



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Queens (New Zealand) Institute of
Studies Limited

Trading as New Zealand Institute of
Studies

Date of report: 20 July 2010

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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.

Brief description of TEO

Location: 155 Queen Street, Auckland

Type: Private training establishment (PTE)

Size: Medium; 287 students currently enrolled: 61 English language students and 226 New Zealand Diploma in Business students

Sites: As above

Queens (New Zealand) Institute of Studies Limited, trading as New Zealand Institute of Studies (NZIOS), provides English language courses and the New Zealand Diploma in Business. NZQA registered NZIOS as a PTE in May 2009 following purchase and renaming of an existing entity. NZIOS has established a new management team consisting of the academic advisor, the office manager, and the general manager, who is also the marketing manager.

At the time of the change in ownership, the organisation had around 11 students enrolled in the New Zealand Diploma in Business (NZDipBus). Currently the organisation has 226 students enrolled in the diploma. This increase was due to NZIOS accepting enrolments from two other PTEs which closed during 2009.

NZIOS was previously quality assured by NZQA in 2009 under the previous audit system. NZIOS did not meet 11 requirements of the standard then in force. These requirements related to the areas of governance and management and student information. NZIOS has since addressed these issues. In addition, a monitoring report on the NZDipBus showed that NZIOS was required to address a number of areas to improve the quality of its diploma programme. The organisation is in the process of addressing these issues. The diploma programme has not had any students graduate from its courses since the organisation changed ownership in 2009. The first cohort of students dating from the change of ownership is expected to graduate in August 2010.

Executive Summary

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Queens (New Zealand) Institute of Studies Limited Trading as New Zealand Institute of Studies (NZIOS)**.

Progress results for NZIOS students are averaging above 70 per cent. This indicates that the majority of the first cohort, enrolled since the organisation underwent a change of ownership, is on target to achieve the diploma.

NZIOS operates strict attendance monitoring and follow-up, which has assisted with students' high completion rates.

Delivery of the diploma programme is enhanced through the inclusion of activities designed to assist students' understanding of how businesses operate in a New Zealand context. This includes using guest speakers and organising field trips to local businesses. These activities were included on advice from the programme's advisory committee consisting of diploma tutors from other training organisations and local employers.

In addition, the organisation has responded to the English language needs of students by including a New Zealand Institute of Management paper on language and culture to further help students understand the New Zealand business environment. The organisation has also reviewed its timetabling to suit the needs of students who wish to complete their studies in the summer or wish to attend evening classes to fit around part-time work commitments.

So far, short-term survey results indicate that the students who transferred to NZIOS from another PTE have completed their diploma and found employment, or have enrolled in further studies. However, there are no graduate outcomes known for the first cohort enrolled in the diploma when the PTE was established in 2009.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Not Yet Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Queens (New Zealand) Institute of Studies Limited Trading as New Zealand Institute of Studies (NZIOS)**.

The organisation has analysed students' results for those that have completed papers towards the diploma, but because the data does not include all students enrolled in diploma papers it does not provide comprehensive outcomes. The organisation has also analysed the data to show outcomes for the different nationalities which are used to determine students' learning needs. Again, these results need to include all students enrolled in the diploma.

The management team has used the results gathered so far across the papers that comprise the diploma to compare outcomes for its students across semesters and between tutors. Management has used the results to make a number of changes to the programme and student support systems, which have resulted in improved attendance and outcomes for students sitting papers.

Ongoing reviews are conducted at weekly management team meetings as well as with the advisory group to ensure the programme is aligned to the diploma requirements and the delivery is meeting the needs of the business community and students.

In the first 11 months of operation, NZIOS has made adjustments to its programme and has increased classroom spaces and the number of teaching staff to match an increase in student numbers. These initiatives show that NZIOS is responding to the needs of its students.

However, the organisation does not have established internal self-assessment processes that are inclusive of the organisation as a whole to drive better teaching practices.

In addition, NZIOS moderation practices are not yet fully established to confirm that assessments are valid and that tutors are consistent in their marking.

TEO response

NZIOS has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

Basis for External Evaluation and Review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and 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 policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.

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).

Findings

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

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>

Outline of scope

The agreed scope of the external evaluation and review of NZIOS included the following mandatory focus areas:

- Governance, management, and strategy
- International student support
- New Zealand Diploma in Business.

NZIOS also provides English language courses to prepare students for exams to meet language requirements for entry to university using the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Courses are also available for those wanting to improve their general English language skills.

Part 1: Answers to Key Evaluation Questions across the organisation

This section provides a picture of the TEO's performance in terms of the outcomes achieved and the key contributing processes. Performance judgements are based on the answers to key evaluation questions across the focus areas sampled. This section also provides a judgement about the extent to which the organisation uses self-assessment information to understand its own performance and bring about improvements, i.e. capability in self-assessment.

