

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Queens (New Zealand) Institute of  
Studies Limited trading as New  
Zealand Institute of Studies

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 28 March 2012

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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

Location:	155 Queen Street, Auckland
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	2006
Number of students:	Domestic: nil International: 460 (with 400 enrolled in the New Zealand Diploma of Business) Eight international students under 18 years of age
Number of staff:	22 full-time and 16 part-time staff
Scope of Accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate in University Preparation (Level 3)</li><li>• English Language Development for ESOL Students (Level 5)</li><li>• New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 6)</li><li>• NZIM Certificate in Management (Level 4) - NZ Institute of Management Incorporated</li><li>• NZIM Diploma in Management (Level 5) - NZ Institute of Management Incorporated</li><li>• NZIM Diploma in Management (Advanced) (Level 6) - NZ Institute of Management Incorporated</li><li>• NZIM/ATTTO Diploma in Tourism Management (Level 5) - NZ Institute of Management Incorporated</li><li>• Teaching English as a Second Language</li></ul>

(TESOL) (Level 5)

Sites:	<p>One site as noted above.</p> <p>NZIOS occupies levels 5, 6 and 12 of 155 Queen Street, Auckland</p>
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>Queens (New Zealand) Institute of Studies trading as New Zealand Institute of Studies (NZIOS) provides the New Zealand Diploma in Business, (NZDipBus) and English language courses. NZQA registered NZIOS as a PTE in May 2009 following the purchase and renaming of an existing entity.</p> <p>NZIOS is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.</p> <p>Currently there are no domestic students enrolled.</p>
Recent significant changes:	<p>NZIOS has grown significantly in the last year, from 287 students in 2010 to 460 in 2011, with 400 of the 460 students enrolled on the NZDipBus. The management team expanded and staff increased in the last year to include many nationalities.</p>
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>NZIOS previously underwent an EER in 2010. The outcome was that NZIOS was judged Confident in capability in educational performance and Not Confident in capability in self-assessment.</p> <p>The 2010 and 2011 monitoring reports on the NZDipBus showed that NZIOS was required to address a number of areas to improve the quality of its diploma programme, including: using an internationally recognised English language test for entry; ensuring any changes to delivery are approved by NZQA; ensuring immigration requirements regarding hours of attendance for international students are met; limiting class sizes; tutor workloads; representation at conferences. The organisation has addressed the majority of these issues and is working on the remaining few.</p> <p>NZIOS underwent a validation visit in June 2011 and met all but one of the Policies and Criteria for Ongoing Registration of PTEs. The one requirement not met related to the absence of a comprehensive risk plan, which is now in place.</p>

National external moderation of assessment material and assessor judgements in recent years indicated that some material required modification and some assessor judgements did not meet the national standard. The 2011 NZQA external moderation results for new and resubmitted assessment material from the New Zealand Diploma of Business programme identified that all key assessment requirements had been met.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

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

- Governance, management, and strategy
- International student support.

The following programme was included as a focus area:

- NZ Diploma in Business (Level 6) (NZDipBus) (including NZIM Diploma in Management (Level 5))

This programme was chosen because it is the highest-level programme offered and involves most of the student body.

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.

## 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 EER included two NZQA lead evaluators, with another lead evaluator joining for the second day in a compliance capacity in response to the NZQA Risk and Compliance team's concerns about several student complaints. This visit informed the EER. The results note that the systems in place are ensuring that records are kept accurately and appropriate criteria are used to determine fitness for enrolment

and for entry criteria and withdrawals, and that student support, including attendance requirements, is implemented consistently.

The evaluation team met with the academic director, other management staff, teaching staff, one large group of students, graduates, three external stakeholders, and international enrolment and marketing support staff. The team also reviewed a sample of the organisation's documentation to confirm and validate the evidence discussed with the personnel above. Documentary input was also obtained from NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

Various students and staff who were unable to attend the EER sessions were contacted via phone on the days following the EER.

NZIOS has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **New Zealand Institute of Studies**.

Pass rates at NZIOS are improving. Students at NZIOS achieved a higher prescription pass rate for the NZDipBus in 2011 than in 2010, showing a small increase from 73 per cent to 79 per cent. This rate is 2 per cent below the national average of 81 per cent based on the same papers offered across New Zealand in 2011. Benchmarking is undertaken against national outcomes but is not undertaken with other, like providers at the present time. Internal benchmarking is undertaken, with comparisons of achievement rates across the papers offered each semester, whereby those papers with lower pass rates undergo teaching and assessment reviews and changes are made. Student retention is high at 90 per cent.

