

Report of External Evaluation and Review

New Zealand College of Business
Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 4 February 2015

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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 College of Business Limited
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	15A Bishopdale Court, Christchurch
Delivery sites:	In addition to address above: Unitec Institute of Technology, Carrington Road, Mt Albert, Auckland Hudson Building, Lincoln University, Ellesmere Junction Road, Lincoln, Canterbury
First registered:	3 May 2004
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparation for International English for Speakers of Other Languages (IESOL) (Levels 1-3)• Diploma in Business Administration (Level 5)• Diploma in Business Administration (Level 6)• Diploma in Business Administration (Level 7)• New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 6)
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: nil International: 129 at the time of the external

	evaluation and review (EER) (approximately 200 EFTS (equivalent full-time students) per year)
Number of staff:	22 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	In addition to the courses listed above: Certificate in Business Administration (level 4)
Distinctive characteristics:	All enrolments at New Zealand College of Business (NZCB) are international students, who are mainly between 18 and 20 years of age and from China or India. The organisation has partnership arrangements with universities in China and Taiwan. These arrangements allow for students to complete English language and foundation business courses prior to enrolling in NZCB. Arrangements also exist between NZCB and two New Zealand universities and two polytechnics, to pathway into their programmes. NZCB says it is the only testing centre for IESOL in New Zealand (with campuses in both Auckland and Christchurch). ¹
Recent significant changes:	On 6 June 2014, NZQA approved NZCB's application to deliver courses at the Lincoln University campus. NZCB was approved by NZQA to deliver preparation courses for IESOL ² in August 2013. NZCB began delivery of these courses in Christchurch (October 2013) and Auckland (January 2014) using the City & Guilds international syllabi. At NZCB, IESOL covers reading, writing and understanding English. Students generally enrol in order to achieve the English language requirement so they can progress to one of NZCB's business diplomas. Student numbers have grown in the last two years,

¹ A table of the English language proficiency tests approved by NZQA can be found at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/nzqf-related-rules/programme-approval-and-accreditation/app-2/the-table/>

² <http://www.cityandguildsenglish.com/ESOL>

almost regaining the numbers enrolled prior to the Christchurch earthquake in 2011 (138 EFTS). At the time of the EER there were 33 students attending classes at the Bishopdale campus, 58 students at the Unitec campus, and 41 students at the Lincoln campus.

Previous quality assurance history:

NZCB met the requirements of national external moderation by NZQA for one New Zealand Diploma in Business subject moderated in 2012 and 2013, although in each case the assessment materials required modification to meet the course prescription prior to re-use.

At the 2012 EER, NZQA was Confident in both the educational performance and capability in self-assessment of NZCB.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Focus areas selected were:

- Governance, management and strategy – this is a mandatory focus area
- International student support – all NZCB students are international students
- Diplomas in Business Administration (Levels 5-7) – this is the main area of programme delivery
- Preparation courses for IESOL – this is a new programme for NZCB.

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.

Two evaluators visited NZCB over two days, visiting both the Bishopdale and Auckland campuses. Interviews were conducted with the head office management team: the director, chief executive officer, principal, deputy principals, chief executive officer's assistant and academic team.

The evaluators also met with the campus managers for Auckland and Lincoln, six tutors (four in Christchurch and two in Auckland) and 22 students.

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The evaluators conducted telephone interviews with staff from Unitec, CPIT (Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology), Lincoln University, and three NZCB graduates.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **New Zealand College of Business Limited**.

The reasons for this judgement are as follows:

- Most students are achieving their primary study goals by passing courses and achieving qualifications that give them access to academic pathways (into diploma programmes and then degrees) and employment. They are also learning about New Zealand culture and business.
- Learner achievement data shows that course and qualification completion rates have been consistently good across all business programmes for the period 2009-2014, and there is some evidence of a trend of improving completion rates (see section 1.1).
- Agreements with four New Zealand polytechnics and universities enable graduates of the NZCB Diplomas in Business Administration to transfer with credit to degree studies. This opportunity is highly valued by learners and other stakeholders. Historically, the performance of NZCB graduates at these other institutions has been satisfactory, but recently concerns have been raised with NZCB about the academic progress of NZCB graduates in their degree studies. At the time of the EER site visit, investigations were underway to understand contributing factors and identify remedial actions.
- As yet, 31 of 63 students have successfully achieved the required standard to pass IESOL and have progressed to the Diploma in Business Administration (Level 5). A further 18 students are still studying IESOL. As the IESOL programme began in August 2013, it is too early to establish how well students are achieving overall in the English language programme, beyond this cohort of 63.
- NZCB mainly has appropriate management, academic and student support processes in place, which contribute to learning and other important outcomes. These processes provide some assurance of NZCB's capacity to successfully manage three delivery sites.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **New Zealand College of Business Limited**.

