



External Evaluation and Review Report

Talent International Institute Limited

Date of report: 22 August 2024

About Talent International Institute Limited

Talent International Institute is a Christchurch-based private training establishment with a variety of offerings. These include English language courses, intensive training for unemployed adults, after-school programmes, Alternative Education programmes, and construction qualifications.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	282 Durham St North, LG 1&2, Christchurch
Eligible to enrol international students:	Yes
Number of students 2024:	<p>Domestic: 41 learners, including 13 Māori and six Pasifika.</p> <p>International: 23 learners; 14 in ESOL¹, nine in construction qualifications, and one with an identified disability</p>
Number of current staff:	Nine full-time, three part-time and five contractors
TEO profile:	<p>See: NZQA - Talent International Institute Limited</p> <p>Talent International continues to provide English language courses to international students, as it has done for more than a decade. The PTE has recently developed new programmes to offset the impact of the Covid pandemic and resulting substantial decline in international student numbers. Over the past two years, Talent International has also shifted focus from international students as its sole student cohort, to domestic, at-risk and young students.</p> <p>Talent International has secured contracts with the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Education to offer intensive training to unemployed adults and support children</p>

¹ English for Speakers of Other Languages

through an after-school programme. The PTE has also recently commenced delivery of an Alternative Education programme for 13-16-year-olds, and New Zealand qualifications in construction (level 6).

Talent International is a subsidiary of Huadu International Management Group Limited, a large international construction company with clear links to the industry, providing impetus for the development of four new programmes: New Zealand Diploma in Construction (Construction Management Strand) (Level 6); New Zealand Diploma in Construction (Quantity Surveying Strand) (Level 6); New Zealand Diploma in Information Technology Technical Support (Level 5); and New Zealand Diploma in IT Infrastructure with strands in Networking and Systems Administration (Level 6). In early 2024, Talent International commenced delivery of the Construction Management and Quantity Surveying stranded programmes. At the time of the EER, there were seven international students enrolled.

Last EER outcome:

In 2020, NZQA was Confident in Talent International Institute's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

Scope of evaluation:

- **Skills for Industry programme**
Funded by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) for adults at risk of being unemployed long term. MSD has established key performance indicators (three per cohort) that are to be met.
- **Certificate of English Proficiency, all levels General English (ESOL), including:**
 - Certificate in Academic Critical Discourses (Level 4) ID.106653 (Training Scheme)²

² For internationally qualified nurses to prepare for the Occupational English Test, enabling them to progress to a New Zealand Nursing Council-approved Competency Assessment Programme.

- Pre-Purchased English Language Tuition (PELT); funded by the Tertiary Education Commission, MBIE and self-funded for migrants

- **International Student Support and Wellbeing**

Mandatory focus area

MoE number: 7592

NZQA reference: C56155

Dates of virtual EER: 4, 5 and 6 June 2024

Summary of results

Talent International has undergone significant changes in leadership, programme delivery and student profile since the last EER. Overall, these changes have been well considered and successfully implemented. Talent International has convincingly demonstrated very strong student outcomes and effective self-assessment that will continue to guide and inform performance.

Highly Confident in educational performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly effective processes and rigorous monitoring of progress, including analysis, internal benchmarking and moderation, underpin very strong achievement. Self-assessment is focused well on meeting the needs of students and participants.• Talent International is meeting the individual, immediate and important outcomes for students and participants well. Systematic review is occurring but could be improved by collating individual outcomes to better understand and demonstrate the extent of the value of these outcomes. This will be important as the number of students and Skills for Industry cohorts increase.
Confident in capability in self-assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly effective teaching of relevant, well-reviewed programmes, where academic standards and integrity are maintained, ensures high-quality learning at Talent International.• Academic and personal support is both purposeful and authentic. This enables students to be involved in their learning, and is the key factor in the achievement of successful outcomes. However, Talent International also needs to better understand the quality and effectiveness of support during the progression and retention phases of the Skills for Industry programme.• Talent International is using self-assessment effectively and comprehensively to guide governance and management through significant changes in leadership, programmes,

learner profile and funding sources. The organisational purpose and direction are supported by a clear vision and detailed strategic planning.

