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External Evaluation and Review Report

New Zealand Institute of Studies

Date of report: 28 November 2019

About New Zealand Institute of Studies

New Zealand Institute of Studies (NZIOS) delivers English language programmes to international students. NZIOS is in transition after a major review of its purpose and direction and cessation of its business and university preparation programmes.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 12, 155 Queen St, Auckland CBD
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	International: 41 full-time students ¹
Number of staff:	Six full-time and three part-time
TEO profile:	See: NZQA - NZ Institute of Studies NZIOS has undergone substantial changes recently. Following NZQA monitoring and moderation of programmes in 2017 and 2018, and NZQA interventions and NZIOS management decisions, delivery of business and university preparation programmes has ceased.
Last EER outcome:	NZIOS's previous EER outcome in May 2018 was Not Yet Confident in educational performance and Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The current EER looked at the following focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Level 4)• English Language Development for ESOL Students (Level 5)²• International Students: Support and Wellbeing

¹ Students originate predominantly from China.

² The components of this programme currently delivered are General English (Levels 1, 2 and 3).

MoE number: 7820
NZQA reference: C36322
Dates of EER visit: 24 and 25 September 2019

Summary of Results

NZIOS is delivering good value to students in its current offering of English language programmes. However, if the organisation wishes to initiate new programmes, especially in business, it will need to further strengthen its management and delivery of programmes.

Confident in educational performance

- The organisation has a clear strategy and purpose. NZIOS has responded positively to the changes in strategy and operation they were required to address over the past year. Significant programme management and assessment problems identified in NZIOS's programmes by NZQA during 2017 and 2018 have led NZIOS to cease delivery of several programmes. Currently, the PTE delivers a portfolio of English language programmes from which they have, of late, had high programme and qualification completions, along with good student satisfaction with their outcomes.
- Activities are suitably resourced, and important compliance accountabilities are now being effectively managed.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Many of the contributing processes that underpin the improved performance at NZIOS are new and yet to be tested over time. Capability in programme management and delivery will need to be further strengthened if NZIOS decides to initiate new programmes.
- English language students at NZIOS are achieving or exceeding their academic and personal goals. Students are highly engaged in their learning and are experiencing a strongly supportive and caring learning environment.
- Programmes are taught by experienced, qualified staff who use their experience to ensure the education delivery is relevant and engaging.
- Much of NZIOS's self-assessment activity has been strengthened since the last EER but is still being fully

embedded in the organisation. The challenge for NZIOS will be to ensure that the good work of late continues as the organisation grows.

Key evaluation question findings³

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZIOS students have achieved strong results. New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) completion rates have consistently been above 80 per cent over the past year. The retention rate of students is good (refer Appendix 1). Achievement is verified by NZIOS's own internal and external moderation processes which ensure that assessment is valid and reliable.⁴</p> <p>Assessment of NZCEL is conducted regularly and assessment tools are well designed. Development of more comprehensive and reliable indicators of achievement and progression in General English programmes would enable teachers to better target educational support to their students. Record-keeping is thorough, although systems to enable effective analysis of student achievement are still emerging.</p> <p>Staff across the organisation demonstrate a good understanding of the factors that lead to student success. They meet daily to discuss student progress. The whole organisation has a strong emphasis on student achievement. Many of the contributing processes underpinning the high level of achievement are new and evolving and yet to be tested over time. Any gaps and weaknesses at this stage are being managed effectively.</p>
Conclusion:	Students are retained in study and show strong progress in learning and using English language.

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 At the time of this EER, NZIOS had not undergone NZQA moderation of NZCEL – this is scheduled for mid-2020.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English language students clearly benefit from their time at NZIOS. Most students enrolling in NZCEL do so as a pathway to higher-level tertiary study and are ultimately achieving this. Over 80 per cent of graduates have moved on to university degree study. Feedback from graduates confirms that they have been well prepared for higher-level study.</p> <p>NZIOS has designed and implemented a thorough and detailed graduate survey, conducted six months after graduation. The findings from the survey, combined with exit surveys at the end of the programmes, have been analysed and used insightfully to bring about improvements to programme delivery. The graduate survey processes are still new but are expected over time to continue to provide valuable feedback to NZIOS.</p> <p>General English students enrol for a wide variety of reasons and for variable periods of time. Exit surveys indicate that General English students are highly satisfied with their programmes and their experience at NZIOS.</p>
Conclusion:	Graduate feedback confirms that English language students at NZIOS are gaining good value from their study by achieving or exceeding their academic and personal goals and are well prepared for higher-level study.