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**.

Context

The diploma comprises of 12 business-related papers. Students complete assignments and sit examinations to meet the requirements for each paper.

Explanation

Prior to NZIOS purchasing the organisation, the results analysed for students sitting diploma papers show that in 2008, 88 per cent of students were passing. This figure

increased to 96 per cent in 2010. However, these results do not include all students enrolled in the programme, only those who sit the examination. Information on the Ministry of Education website shows that the average pass rate for students enrolled in all New Zealand diplomas from 2001 to 2008 was 80 per cent. When all students enrolled in the diploma with NZIOS are taken into account, the average pass rate for 2009 was around 70 per cent. This means that students are still achieving within acceptable limits for the programme.

NZIOS said some students failed to complete the diploma due to delays in receiving a student visa. This has led the organisation to only enrol students for papers of up to three months, which do not require a student visa. As a result, students have tended not to enrol in further papers towards the diploma with NZIOS. The organisation has identified that some students leave at this stage to enrol in other PTEs, perhaps for cheaper or shorter courses. The NZIOS management team said it is committed to maintaining high standards of attendance and the high achievement expectations of students, because its goal is to ensure students are well prepared to work in the New Zealand business environment.

The organisation has also analysed results for different nationalities and found achievement rates differ between nationalities, with some more successful in some papers and vice versa. Overall, Chinese students who complete the papers have lower overall pass rates (73 per cent) than Indian students (92 per cent). This is due to a difference in English language ability. As a result, NZIOS introduced weekly tutorials to assist students' understanding of business terminology and concepts in English, which has improved results, in particular for Chinese students.

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**.

Context

NZIOS's goal is to prepare its graduates for work in New Zealand businesses. A small percentage of students return to their home country but a majority want to find employment or enrol in further business study in New Zealand.

Explanation

The short-term results indicate that NZIOS students are on track to achieve a diploma and find employment. This is based on the management team's analysis of results so far and a student survey conducted last year. Although the survey included students that had not completed the diploma, it indicated the possibility that 60 per cent or more of students would go on to enrol in further education or find employment. The survey results also found that 15 per cent of students were leaving to return to their own country. NZIOS is currently investigating ways to discover what students do when they leave New Zealand, to gauge whether the programme is of value to this group of students.

NZIOS management promotes an ethos of ensuring the programme provides students with a good understanding of working in the New Zealand business environment. This is

supported by tutors whose stated aim is to produce graduates who are among the best in the PTE sector. At this stage it is too early to judge whether the feedback from employers and students shows the organisation is successful in achieving this.

Student feedback during the evaluation visit was positive about the benefits of studying at NZIOS. High on their list was the opportunity to apply theory in practical situations, such as interviewing people in business and observation of the application of management theories during visits to local businesses. Students also reported that they received good support from the management team and tutors.

The management team has been active in reviewing student outcomes and researching the needs of the employment market in New Zealand to determine if it is of value to students finding employment in New Zealand. However, it is still too early to make a judgement of value until after the first cohort of students graduate from NZIOS with the diploma.

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 **Excellent**.

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

Context

NZIOS accepts students in three intakes over the academic year. The NZDipBus programme requires students to complete an average of three papers per semester over four semesters. NZIOS also offers a two-month summer school so that students can complete the programme over four semesters within one year, instead of over four semesters over two years. Programme activities include classroom lectures, group projects, and individual class presentations. Students also visit the nearby library, museum, workplaces, and the law courts.

Explanation

NZIOS is establishing regular management review practices involving the marketing manager, principal academic adviser, administration manager, and the advisory group to understand and meet the needs of its stakeholders. This has already led to changes to the programme delivery and activities.

Examples of changes include the introduction of evening classes for some papers to encourage students to continue their study when undertaking part-time work during the daytime. Other developments include adding a New Zealand Institute of Management paper on language and culture to further enhance understanding of New Zealand business terminology and concepts, and a CV writing workshop to help students gain employment. NZIOS staff also help students gain interviews for part-time work, which helps improve students' English language abilities and boosts full-time employment opportunities on completion of the diploma.

A diploma advisory group provides input to the management team on course content and aims. One area where the group has had an impact is in ensuring the programme

development team includes a practical focus to prepare students to work in a New Zealand context.

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**.

Context

NZIOS employs tutors on a part-time basis. Many of the teaching staff also undertake roles in student support and marketing. The tutors employed by NZIOS have a teaching background and relevant qualifications to teach business.

Explanation

The achievement results for the business papers show that students are passing with acceptable scores in relation to similar training providers. The organisation has attributed this to setting high achievement standards for its students, providing free English language tutorials, and strong monitoring of attendance. At present, attendance is at 90 per cent.

