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External Evaluation and Review Report

Eagle Flight Training Limited trading
as The Aviation School of New
Zealand

Date of report: 8 December 2020

About Eagle Flight Training Limited trading as The Aviation School of New Zealand

Eagle Flight Training delivers aviation training, enabling their predominately international students to gain internationally recognised pilot licences and aviation-related work.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	16 Aerodrome Road, Gisborne
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	24 students at the time of the external evaluation and review (EER) (international: 23 domestic: 1); 16 equivalent full-time students in 2019
Number of staff:	10 full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	See: NZQA – Eagle Flight Training Limited The Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand (CAA) certifies New Zealand organisations offering aviation training, issues pilot licences, and oversees theory assessments and flight test examinations. Eagle Flight has agreements with the Vietnamese aviation authority, and two Vietnamese airlines recognise its training.
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Not Yet Confident in the educational performance and Not Yet Confident in the capability in self-assessment at the last EER of Eagle Flight conducted in November 2018.
Scope of this evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flight training (encompassing all training scheme delivery)• International students: support and wellbeing
MoE number:	7806
NZQA reference:	C41834
Dates of EER visit:	2-4 September 2020

Final report

Summary of results

Eagle Flight has met many of the important needs of students and other stakeholders. Its processes are generally effective. The PTE has made a range of key improvements since the last EER, although compliance still requires attention.

Confident in educational performance

- Achievement is generally strong. Most students gain an internationally recognised commercial pilot licence. Theory pass rates have considerably improved, while flight test pass rates have been steady. Since 2018 students have taken significantly fewer flight hours and a shorter training duration to gain an externally assessed licence. Many graduates since 2019 have gained work in the aviation industry.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- The training approach is effective and has been strengthened, enabling most students to become competent licensed pilots. Pastoral support has kept students engaged to complete their studies.
- Eagle Flight leadership has made changes to its ownership, appointing new staff, which has contributed to its improved educational performance.
- The PTE has resolved many of its important compliance issues. While the 2019 Code of Practice¹ review was variable, many key procedures have been strengthened. The training schemes need to be formally reviewed. The impact of these gaps has not been significant. CAA renewed Eagle Flight's Part 141 certification in November 2020 that authorises the school to train pilots.
- Self-assessment has identified and reviewed many priority areas identified at the last EER. Important improvements have been made. Analysis of aggregate achievement data has improved but is still evolving.

¹ [The Education \(Pastoral Care of International Students\) Code of Practice 2016](#)

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Eagle Flight trains predominately international students aiming to obtain commercial pilot licences; it has rolling enrolments. Twenty-six (84 per cent) of the 31 students exiting since 2015, have achieved this key goal.³ The percentage of students passing CAA aviation theory examinations has considerably improved from 61 (2019) to 79 per cent in the 2020 year to August. The flight test pass rates over the same period remain sound. The Eagle Flight rates are comparable to the available national averages. There is reasonable evidence that since 2018 students have taken significantly fewer flight hours and a shorter training duration to achieve the externally verified licence benchmark. These are generally strong results.</p> <p>Eagle Flight has improved its tracking and understanding of individual student academic progress. The head of training and instructors review individual student progress in weekly staff meetings, identify students not making the expected headway, and propose remedial actions. Results are reviewed in subsequent meetings. Students who were interviewed by the evaluators had a clear understanding of their progress. Academic progress is reported to the bi-monthly academic board and management review meetings.⁴ The analysis of aggregate achievement while generally sound is still not complete. However, this gap has not had a significant impact.</p>
Conclusion:	Student achievement has improved and is generally strong. The understanding and use of achievement data has been strengthened, although it is not yet comprehensive.

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ See Appendix 1 for further achievement details.