The reasons for this judgement are as follows:

- NZCB gathers information relating to the most important aspects of its performance. Tabulated data for student achievement over the last five years is available. While there is a level of analysis occurring, NZCB does not have a complete or overall understanding of student achievement, for example determining emerging patterns and trends and how NZCB performs in comparison to other, similar PTEs. The development of the learners' personal well-being and skills, such as self-management and teamwork, are not yet well measured. There is some evidence of general discussions on strategies for improvement, although these do not appear to be wide-ranging or comprehensive across all staff, indicating these issues may not yet be discussed regularly or monitored within all programmes.
- NZCB knows how many graduates have gained entry to degree programmes. However, it has recently become clear that closer monitoring of graduate success in their subsequent higher studies programme would provide useful information on the strengths and weaknesses of educational provision at NZCB. NZCB, together with the other tertiary education institutions involved, recently instigated a review of factors affecting NZCB graduates' success in subsequent degree study.
- While NZCB has collated information on the employment outcomes for NZCB graduates, it does not provide convincing evidence of the value of the diploma programmes for gaining employment.
- Self-assessment information is being shared and discussed at management level within the organisation, although the quality of analysis and measurement of outcomes could be strengthened further. The extent of staff understanding of, and engagement with, self-assessment activities is variable across the organisation, as evidenced through staff interviews at this evaluation.
- NZCB surveys students regularly, but the information gathered has limited use for identifying meaningful improvements. Tutors report that students' individual progress is carefully tracked, although there is limited evidence of this activity.

Findings³

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Student achievement in the Diplomas in Business Administration was consistently good between 2009 and 2013 (refer Table 1 below for course and qualification completion data). Moderation processes provide assurance of the consistency of assessment practices, although more independent and robust external moderation arrangements would further improve the validity of the learning outcomes.

Currently, the external moderator of the NZCB Diploma in Business Administration (Levels 5, 6 and 7) is a professor at a state tertiary institution with appropriate qualifications, skills and experience, but also holds a senior management position at NZCB. This situation is not sufficiently independent for external moderation purposes.

The data shows that there is some evidence of improvement in course completions, particularly at level 5, although NZCB reports that the average scores have declined slightly. Average scores for the 2009-2014 period were between 55 and 60 per cent. Analysis of achievement rates between the two main sites shows generally comparable performance of students at both sites in 2013, but some variation in 2014 (96 per cent of students at level 5 in Bishopdale completed courses compared with 89 per cent of level 5 students in Auckland).

	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
	CC	QC	CC	QC	CC	QC	CC	QC	CC	QC
Level 5	87%	82%	84%	84%	81%	90%	88%	89%	93%	88%
Level 6	89%	100%	91%	100%	96%	100%	87%	100%	89%	100%
Level 7	93%	100%	87%	96%	91%	83%	99%	92%	93%	100%
All levels	89%	85%	86%	90%	90%	94%	90%	94%	90%	96%

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 For period 1 August-31 July of each academic year; data as tabulated by NZCB.

Student achievement data is collated, then presented to NZCB's management team as tables and graphs. This data is compared with internal targets. Some external benchmarking has been undertaken, and this provides some indication that graduates of NZCB are achieving similar success rates at the benchmarked tertiary institute. Currently there is no deeper analysis of achievement at individual paper level, nor is there any tracking of how many passes are achieved by re-sits. Despite the level of analysis that has been done, NZCB has not identified key factors contributing to the achievement trends. There is some evidence of general discussions on strategies for improvement, although these do not appear to be wide-ranging or comprehensive, indicating that these matters may not yet be discussed regularly or monitored in all programmes. NZCB has identified that the development of personal well-being and skills, such as self-management and teamwork skills, is not yet well measured and is currently considering how to improve this aspect of self-assessment. There is a lack of detailed understanding of the underlying reasons for achievement trends.

As yet, NZCB has minimal data available on the progress of students in the IESOL programme because this is a relatively new programme. Thirty-one out of a total of 63 students have progressed to the Diploma in Business Administration and 18 students are continuing with their English studies. Seven IESOL students are studying to improve their English rather than to gain access to higher-level programmes.

NZCB does not have evidence of analysis of student achievement in the IESOL programme in any formal way at this stage, although tutors report that they are tracking individual learner progress through in-house and standardised tests for reading, writing and listening. Further development of self-assessment activities is required to effectively monitor the educational performance of this programme and identify areas for improvement.

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

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

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

Graduates from NZCB are able to gain entry to degree studies in New Zealand. This outcome is highly valued by students and other stakeholders.