- Talent International manages most of its compliance accountabilities well; however, an oversight regarding the insurance of international students occurred and was not detected through Talent International's self-monitoring processes.

Key evaluation question findings³

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Participants and students are acquiring important skills and knowledge that support their endeavours toward gaining and retaining employment and, for ESOL students, progressing their English language skills.</p> <p>Progress and achievement of these outcomes are meticulously recorded and reported, focusing on skills development, attendance, course completion, participant/student feedback and enhancement of personal attributes (Skills for Industry).</p> <p>Over the past three years, the Skills for Industry programme has met or exceeded MSD's key performance indicators (KPIs) for nine of the 10 cohorts in 'programme completion' and 'employment retention'.⁴ This is evidence of very strong performance, given that the original performance indicator of 40 per cent was raised to 70 per cent in 2023. The KPI 'employment within eight weeks of course completion' was met for seven of the 10 cohorts, which was attributed to the Covid lockdowns and market conditions.</p> <p>Achievement data is disaggregated, and indicates that Māori and Pasifika participants' success exceeds that of others. Analysis of achievement of participants with disabilities has not yet occurred.</p> <p>English language students, regardless of their programme of study (Academic Critical Discourse (ACD), PELT⁵ and General English) are acquiring English language skills and progressing. Robust internal moderation validates achievement. Over the past four years, course</p>

³ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

⁴ Refer Appendix 1.

⁵ Refer scope of evaluation in the 'About' section of this report for details.

	<p>completion⁶ has remained high at 84 per cent and attendance at 85 per cent. The evaluators note the impact of Covid restrictions on the small number of international students, including being unable to attend classes in person.</p> <p>Small class numbers, an individualised approach to teaching and learning, and feedback from participants and students are used effectively to focus on student needs and to positively influence achievement.</p>
Conclusion:	Highly effective processes and rigorous monitoring of progress, including analysis, internal benchmarking and moderation, underpin very strong achievement. Self-assessment is focused well on meeting the needs of students and participants.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Skills for Industry participants gain updated skills for job seeking and the development of attributes to improve the likelihood of being retained in employment. The gaining of these qualities is clearly evident, and it is the most valued outcome for both participants and MSD.</p> <p>Talent International assesses and recognises the varying skills and expertise of individual participants, and focuses its engagement and effort on enhancing existing abilities and supporting overall wellbeing. This is highly valued by participants, who report that job seeking over time has negatively impacted their wellbeing.</p> <p>Talent International uses video to record each student at both entry and exit of the programme as an opportunity to speak to and illustrate the benefits, gains and positive change in themselves and in their approach to seeking employment. These important and individual outcomes are collected and reviewed, but not yet collated to highlight</p>

⁶ Refer Appendix 1.

	<p>trends, areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.</p> <p>In addition to language skills acquisition, Talent International recognises the value of ESOL student progress and achievement towards personal goals which mostly focus on the ability to converse at work, in the community, while travelling or during further academic study. These immediate and important outcomes for students are established at the beginning of study and reviewed again at exit, and there is clear evidence these goals are being achieved.</p> <p>Talent International has been systematically collecting this data for several years, and the collation of data is of a high standard. It would be beneficial for Talent International to articulate personal goals in a more nuanced way to better measure and demonstrate the extent to which these goals have been achieved.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>The individual, immediate and important outcomes of students and participants are being well met and are clearly evident. Systematic review is occurring and could be improved by collating individual outcomes to better understand and demonstrate the extent of the value of these outcomes. This will be important as the number of students and Skills for Industry cohorts increase.</p>

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>Talent International's English language and Skills for Industry programmes effectively match the needs of students and participants. All teachers are well qualified. ESOL staff have extensive experience in teaching English language, and the Skills for Industry facilitator has appropriate teaching and coaching experience.</p> <p>Skills for Industry programme design reflects the needs and level of participants in developing current job seeker skills. Guest speakers inspire and share approaches and strategies and there is a specific focus on confidence</p>