⁴ One or both directors attend these meetings.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Eagle Flight’s key value proposition is to produce competent commercial pilots who obtain an internationally recognised licence. As noted, most students achieve this externally verified valued outcome, and this is often occurring within accelerated training durations, which adds further value. Also, an increasing number of graduates have gained their ‘instrument rating’ (four in 2017, six in 2018, nine in 2019). There was sound but not complete evidence that many graduates since 2019 had gained work in the aviation industry, predominately in Vietnam.⁵</p> <p>Eagle Flight has well-established linkages formally with CAA and informally with the New Zealand aviation industry, ensuring the ongoing currency and quality of its training outcomes. Similarly, the PTE has strong relationships with Vietnamese aviation stakeholders, through its owner and staff operating in the Vietnamese industry and its formal agreements with airlines and the aviation regulatory authority.</p> <p>Eagle Flight has made a range of improvements, noted in this report, enabling it to deliver stronger outcomes for its students and key industry stakeholders. Nearly all students who were interviewed had enrolled on the recommendation of former students. They had recommended or would recommend the school to others.</p>
Conclusion:	Eagle Flight has delivered outcomes of clear value for most students and the aviation industry. Changes made have produced stronger outcomes.

⁵ The evaluators accepted there are some challenges tracking international graduate destination outcomes due to aviation security requirements. These destination outcomes occurred prior to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the international aviation industry.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Eagle Flight's facilities, aircraft and curriculum comply with CAA aviation industry requirements. Internal auditing processes are designed to maintain their currency. The Gisborne location offers diverse flying environments well suited for aviation training. CAA also quality assures the online theory assessments, and independent examiners conduct the Commercial Pilot Licence flight tests. A regular examiner commented on the improved quality of its training delivery.</p> <p>Student learning involves a combination of self-study and instructor-guided training. Instructors offer a mix of class and individualised theory tuition and one-on-one flight instruction. Instructors reflect on their teaching practice to adapt programme delivery. The head of training observes, monitors and mentors the instructors, providing valued guidance to the instructors in weekly staff meetings. Eagle Flight was effective in moving theory lessons to an online platform in response to the pandemic restrictions. Improved operations over the past 18 months have enabled more flight instructor hours to be offered. At the same time, the efficacy of flight instruction has improved, with graduates needing fewer flight hours to achieve the externally assessed certification benchmark.</p> <p>Eagle Flight has identified that some students require additional language support which is provided by a qualified and experienced ESOL⁶ professional. The PTE has concluded that the IELTS⁷ score is not a sufficiently accurate language assessment tool and is exploring additional requirements. It has reviewed the suitability of its materials. Some additional</p>

⁶ English for Speakers of Other Languages

⁷ International English Language Testing System

	<p>professional development of instructors seems warranted.</p> <p>The PTE's two NZQA-approved programmes have lapsed; there was no impact on delivery over this period.⁸ The training schemes need to be formally reviewed, though the curriculum and assessments are CAA mandated.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>The aviation training is matching the important needs of most students and industry stakeholders. There have been improvements to the delivery of training. The training schemes need to be formally reviewed.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The instructors have CAA-compliant qualifications and appropriate experience. Since the last EER, Eagle Flight has employed a new chief flying instructor who now oversees a more diverse team of instructors. There is a clear team ethos. Instructors discuss student progress and wellbeing in weekly staff meetings and review instructor support strategies when warranted. Students' learning goals are clear, and they have access to the monitoring spreadsheet. Students interviewed were confident they are well informed and are positive about their instructors.</p> <p>New students are inducted weekly. Sampling of attendance records indicates that attendance has improved since the last EER; a clear explanation and credible response was provided for the few absences. A Code review undertaken in 2019 was adequate for a small school; it identified specific and relevant gaps and remedial actions which were mostly implemented. The terms and conditions and handbook have been substantially revised.⁹ It was not evident that any gaps had significantly impacted on student wellbeing. Eagle Flight is a small aviation school with a personable pastoral care approach and a range of procedures. The students interviewed were satisfied or very</p>

⁸ The New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Aeroplane) (Airline Preparation) and New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Aeroplane) (Flight Instruction) were retired on 9 September 2020 due to non-delivery for more than 12 months. There was no impact on current students.

