity. The initial focus on coming out of hibernation was to ensure a high quality student experience. This resulted in some gaps in NZQA knowledge and managing relevant PTE processes.</p> <p>There is a need to focus on systematically responding to NZQA requirements for maintaining registration now that operations are back on track. It would pay to further strengthen systems and make sure there is a specific focus</p>

	<p>(or role) on maintaining NZQA registration – for example, making sure the quality management system is explicitly meeting NZQA guidelines and managing the Code² requirements.</p> <p>EF International (Auckland) operates a financially viable and sustainable business, assuring security for students.</p>
Conclusion:	Overall compliance is managed effectively. Rebuilding knowledge and a focus on NZQA PTE guidelines needs further attention.

² Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

Focus areas

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

2.1 General English (Beginners - Academic Proficiency) (Level 3)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

2.2 International Students: Support and Wellbeing

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that EF International Language Schools Limited:

- Strengthen systems that manage NZQA compliance and make sure there is a specific focus (or role) on rebuilding knowledge of NZQA PTE guidelines.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

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

- *Identify organisational fraud³*
- *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.*

³ 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 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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 excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials 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 2022. 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). 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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