NZCB has arrangements with two universities (Canterbury and Lincoln), and two polytechnics (Unitec and CPIT) which include agreements for cross-credit and credit transfer towards higher-level programmes, in recognition of the learning provided at NZCB. The arrangements allow for students to transfer to Bachelor's

degrees from the Diploma in Business Administration (Level 5), or to Master's programmes from the Diploma in Business Administration (Level 7).⁵

Data provided by NZCB on the graduate outcomes for 2013-2014 shows that 49 out of 95 graduates (52 per cent) progressed to degree studies with one of the four partner institutions (and a further 10 graduates enrolled with other tertiary education institutions (11 per cent)). This is a good result which exceeds NZCB's annual target of 50 per cent of graduates progressing to further study.

Historically, receiving institutions have indicated that progressing students have achieved satisfactorily in their destination programmes (although most of NZCB's partner institutions have not tracked the performance of NZCB graduates specifically and so there is limited data available). However, the graduates who have enrolled in 2014 at two tertiary education organisations have not performed well. While the circumstances are different in each case, stakeholders have confirmed that contributing factors include students' English language levels and difficulties in adjusting to the learning environment. NZCB is working with the two tertiary education organisations to understand contributing factors and identify remedial actions, and is exploring options to gather more complete data on graduates' success in higher programmes at other tertiary education organisations. Closer monitoring of graduate success in their destination programme may provide useful information on the strengths and weaknesses of educational provision at NZCB, especially to best prepare graduates for university study.

Another outcome of value for NZCB graduates is employment. According to NZCB summary data on employment outcomes for 2008-2014, most graduates (97 per cent) gain work that is related to their study, and approximately two-thirds (65 per cent) gain work at managerial level. While it is creditable that NZCB has tracked graduate destinations, a review of the raw data suggests that the conclusions as to the nature of these roles, and the value of the programmes in gaining these jobs, are somewhat overstated. An employer survey is used to gather feedback on a range of aspects about NZCB graduates as new employees. This information is reviewed and analysed, and this shows a high level of employer satisfaction, indicating that NZCB programmes are delivering value for students and employers.

Students from academic partners in China are still enrolling at NZCB, showing the value of this pathway for off-shore stakeholders. NZCB reports that students who entered the business programmes in 2012, having previously completed foundation studies in China, performed somewhat better than other entrants. However, there is no evidence of systematic analysis to establish whether this is a continuing trend.

⁵ Lincoln University only, from the New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 7).

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

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

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

NZCB is delivering approved programmes which provide students with relevant knowledge and skills, including some understanding of New Zealand culture and business. The programme design of the business diplomas (eight week blocks of teaching and assessment for each paper, delivered consecutively) enables students to focus on one subject at a time. However, the evidence of some recent graduates struggling with higher learning at other institutions in 2014 suggests that there may be a need to provide opportunities for students to develop the skills for independent learning that are needed for subsequent successful degree studies.

It is too early to assess the success of the IESOL programme in facilitating pathways into the business diplomas. However, it is evident from the discussion in Findings 1.2, and from stakeholder feedback, that English language skills, including confidence and verbal fluency, are a critical factor for student success in degree programmes. Including assessment of speaking skills in the summative testing regime for IESOL could contribute to a greater focus on these skills and better prepare students for further study.

The IESOL programme is supported by international syllabi and standardised tests. NZCB has made a number of adjustments to teaching and assessment activities and resources in response to feedback from students and tutors. Tutors are adapting activities and resources to match students' needs. Recently a digital repository was established for sharing English language resources across the two delivery sites. While it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of these changes, they are likely to contribute to matching students' needs and supporting their English language development.

All students at NZCB are surveyed regularly and their feedback on teaching and classes is reviewed by management and tutors. NZCB reports that changes have been made to the business programme in response to feedback, such as an increase in local case studies. Although field trips were identified as an example of a change⁶, only two had taken place in the last 12 months and there was little evidence of associated teaching and learning activities.

NZCB has a large advisory group which includes representatives from Chinese partner universities and New Zealand 'destination' tertiary education organisations, professional advisors and business owners, management and a student representative. Minutes of the annual meetings suggest that the group's purpose is

⁶ It is noted that this was also identified in the previous EER and in the 2012 self-assessment.

to maintain stakeholder relationships and provide input into strategic planning rather than to add value to the current programme delivery.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Teaching is generally effective for the student cohort, based on the achievement levels and positive feedback from students. Business tutors generally use a lecture format, standardised PowerPoint presentations and additional course materials. They report that they incorporate interactive activities (such as class discussions or group work), depending on the confidence and language skills of their students. This was confirmed to some extent in student interviews. All tutors are well qualified in their subject area and many have, or are completing, adult teaching qualifications. The IESOL tutors have extensive experience in English language teaching, experience they are drawing on as they build familiarity with the IESOL syllabi and testing system. Student progress is tracked and recorded appropriately and this was evidenced by a range of course and student records.