⁹ Other significant Code-related improvements are outlined in 1.6.

	satisfied with the support received (including during the pandemic) and the social events organised. There was no periodic anonymous student feedback mechanism in place.
Conclusion:	Eagle Flight has been effective in supporting student wellbeing and enabling nearly all students to stay involved and complete their training. Important improvements have been made to pastoral care procedures. The review of the Code was adequate, but it requires some further strengthening.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Eagle Flight has a clearer focus on its purpose since moving to sole ownership, although it has no formal strategic plan. The academic board and management meeting, with a mix of governance and management members, provides appropriate oversight of performance and direction to the organisation.</p> <p>Since the last EER, the leadership team has established an NZQA liaison role, and recruited a new chief flying instructor and two new instructors. The head of training has considerable experience in different roles across the aviation training industry. His respected leadership helps ensure high and improving standards of aviation training and effective oversight of the instructors.</p> <p>Eagle Flight actively enables its instructors to gain higher-level instructor rating; two of the seven instructors have recently done so. Instructors report feeling valued and are positive about the improvements in the organisation. The organisation responded effectively to the pandemic lockdown and the resulting uncertainty. The leadership has addressed the priority areas identified at the last EER. Some compliance matters require further attention (see 1.6).</p>
Conclusion:	Eagle Flight leadership has been effective in supporting generally strong educational performance. There has been improvement in key priority areas.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Eagle Flight has some effective systems and procedures to manage many of its important compliance requirements. Most of the key gaps have been addressed. Key findings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAA renewed Eagle Flight's Part 141 certification that authorises them to train pilots on 16 November 2020. • Sampling of student files found more robust enrolment processes and that entry requirements were being met. • A student sample was consistent with the key training scheme the approved hours. • Eagle Flight has worked with NZQA and other parties to resolve concerns related to its student fees trust and insurance.¹⁰ Despite some professional development undertaken, the 2019 Code review was variable. It did however identify areas requiring attention. It has substantively revised its offer of place, terms and conditions, student handbook and website. • Credit reporting had been well over 90 days; however, this was rectified in mid-2019. • Eagle Flight has delayed reviewing its training schemes and programmes.¹¹ More generally, the PTE needs to be more timely in meeting its commitments. • The PTE has stated there have been no significant legal or ethical issues since the last EER. This enquiry has not identified any issues that contradict this statement.
Conclusion:	Eagle Flight has made significant improvements in managing many key compliance areas. However, there is still some variability in its performance and self-review.

¹⁰ Eagle Flight does not use recruitment agents.

¹¹ The approval of the latter has lapsed due to non-delivery.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: All flight training

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: International student support and wellbeing

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal

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 Eagle Flight Training Limited:

- Investigate a student management system that better analyses its achievement data.
- Develop a more robust English language assessment tool for an aviation training context.
- Review the teaching materials and lesson plans to better meet the needs of learners for whom English is a second language.
- Consider appropriate ESOL or literacy and numeracy professional development for its instructors.
- Consider an anonymous feedback mechanism on support and guidance offered.
- Undertake a more robust Code review in 2020.
- Engage external expertise to robustly review its current training schemes and help develop any programme applications.
- Invest sufficient resources to action these recommendations in a timely fashion.

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. Completion rate of training schemes 1 January 2015-30 July 2020

NZQA Training Scheme (CAA Licence)	Students enrolled	Students still enrolled	Students who have exited	Students completed	Completion rate (%)
Private Pilot Licence	4	2	2	1	50%
Commercial Pilot Licence	4	3	1	1	100%
Commercial Pilot Licence with Instrument Rating	50	20	30	25	83%
Commercial Pilot Licences (2 and 3)	54	23	31	26	84%
Overall	58	25	33	27	82%

Source: Eagle Flight Data

Table 2. Theory results 2019-2020 (papers passed/papers attempted) and national average

Paper pass rates	2019	2020 year to August
Average paper pass rate	61% (143/234)	79% (77/97)
National average (1 st attempt)	75%	75%

Source: Eagle Flight and ASPEQ¹² Data

¹² The Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand delegates ASPEQ to conduct its theory assessments and flight tests.

Table 3. Flight test results 2019-2020 (tests passed/tests conducted) and national average

Training Scheme	2019		2020 year to August	
	EFT	National average (1 st attempt)	EFT	National average (1 st attempt)
Private Pilot Licence	83% (10/12)	NA	83% (5/6)	NA
Commercial Pilot Licence	50% (7/14)	52%	67% (4/6)	53%
Commercial Pilot Licence with Instrument Rating	90% (19/21)	68%	75% (6/8)	87%

Source: Eagle Flight and ASPEQ Data

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 fraud¹³*
- *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.*

¹³ 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 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

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 including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes 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 2016. 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/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz