



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

New Zealand Institute of Studies
Limited

Date of report: 28 January 2025

About New Zealand Institute of Studies Limited

New Zealand Institute of Studies (NZIOS) provides English language and bridging programmes that support international students to pathway into further study at a range of tertiary education organisations across New Zealand

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 12, 155 Queen Street, Auckland
Eligible to enrol international students:	Yes
Number of students:	International: 51 students as at 30 August 2024 73 students, 34.13 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) in 2023
Number of staff:	Six full-time and four part-time staff (eight full-time equivalents)
TEO profile:	New Zealand Institute of Studies (provider page on NZQA website) NZIOS offers programmes to onshore and offshore students, predominantly from China. These students have planned pathways to tertiary study at degree and postgraduate levels. A small number of courses support high school students to gain required credits for entry to tertiary study.
Last EER outcome:	In 2019, NZQA was Confident in the PTE's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	Focus area 1: New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 4) ID:115891-3; Qualification 1883-2 Focus area 2: New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 5) ID: 125881-2; Qualification 1884-2

Focus area 3: International students: support and wellbeing

MoE number: 7820

NZQA reference: C54395

Dates of EER visit: 27 and 28 August 2024

Summary of results

NZIOS has maintained delivery following significant impact from border closures and continued low student numbers. This has been achieved through strong leadership and careful management of the PTE. Most students are achieving qualifications, with many going on to further study. NZIOS integrates offshore students into hybrid learning classes effectively while maintaining academic standards and integrity.

Confident in educational performance	<p>Most students who remain in study to the end of their programme achieve qualifications and gain useful skills that enable many to progress to further study in New Zealand.</p> <p>The teaching team is well qualified and focused on supporting students to succeed with their learning. NZIOS is managing its offshore delivery well and is meeting the needs of students for more cost-effective study. Students achieve qualifications and confirm their entry to destination programmes at other providers prior to leaving their home countries.</p>
Confident in capability in self-assessment	<p>Student support is appropriate for the 16-week courses, provided by staff who maintain a strong focus on student success.</p> <p>NZIOS uses information technology well to support learning in the hybrid classes, with online and face-to-face students learning together. Suitable technological controls are in place to ensure assessment is validated for online-offshore students.</p> <p>NZIOS has made significant efforts to improve its self-assessment since the last EER. The PTE is still developing its use of data to demonstrate a clear understanding of overall performance and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Strong leadership and careful management of the PTE supports educational achievement and effective compliance processes.</p>

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Most students achieve well. Qualification completion rates during the EER period (2020-24) ranged from 73 to 84 per cent for the New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) (Academic) (Level 4); and 93 per cent or higher for the NZCEL (Level 5) programme. Detailed achievement data is included in Table 1, Appendix 1.</p> <p>NZIOS also measures the acquisition of the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening through students' self-rating² of their confidence. NZIOS captures information about the students' English language skills at entry and in an exit survey to reveal the students' own perception of their language skill improvement. Initial average self-ratings range from 2.8-3.2 across all cohorts (2021-23). There is significant improvement shown in the exit survey, with a ratings range of 4.2-5.</p> <p>Across the EER period, 81 per cent of students were retained to the end of the level 4 programme, and 96 per cent in the level 5 programme. The reasons for student withdrawals are understood, with a frequent reason being changed study plans, meaning the student no longer needs the qualification to meet entry requirements.</p> <p>NZIOS tracks, monitors and discusses achievement at weekly meetings, at the end of each block, and again as part of the annual programme review.</p> <p>The PTE has comprehensive data and monitors student achievement at an individual and cohort level. Data about withdrawal reasons, module completions, unit standard achievement and progress from level 4 to level 5 is collected and reported annually. Further analysis across</p>

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

² Ratings are from 1-5, with 1 being low and 5 being high.

	years would help NZIOS to identify trends and provide deeper insights into student achievement.
Conclusion:	Most students who remain to the end of the programme successfully complete their qualifications. Students report significant gains in all four language skills. NZIOS has comprehensive achievement data and is using this to track and understand student progress. More analysis of achievement and withdrawal data could provide deeper insights into trends to inform areas for improvement.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZCEL qualifications provide valued outcomes for the students and the New Zealand tertiary sector. They enable students to meet language entry requirements for New Zealand degrees or postgraduate programmes.</p> <p>NZIOS students have clear goals, with many already holding conditional offers from a tertiary provider when they enrol at NZIOS. Between 85 and 96 per cent of students identified further study as their reason for joining NZIOS programmes during the period 2021-23.</p> <p>The graduate destination survey shows that, on average, just under 50 per cent of the 2021-23 graduates were admitted to tertiary-level courses at a New Zealand provider. In 2023, NZIOS contacted graduates by phone and social media messaging. This provided data for 21 out of 24 graduates of NZCEL (level 4) and 18 graduates out of 26 for level 5. Nineteen level 4 graduates were in further study; 17 of the level 5 graduates who responded were studying higher-level programmes with another provider.</p> <p>Graduates generally agree that NZIOS prepares them well for study. A next user survey was implemented in 2020 to gather information three months after graduation about how well graduates met qualification graduate outcomes. While graduates were rated 4.5 or higher for all graduate outcomes in both level 4 and 5 programmes, response</p>