The aim of NZIOS is to provide sound education to international students to enable them to use their learning as a stepping stone towards higher education or work in New Zealand. NZIOS has a good qualification completion rate for NZIM as many of the NZDipBus students complete half the required NZDipBus papers to gain the NZIM qualification and then exit to either enrol elsewhere or gain work. Many students pathway to further study in higher education and are achieving well, with 50 per cent of all students in related work or further study and 11 per cent of those who gain employment working in a specific related area as evidenced by graduates spoken to during the EER.

Results from student evaluations of their learning experience taken during and at the completion of each paper confirm that they were satisfied with their learning experience and that their needs were met with regard to gaining an education and acquiring social and cultural experiences in New Zealand. Students interviewed during the evaluation also confirmed that they were satisfied with the teaching and their learning and that they enjoyed the variety in the teaching methods and noted the good support systems in place for their learning and well-being.

NZIOS teaching staff are well qualified in their subject area and adult teaching qualifications. Staff numbers have increased significantly, with the organisation growing from 21 part-time-tutors in 2010 to 22 full-time and 16 part-time in 2011. The teaching staff are aware that with such a diverse cultural mix of students that different learning styles need to be acknowledged and catered for, and they have addressed this need by mixing different cultural groups together and using group work for learning.

Ongoing issues with internal and external moderation and plagiarism have been given considerable time and analysis by the management team and staff during 2011. Professional development and training on moderation and reducing

plagiarism have been offered to teaching staff, and students have been given intensive instruction academic referencing and warnings about school policy and the consequences of cheating. During the evaluation visit it was noted that the organisation still has issues with plagiarism and internal and external moderation and was undertaking further work in these areas.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **New Zealand Institute of Studies**.

The organisation is collecting and establishing benchmark data for the NZDipBus in order to measure its performance internally over time, such as against successive student cohorts and against available national data for prescription completions across New Zealand.

NZIOS has a small local advisory group which provides input into the programmes and feedback to determine how well programmes meet industry requirements. As a result of self-assessment, more direct input from industry into the programmes was being sought to lift the organisation's profile in the community, with more interaction being planned between NZIOS and industry through timetabled industry-specific presentations to students.

NZIOS is establishing a culture of closely monitoring its performance as an educational and training institution. The organisation has relevant and appropriate quality systems, including paper-based and electronic databases, to monitor all aspects of its operations. NZIOS can now show a track record of making ongoing improvements.

Processes to critically analyse contributing factors to student achievement and other quality improvements have been developed and are in the early stages of implementation, with the organisation's planning and monitoring processes focused primarily on identifying issues and implementing appropriate actions. Actions have been taken to eliminate plagiarism, improve internal moderation processes and practices, increase awareness of different learning styles, and initiate increased advisory input. This self-assessment is planned and well structured, and with the organisation being primarily focused on further analysis and implementation at this stage, it is yet to fully develop its processes to track the effectiveness of the new initiatives over time.

There was clear evidence that NZIOS recognises the value of self-assessment and uses it as a tool to improve its educational performance, and there has been some significant movement towards improved self-assessment since the previous EER in 2010. Early indications are that these self-assessment processes are leading to enhanced outcomes for students.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 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 **Good**.

For the period April 2010 to August 2011, there were 55 NZDipBus graduates and 227 NZIM diploma graduates, comprising students enrolled with NZIOS or who had transferred to NZIOS from other providers. Pass rates for NZDipBus prescription papers were 73 per cent for 2010 and 79 per cent for 2011. An analysis by individual prescription was provided which compared NZIOS's pass rates with those obtained nationally using statistics available on the NZQA website. These showed improvement towards meeting the national average benchmark for the same prescription papers of 81 per cent, which shows that NZIOS is close to the national average and aligning with like providers.

It is evident from discussions with students that their personal confidence increased with the acquisition of English language skills, New Zealand business practices, and employment-related personal skills involving work ethics and professional attitude. Students were also keen to outline their knowledge of Māori protocol.

NZIOS compares and analyses achievement across nationalities to identify trends in prescription data and to initiate support where achievement is lower. NZIOS also undertakes year-on-year tracking of student pass rates, with ongoing analysis of trends over time.

## 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**.

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 most want to find employment or enrol in further business study in New Zealand. An analysis of surveys completed of graduate outcomes at three, six, and 12 months showed that 50 per cent go to further study or employment, with 11 per cent being employed in areas related to their study.