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>NZIOS's programme design and delivery are meeting the needs of students and stakeholders by providing programmes that are relevant to the students and their aspirations for further study.</p> <p>Support staff and teachers identify the individual needs of their students and, where possible, structure their teaching to align with those aspirations. The current small scale enables NZIOS to meet needs well, but will need to be more systematic as the organisation grows.</p> <p>There was evidence of the teachers regularly engaging in meaningful discussion about teaching practice and student progress. Teaching staff spoke about how they share ideas, experiences and knowledge through their daily interactions, regular peer reviews of teaching, and at staff meetings.</p> <p>Assessments are fit for purpose and the regular and ongoing post-moderation discussion leads to ongoing improvements in assessment practice.</p> <p>NZIOS has a robust system for programme review, two rotations of which have occurred since the last EER. The process draws on evidence from a variety of quarters and has strength in the way it accommodates a range of voices in the process.</p> <p>Teachers have high-level qualifications and are supported with their professional development which is targeted to individual staff needs as identified in performance reviews against the background organisational strategy.</p>
Conclusion:	There is a good match between the design and delivery of programmes and the needs of students.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students at NZIOS receive active, integrated and ongoing support from staff at all levels of the organisation. Intending students are tested and well guided into programmes appropriate to their aspirations and capabilities. Students are provided with a comprehensive orientation programme.</p> <p>Teachers described numerous activities and initiatives to motivate, engage and encourage students to get the full benefit from their time at NZIOS. Current small class sizes ensure that teachers can give students individual attention as required.</p> <p>Comprehensive student support services are well integrated with teaching and used effectively by students. The organisation regularly monitors the use of student support services and analyses the results to identify areas of teaching or pastoral support for improvement. Attendance expectations are effectively communicated to the students and are monitored closely with timely and appropriate follow-up as required. Good student retention and qualification completions of late confirm that these pastoral processes are effective.</p> <p>The evaluators also found evidence that plagiarism controls are in use, focussed predominantly on ensuring that teaching staff know their students and identify when work presented is not representative of the students' abilities. Plagiarism control software supplements this process.</p> <p>The organisation has effective processes to review how well it meets the spirit and intent of the Code of Practice.⁵ This, and other evidence sighted, provides assurance that international students are well supported.</p>
Conclusion:	Regular and ongoing communication between staff, teachers, management and students ensures that students are well supported academically and personally.

⁵ Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>There has been significant challenge for NZIOS's governance and management as they seek to improve systems, reposition the organisation, and achieve a sustainable business model while lifting and maintaining the quality of delivery. NZIOS has addressed and complied with the requirements, recommendations and themes covered in the last EER. The PTE has good administration and management systems and procedures in place, although many of these processes are new.</p> <p>There is a clear, long-term vision for the organisation, which is well understood and put into practice at all levels. Staff are valued by management, as illustrated by their inclusion in developing the new direction and culture of the PTE. An open-door policy and clear communications have created a pleasant environment and atmosphere within the organisation.</p> <p>Teaching and learning are well resourced with well-trained staff, appropriate teaching materials and good facilities. NZIOS has good physical resources available to students which are well maintained and replaced through a planned approach.</p> <p>Reflective practice is established and in the process of being embedded in the organisation. Ongoing collation and analysis of organisational-level data will strengthen self-assessment by enabling the identification of trends and patterns in performance.</p>
Conclusion:	NZIOS management and governance have a clear vision and understanding of their new business direction and are committed to providing effective support for educational achievement.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Compliance is overseen by the principal and management team. Code of Practice obligations, programme approvals and immigration requirements are being met.</p> <p>NZQA attestations and returns have been submitted within required timeframes. The programmes at NZIOS are being delivered consistent with NZQA approvals. All students complete a weekly plan of the self-directed component of their study. A discussion and sign-off with their teacher at the end of each week ensures compliance.</p> <p>International student agents are trained and well monitored, and their performance is regularly reviewed. All agents are New Zealand-based.</p> <p>The PTE has undertaken the yearly self-review of the Code of Practice using the NZQA template, and has made the required attestation to NZQA within the required timeframe. There was evidence of actions taken to improve procedures. Staff have attended Code of Practice training workshops.</p> <p>A random sample of student files was checked during this EER. Necessary documents were in the files in a well-organised and easily accessible format.</p>
Conclusion:	While NZQA had identified concerns with NZIOS's compliance management over the past two years, the sampling undertaken in the course of this EER indicated that core compliance processes are now being managed more effectively.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Level 4)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: English Language Development for ESOL Students (Level 5)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.3 Focus area: International Students: Wellbeing and Support

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The goals for international students are well understood. The students are well supported by management, teachers and international student office staff to achieve their goals. Staff clearly understand their responsibility for the progress and welfare of the international students.</p> <p>Students interviewed described the range of pastoral care services and interventions, confirming how they have been supported.</p> <p>NZIOS leadership is effective in managing areas of compliance, including Code of Practice obligations and immigration requirements. NZIOS has completed a detailed self-review of its compliance with the Code of Practice using the NZQA template.</p>
Conclusion:	International students are well supported to achieve their goals, both academic and personal, and for studying and living in New Zealand.

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 New Zealand Institute of Studies:

- Continue to develop the collection of data for self-assessment and build organisation-wide capability in analysing this data.
- Add structures such as a compliance calendar and bring-up system, to enable proactive compliance monitoring processes.

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. NZIOS New Zealand Certificate in English Language achievement data

	Students enrolled	Completed programme	Achieved NZCEL	Achievement %
2018 (Sem II)	29	26	24	83%
2019 (Sem I)	27	24	22	81%

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 fraud⁶*
- *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.*

⁶ 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