The management team reviews students' progress and feedback and uses teaching observations to monitor tutors' effectiveness. Any issues are addressed with tutors and there is a professional development plan which includes training for tutors to serve as mentors for new teachers and peer observation of classroom teaching practices. The process is management-driven and tutors have yet to establish a collegial system to support each other's teaching practices to assist with students' learning. However, as the organisation grows and establishes its teaching team in full-time positions, this may support better collegial practices.

The organisation has concentrated on improving learning facilities for the students in the first year of operation. NZIOS responded to increased student numbers in 2009 by leasing more classroom space and reorganising tutors' workloads to meet the demands of the timetable. There is also a proposal to provide a library for students with additional computers, periodicals, newspapers, listening equipment to help with language learning, and, group meeting facilities. Currently, teaching resources for each paper are available on a shared computer system and students receive handouts to help them complete the workbooks. Tutors also have access to relevant, up-to-date texts from their own resource library and students are members of the nearby Auckland city public library.

However, a recent report from the monitor of the NZDipBus stated that the organisation needed to make improvements in some areas to give assurance that students were being taught to the standard required. The monitor also saw a need for more specific research assistance for tutors. As a result of this report, the organisation has engaged an external person to assist the development of assessment activities and assessment practices. NZIOS has also made an internal appointment to oversee the development of assessment moderation practices among the tutors. In addition, the results of NZQA's national moderation had not been released at the time of this report. Therefore, there is some uncertainty as to whether assessment practices can be viewed as valid and reliable.

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**.

Context

Two cultural support officers look after the students' accommodation and attendance, which helps to provide early identification of issues. Another staff member ensures students have ongoing computer support. The organisation has also appointed staff members to assist Chinese and Indian students. Students must sit a pre-entry test in English language and are required to achieve an average score of 6.0 IELTS. Students receive information about the course early on so that they can select the papers they wish to take for each semester.

Explanation

Tutors are aware of cultural differences in students' progress and use different strategies to engage students in the classroom, such as mixing nationalities in group tasks. Students reported that the tutors were knowledgeable and that they received relevant feedback, which helps with their understanding. Where a student has difficulties with the English language, they can attend additional English tutorials for free, and students have shown an improvement in their learning as a result of this support.

Students reported their satisfaction with the support they received from staff at NZIOS. General comments indicated that students were very happy at the organisation. NZIOS has a student representative on the advisory group so that students' learning needs are considered, such as including more external classroom activities and a larger kitchen/lounge area. These actions contribute to the students' well-being.

Information for students at enrolment is comprehensive, although some information in the course outline needs to be clarified such as the percentage rate required to pass exams and the duration of the diploma course in relation to visa needs.

The evaluation team has concerns about the organisation enrolling students in three-month courses while awaiting visa endorsements to study towards the business diploma. The organisation surveyed students and found that often the delays in visa endorsements lead to students withdrawing at the end of three months and not going on to enrol in the diploma. The organisation has attempted to manage this by allowing students to attend some business classes as observers or by providing separate classes for those without visas until they receive their visa. While, technically, the organisation is permitted to enrol students with a visitor permit or other New Zealand visa on courses of less than 12 weeks, it is not ideal to have students wishing to do a diploma dropping out after three months to pursue other studies.

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 **Good**.

Context

The previous entity was purchased with 11 students enrolled in the NZDipBus in May 2009 and renamed. NZIOS then enrolled 40 students from two other PTEs which closed during 2009. The management team has increased the number of staff from seven to 21, which includes ten diploma tutors employed on a casual, part-time basis, five English language tutors, and six support staff.

Explanation

The management team, consisting of the general manager, office manager, and the academic advisor, has demonstrated responsiveness to feedback from students, the monitor's report, and the previous NZQA audit report. The management team also has a strong commitment to providing relevant education for its students and teaching staff through the review of its programme content and activities. It has implemented a number of improvements, such as providing English language tutorials, employing cultural support officers, and building its moderation capability. The organisation has also responded to the increase in student numbers by increasing the number of classrooms and teaching and support staff.

The management team meets with staff every morning to discuss any issues and share ideas. Staff said they wanted the school to be recognised as an outstanding provider of the NZDipBus to international students for the relevant and high level of skills and knowledge the students take with them to their employer.

Although the management team has shown some good self-assessment activities which have led to improvements, the organisation is still establishing organisation-wide, ongoing internal self-review and assessment of teaching practices and student results.

Part 2: Performance in 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 **Good**.

2.2 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Business

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

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

2.3 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 **Adequate**.

Actions Required and Recommendations

Further actions

Because NZQA is Not Yet Confident in New Zealand Institute of Studies' capability in self-assessment, NZQA will contact the organisation to agree appropriate actions aimed at achieving a level of at least Confident in educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

Progress toward improvement will be monitored by NZQA and a further EER scheduled at an appropriate time.

Recommendations

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

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