	<p>building early in the programme. Learning activities are well aligned to gaining and retaining employment.</p> <p>Processes for maintaining academic standards and integrity in Talent International's ESOL programmes are cohesive and rigorous. Internal moderation processes are robust, and external independent moderation is providing useful feedback and validates internal moderation outcomes. Talent International uses Cambridge Placement Testing scoring rubrics to support consistency, individual learning plans, and summative and formative testing. Together, these measures inform level placement, identify progress, and enable appropriate intervention by teachers to support continued progress.</p> <p>In all areas of delivery, Talent International's programme reviews focus on priority areas including outcomes. Talent International uses this information to adjust programmes including Type 2 changes⁷ to better meet needs. Changes in delivery, materials and assessments enables Talent International to match the teaching and learning needs of the students in a highly effective manner.</p> <p>Informal teacher observations occur, and Talent International is still considering how to improve this process to capture the specialist and unique skills needed in the teaching of ESOL and Skills for Industry. In addition to feedback from student surveys, which consistently indicate a high level of satisfaction, useful information is gained through collegial discussions and weekly teacher self-reviews and written reports to the academic director. These include commentary on student and participant progress. Talent International is using this information to make continuous, meaningful changes that support achievement highly effectively.</p>
Conclusion:	Highly effective teaching of relevant, well-reviewed programmes, where academic standards and integrity are maintained, ensures high-quality learning at Talent International.

⁷ As per the Programme Approval, Recognition, and Accreditation Rules 2022, a Type 2 change means one or more changes to components of an approved programme which have an impact on the programme as a whole.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Talent International generally has fewer than 10 learners in any one programme at a given time, which results in a high ratio of teacher to student or participant. The one-to-one daily engagement enables the development of relevant, individualised activities and support, informed by a comprehensive needs analysis on entry.</p> <p>All students and participants have weekly meetings with the staff to review progress, including individual goals. Feedback is formally and frequently sought, providing ongoing opportunities for Talent International to gauge and respond to the learner experience. Student satisfaction scores across a range of indicators are consistently rated very highly. Teaching and management staff pay close attention to this feedback, looking for opportunities to improve.</p> <p>Skills for Industry participants are provided with resources to ensure full engagement with the programme including, for example, a laptop, bus passes, guidance to community agencies. Participants are also provided with business attire through Talent International's Dress for Success programme.</p> <p>Following the Skills for Industry on-site course, Talent International continues to engage and support participants in their job-seeking efforts for several more weeks during the progression and retention programme phases. The level of involvement during these phases depends on each participant's need and progress in their job search. Talent International says the level of engagement is reported to MSD and meets MSD KPIs. Feedback on the quality of the support and participant experience at this phase of the programme is not formally gathered, and would be useful to validate Talent International's own perspective on performance.</p> <p>The attestation for the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 included an annual comprehensive organisation-wide review. Staff in this small PTE are in training to take responsibility for various outcomes, ensuring knowledge is disseminated</p>

	and pastoral care is a focus of all. Two recent initiatives have emerged in response to review, a wellness plan and a health and safety committee with student representation. Both initiatives are currently in development.
Conclusion:	Academic and personal support is both purposeful and authentic. This enables students to be involved in their learning and is the key factor in the achievement of successful outcomes. Talent International needs to better understand the quality and effectiveness of support during the Skills for Industry progression and retention programme phases.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Governance and management are highly focused on the activities, outcomes and strategic planning of the PTE. Talent International's environmental scanning of the tertiary education sector, Immigration New Zealand, national and regional policy direction and change is comprehensive, and so too is its stakeholder engagement. The resulting information and data have been used highly effectively to navigate the past several years of change and challenge, and to guide the future direction and pivot the PTE's programme delivery to a changed market.</p> <p>Talent International has experienced several significant changes since the last EER, including the closure of its Dunedin campus and personnel changes in the director and general manager roles. These changes have been well managed, with no evidence of impact on learners. There has been several months of lead-in towards the transition of leadership positions. Talent International has retained and employed staff with extensive experience in both management and education, including tertiary, vocational and ESOL education. This continues to support consistency in educational performance.</p> <p>Staff and board members engage in professional development such as mental health training and programme-related subject areas. This is important, given Talent International's shift in focus from international</p>