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<sup>1</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

The personal and supportive atmosphere at NZIOS is valued by staff and students alike. It assists with students' transition to a new country and reduces barriers to learning as it makes students more comfortable about asking questions and interacting with other students in their class.

NZIOS enrolls students from 26 different countries; this diversity allows students to learn about other cultures, including different ways of conducting business in other cultures. The use of case studies from a New Zealand context is appreciated as many students hope to stay and work in New Zealand at the completion of their study. Some students, and members of the local advisory board who were interviewed by the evaluation team, noted that with the internationalisation of business management across the world, some case studies from outside of New Zealand would contribute well to student learning.

NZIOS has a clear focus on student achievement, and staff and students interviewed at this evaluation expressed a high level of confidence in the courses and qualifications being completed. Student feedback during the evaluation visit was positive about the benefits of studying at NZIOS. Those graduates interviewed provided details of their positive learning experiences at NZIOS and confirmed that the papers studied, the professionalism gained, and the growth in personal confidence and attitude prepared them for success in their further learning or employment.

Employers interviewed at this evaluation noted that students on work experience, and graduates who have gained employment, demonstrate a good level of ability with the appropriate skills to complete their work requirements.

### 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**.

NZIOS has well-established formal and informal systems to monitor how well it is meeting the needs of stakeholders. The combination of formal and informal processes is a strength, and data gathered has been used insightfully to bring about meaningful ongoing improvements. For example, the results and suggestions from surveys and conversations with enrolling students and graduates motivated NZIOS to increase the number of NZDipBus papers offered from 18 to 25 in 2011.

Students are surveyed at the middle and the end of courses. These surveys are reviewed and analysed in detail and show a high level of satisfaction with the courses and the way the tutors engage with the students. Interviews with students and tutors confirmed this analysis, with a high level of respect being shown by each group for the other.

Graduates are surveyed as they exit from the school and again after three months and then again after one year, each time using a phone call interview method to ensure good capture of information and high levels of survey data. The results from the surveys show that graduates are progressing to further study and gaining work.

International students' needs, and the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students, are well met through information provided on the organisation's website, in student handbooks, and on noticeboards and through a comprehensive pastoral care network within the organisation.

A diploma advisory group provides input to the management team on course content and learning. One area where the group has had an impact is in using real-life examples for their learning, such as structured visits to the high court and various courtrooms to add a "real-life" flavour to the law paper.

From feedback and analysis from marketing staff, NZIOS noted that some students had stronger writing skills than listening and speaking skills, therefore NZIOS is consciously mixing the nationalities in the classes to nurture their strengths and provide for their weaknesses.

#### 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 **Good**.

The achievement results for the NZDipBus papers show that students are passing with satisfactory scores when aligned with the national average. 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, average attendance is 90 per cent. The tutors employed by NZIOS have a teaching background and significant relevant qualifications to teach business and English language.

The management team reviews students' progress and feedback and uses teaching observations to monitor tutors' effectiveness. Any identified 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, with the growth in full-time tutors, NZIOS has established a system to support each other's teaching practices to assist with the students' learning.

Interviews with staff and students confirm that there is a good level of one-to-one reporting to students following the completion of assessments, with NZDipBus students commenting in particular on the usefulness of the markers' comments. There was reasonable evidence of a good level of engagement between teachers and students to facilitate learning.

The business tutors are academically very well qualified, and back-up support seems to be available for most papers. The tutors use a combination of teaching methods to meet the students' needs and to nurture their strengths to enable them to merge into a New Zealand learning style.

NZIOS has well-established monitoring and tracking of tutor performance and student achievement, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. Student surveys are undertaken regularly, and with new tutors after two weeks' teaching. Student attendance and progress are monitored weekly by the tutors.

In recent years, national external moderation through NZQA has identified modifications required for assessment material and several prescriptions to bring them to the national standard. Plagiarism has also been an issue. Since the last EER in 2010, the organisation has been developing and applying its processes for the ongoing improvement of assessment and moderation and for identifying and eliminating plagiarism. There have been some positive results, although further initiatives are to be implemented to review moderation templates to assist internal moderation practices and prevent plagiarism.

Internal moderation for the NZDipBus is determined to some extent by a set moderation template, and the evaluation team suggests that this could be modified to ensure consistency with prescription outcomes. Staff completing the moderation process are reluctant to disagree with the assessment decisions of markers and often make no comment, which negates the worthwhile purpose and outcome of moderation.