Apart from some informal peer observations and annual performance appraisals, there is little evidence of tutors jointly and systematically reflecting on the effectiveness of their teaching practice and identifying strategies for improvement. Two professional development sessions have been provided on effective teaching. While it is not clear whether these specific activities have made a positive impact on overall teaching effectiveness, student surveys indicate that students are satisfied with the teaching methods. The organisation has developed plans for further enhancing tutors' ability to meet students' learning needs, including promoting student engagement and confidence in class.

NZCB has established moderation processes which are adequate. Business tutors moderate assessments in pairs, which involves them working with colleagues at other campuses. This provides some assurance of consistency of assessment practice across the three delivery sites. However, NZCB does not have an overall moderation plan to ensure all assessment activities are systematically reviewed. The evaluators found there is room for greater thoroughness and rigour, particularly in pre-assessment moderation, and in identifying and following up on areas for improvement. In addition to the standardised tests provided as part of the City & Guild's programme, IESOL tutors are developing some of their own assessments and, while not all of these are yet being moderated, NZCB has identified this as an area to be addressed. 'External' moderation for business programmes has historically been conducted by the principal (a professor at Lincoln University), whose role is mainly advisory and who has no direct involvement with teaching planning or delivery and is also a senior manager at the college. The evaluation team acknowledges that qualification completion rates are consistently good, but

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notes that a more robust internal and external moderation process and a focus on increasing staff capability would provide greater assurance of the reliability and validity of student achievement.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

Students at NZCB are generally well supported. They receive comprehensive information and advice on studying at NZCB and living in New Zealand, and ongoing support is provided by friendly and helpful staff. Face-to-face assistance from speakers of their first language is available for many, and first language support is offered through community organisations for others. The management of attendance is a high priority for NZCB. Processes have been established to follow up students with poor attendance records, including requiring them to sign an attendance monitoring agreement in some situations. Staff report that failing students are identified and given opportunities for one-to-one sessions with tutors. Students can access library and other student resources on the Unitec and Lincoln University campuses. A variety of school activities contribute to social cohesion and student well-being. Students have the confidence to raise issues or concerns directly with staff and report that they are happy and enjoying learning at NZCB.

NZCB is generally compliant with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students, including meeting the needs of students under 18 years of age. The Code of Practice annual review is completed for all sites in consultation with key staff. The review recommends improved record-keeping in several instances, including documenting verbal communications with parents/guardians of students under 18 and verifying the regularity of police checks conducted by the homestay provider.

NZCB management receives weekly reports from support staff on administrative and student support activities. However, there is no regular and systematic process for reviewing the effectiveness of these processes and the impact of targeted interventions on the well-being and success of the students.

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

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**.

NZCB is guided by a vision of growth and consolidation of academic pathways, including the development of postgraduate programmes. Stakeholder relationship management activities (and formal agreements with education partners) and ongoing investment in facilities and resources show that NZCB governance and management are committed to enhancing the educational performance of NZCB and the value of its learning outcomes. The introduction of the IESOL programme is an innovative approach to meeting student needs for enhanced English language skills within established pathways.

Some input has been sought from the advisory group on the effectiveness of the organisation's governance. However, this aspect may require further development as the organisation grows and moves into higher levels of study.

NZCB has established processes to support consistency in curriculum and programme planning and to share resources across the three delivery sites. NZCB has targets for student achievement and outcomes and monitors performance against these targets. Although management staff visit all campuses regularly, there could be value in the teaching teams for each programme interacting more frequently to build collegiality and share best practice.

NZCB has information on student achievement and outcomes, which provides evidence of NZCB's overall educational performance. The quality and validity of this information is variable. Further investigation into the relationships between completed qualifications and subsequent employment would contribute to a greater understanding of the value of the business programmes for employment. There are several examples of self-assessment findings being used to make changes, although the impact of those changes on improving learning outcomes is not always understood.

The extent of staff understanding of and engagement with self-assessment activities is variable across the organisation. Integrating self-assessment into all aspects of its operations and strengthening processes for systematic reflection would improve NZCB's ability to identify worthwhile improvements.

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 **Good**.

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

2.2 Focus area: International student support

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

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

2.3 Focus area: Business programmes

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

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

2.4 Focus area: Preparation courses for IESOL

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

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

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that NZCB:

- Continue to develop tools or explore existing tools to monitor and measure soft skills development.
- Consider the value of including speaking skills in the IESOL programme, to support students' success, for example with presentation skills.
- Review programme planning and teaching strategies, to better prepare international students for higher-level study at the Bachelor's degree level.
- Further develop assessment moderation processes and staff capability across all programmes.
- Further develop processes for evaluating the effectiveness of organisational governance.
- Explore how to effectively monitor the success of graduates in subsequent higher study.
- Integrate the features of effective self-assessment into all aspects of operations and strengthen processes for systematic reflection. Reference: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/key-components/>

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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