	<p>students as its sole student cohort, to its expanded delivery to domestic, at-risk and young students. A recent anonymous staff survey indicated that staff feel valued and report clarity around roles, functions and processes.</p> <p>Talent International's shareholder has committed to the financial sustainability and ongoing viability of the PTE. Continued significant investment in the facilities, staffing and programme development resourcing are evident. Formal reporting from tutors to management and Talent International's director includes priority areas such as student attendance, withdrawals and monitoring students considered at risk.</p> <p>Talent International has recently commenced programme delivery in construction. At the time of the EER, there were no outcomes to report in this area. Programme advisory committees are contributing sector expertise which is reported as being valued and used. Programme applications to the workforce development council and NZQA were comprehensive.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Self-assessment is being used effectively and comprehensively to guide governance and management through significant changes in leadership, programmes, learner profile and funding sources. The organisational purpose and direction are well supported by a clear vision and detailed strategic planning resulting in authentic educational achievement.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Compliance management is overseen by the principal using a compliance plan and calendar.</p> <p>Talent International is monitoring and reporting important compliance accountabilities which, in addition to NZQA, includes two government agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Social Development

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education, including police vetting of staff under the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014 and Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. <p>Effective NZQA-related compliance management includes programme approvals and reviews, training scheme delivery, Code of Practice reviews, management of complaints, provision of complete and timely attestations, up-to-date website information, and management of agreements with the agents of international students.</p> <p>There was a gap in Talent International's compliance management. Half the enrolled international students (five) did not have appropriate insurance in place prior to studying at Talent International for a few days. The oversight did not result in any impact on the students. However, it does not indicate strong or comprehensive self-monitoring in relation to international students.</p> <p>Overall, the evaluation found no further gaps or weaknesses in compliance management.</p>
Conclusion:	Compliance accountabilities are mostly well managed; however, a serious oversight occurred and was not detected through Talent International's self-monitoring processes.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Skills for Industry

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Certificate of English Proficiency (ESOL)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

2.3 International Student Support and Wellbeing

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

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 Talent International Institute Limited:

- Commence analysis of the achievement of participants with disabilities to determine if outcomes are equitable across all learners.
- Formalise the collation of graduate outcome data to demonstrate the extent to which these outcomes have been met.
- Consider relevant self-assessment activities to gather Skills for Industry participant feedback on the quality and effectiveness of support during the progression and retention programme phases.
- Revise the internal compliance management monitoring of international student information and files.

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.

NZQA requires Talent International Institute Limited to:

- Ensure each international tertiary learner who is enrolled with the signatory for educational instruction has appropriate insurance. Refer to Part 6, clause 44, (1-3) of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Skills for Work – Participant completion rates⁸

	2021		2022				2023			
Cohort	C.1	C.2	C.3	C.4	C.5	C.6	C.7	C.8	C.9	C.10
Completion rate	86%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Progression rate	33%	92%	67%	100%	63%	33%	25%	70%	75%	88%
Retention rate	50%	83%	83%	100%	100%	100%	100%	86%	67%	88%

Completion rate – completion of the core four-week programme

Progression rate – percentage of people entering employment within eight weeks of course completion

Retention rate – percentage of people retained in employment beyond 91 days

MSD KPI for employment was set at 40 per cent for 2021 and 2022. In 2023 the KPI was raised to 70 per cent.

Table 2. ESOL – Student course completion rates⁹

Programme 2021-23	Withdrawals	Completions
After School ESOL - Dunedin	4%	96%
Cert 4 ACD - Dunedin	-	100%
Cert 4 ACD Christchurch	-	100%
GE Academic	26%	74%
GE All Levels	23%	77%
Cert English Elementary	25%	75%
Cert English Intermediate	7%	92%
Cert English Upper Int	5%	95%

⁸ Source Talent International Institute: EPI Data EER Skills for Industry Programme 2021-2023 FINAL

⁹ Source Talent International Institute: EPI Data EER ESOL Programmes 2020-2024

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

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

Disclaimer

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

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

- *Identify organisational fraud¹⁰*
- *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.*

¹⁰ 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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