There are appropriate tutor appraisal processes in place, including six-monthly reviews and meetings with management to discuss performance, and these are well linked to ongoing professional development. Opportunities for professional development include a close involvement in specialist areas such as law and information technology and formal ongoing education as appropriate.

## 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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**.

The existing facilities are of a high standard; the recent acquisition of another floor in the building, together with the planned enhancements noted earlier, should result in a high-quality learning environment.

Pastoral care is a key focus for NZIOS and all staff demonstrate this embedded approach. All international students have access to a support coordinator who speaks their first language and supports them from the time they enquire about the programme until they leave. Support staff interviewed were able to describe their and each other's different roles and functions clearly. A practical benefit of this is that staff help each other when they are under pressure or absent. Good academic

and pastoral guidance and support results in high levels of student satisfaction with their time spent at NZIOS. NZIOS's marketing and support provisions include student support staff from five different countries.

NZIOS has recognised the positive correlation between student attendance and achievement and has developed processes to monitor student attendance. A daily record of student attendance is maintained, and an examination of student files indicated that absences are being followed up. Students who are not in attendance and have not made contact are followed up by the support team staff. This has led to a noticeable increase in attendance rates and retention in all courses, with an overall retention rate for 2011 of 90 per cent.

The organisation has clear complaints and appeals processes, and while complaints have been laid internally and externally with NZQA, these have been resolved satisfactorily.

A full-time position of student counsellor is held for the pastoral care of the international students, and there is a phone/mobile number that students can call at any time if they require help or assistance. In addition to her role in caring for the students, the support counsellor ensures that all staff are aware of their obligations under the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students. The under-18-year-old international students are closely monitored and supported by this staff member, and all paperwork was found to be in place with the annual Code of Practice review having been completed.

Class sizes were noted as being large in some cases, and this was explained as being due to the closure of other providers and the enrolment of students from those providers. The increase in student numbers has been handled and resourced well, with a parallel increase in staff and floor space and the upgrading of facilities and services including meeting rooms, study rooms, and a new library area.

## 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**.

NZIOS has grown significantly in the last year, with 287 students in 2010 and 460 in 2011 (400 of those enrolled on the NZDipBus). NZIOS has managed the increase in rapid growth by employing additional full-time teaching and specialist support staff, upgrading resources, extending office and teaching space, and supporting staff with regular funded professional development opportunities in order to strengthen the quality of teaching and assessment. With the increase in student numbers, NZIOS has invested in new classrooms and more qualified staff along

with a learning centre with group meeting rooms. A library with textbooks is yet to be assembled.

The NZIOS management team provides both governance and management roles and, although the director is involved at a distance, communications flow well between the sole director/owner, the senior management team, teaching staff, and support staff. Management has developed and maintained effective working relationships with all staff.

The primary aim for NZIOS is to provide education to international students to use as a stepping stone towards either higher education or work and residency in New Zealand. The management team is currently exploring other relationships, both within New Zealand and overseas, for the pathway of students both into and from NZIOS. Stated aims are to increase numbers and broaden areas of study, although these have not been addressed fully as yet as the organisation has concentrated on improving learning facilities for the students.

The evaluation team noted that NZIOS has effectively managed a time of rapid growth by employing additional staff, upgrading resources, and supporting staff with regular training, professional development opportunities, and information sharing.

The management team meets every two weeks and ensures that the staff and students are well resourced in regard to educational facilities and teaching resources, and that there is appropriate planning in place for the upgrading and renewal of resources.

During the 2010 EER it was noted that for 2011 a library was to be provided for students to provide services for both language and business course students with a range of story books, novels, and business-related books. The new library was being set up during this 2011 EER and some textbooks and various periodicals arrived and included story books to ensure language learners' needs are catered for. A proportion of the books were brand new and others that were previously used were in excellent condition. A list indicating the range of books ordered was provided to the evaluators. Additional computers, listening equipment to help with language learning, and group meeting facilities have also been provided for the learners.

Class sizes can be big, with up to 45 students as a result of taking students from providers that have ceased operation, and this was a concern noted by the NZDipBus monitors. Staff felt they were supported well when class sizes suddenly expanded. The intention is to limit class sizes by dividing the larger classes into two.

Management focuses primarily on monitoring processes and identifying issues. Significant movement has been made towards improving self-assessment. However, following up with appropriate actions and noting actual improvements are in the early stages of implementation.

## 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: 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 **Good**.

### 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 **Good**.

# Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review, other than those expressed or implied within the report.

# Appendix

## Regulatory 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 non-university TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses 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 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](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

*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/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eeer/introduction/>*

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