	<p>rates have been low, meaning the information has limited utility.</p> <p>NZIOS programmes help students to understand the New Zealand education context and provide them with improved English language skills. Students and graduates acknowledged the value of their programmes and their improved confidence in using English in their daily lives and as tertiary students.</p> <p>There is some evidence to show the value of outcomes for graduates and stakeholders in the New Zealand tertiary sector. Further follow-up of graduates, along with analysis of information to supplement the survey data would be useful. Information gained from personal feedback to tutors via WeChat, and graduate visits to campus would provide a stronger picture of the value of outcomes for graduates, their families and New Zealand tertiary providers.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Graduates gain English skills and enter further study. Existing sources of information could be used to strengthen self-assessment and more effectively demonstrate valued outcomes.</p>

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>English language programmes provide NZIOS students with suitable and credible pathways into further study, and meet their learning needs. Offshore delivery is popular with students who want the option to complete English language programmes in their home countries prior to beginning tertiary study in New Zealand. Students express high levels of satisfaction³ with their overall experience.</p> <p>NZIOS has close working relationships with Auckland University of Technology and is working to establish more</p>

³ All average ratings for: online learning, student services, learning needs met and overall satisfaction with NZIOS were 4 or above (on a scale of [low]1-5[high]) for the period 2021-23. Most average ratings per cohort were 4.5 or higher.

	<p>formalised agreements for graduate pathways into their programmes of study.</p> <p>NZIOS uses appropriate technology to create engaging learning environments for classes that include onshore and offshore students. Tutors communicate learning expectations and share feedback across a range of channels. Student information and learning resources are shared online in the student hub, providing students with continued access to relevant resources.</p> <p>Lesson plans ensure consistency of teaching across different tutors, while observation of teaching supports tutors to share good practice and identify areas for development.</p> <p>Placement tests to assess students' reading, writing, listening and speaking skills at entry are followed by regular formative assessment and practice tests that prepare students for summative assessment.</p> <p>NZIOS has made positive changes to assessment tools, assessor practice and moderation processes since the previous EER to address issues identified by NZQA monitoring. Appropriate assessment and moderation processes are in place.⁴ Robust processes and guidelines, including online invigilation, ensure the integrity of assessment.</p> <p>Programme review provides some insights but could be strengthened to include deeper analysis of all information relevant to programme performance. A focus on tracking improvements over the life of a programme would help NZIOS to understand the impact of changes and ensure continuous improvement.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Programmes meet student expectations to develop their English language skills and confidence and prepare them to gain entry to tertiary study in New Zealand. Sound teaching and learning practices and effective use of technology underpin effective hybrid learning delivery. Self-assessment could be strengthened to provide evidence of effectiveness and to guide ongoing improvement.</p>

⁴ Monitoring activity completed by NZQA for NZCEL Level 4 in May 2023 found significant improvement in assessment and moderation practices.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZIOS is supporting the students well, from pre-entry interviews through to ongoing relationships with graduates once they complete their study. Entry interviews and surveys gather information about the students' skills, goals and intentions which guide the tutors in their teaching and support of students.</p> <p>Thorough orientation sessions presented by the principal and head of student services highlight relevant information for students who are adjusting to life and study in New Zealand. NZIOS is currently a small school, and the leadership team interacts directly with the students and enables them to communicate directly with the principal or other managers if they have any concerns. Native Chinese-speaking tutors can support students in their own language when challenging situations arise.</p> <p>Small hybrid classes that combine teaching for online and face-to-face students enable supportive learning environments. The tutors focus on student success, and learning activities in the hybrid learning environment are well managed. Group work and discussion create interactive student learning communities that enable students to establish effective and ongoing relationships with tutors and peers.</p> <p>The tutors monitor student progress in class and through their assessment results, and review them at the end of each teaching block. Feedback to students supports their skills development, while ongoing risk-based monitoring identifies where intervention may be needed.</p> <p>The PTE's self-review of the Code of Practice⁵ describes how NZIOS is meeting Code outcomes, and notes that there have been no complaints or critical incidents. A</p>

⁵ The Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice
<https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/tertiary/the-code/>

	<p>detailed action plan is regularly monitored and reviewed annually. It would be useful to incorporate broader involvement from staff and students into the self-review process, and to include information about the impact of improvements as part of the action plans to strengthen understanding of how well NZIOS is meeting student needs.</p> <p>NZIOS collects a broad range of data that could provide insights into how well it is meeting teaching, learning and support needs. At the time of the EER enquiry, there was limited analysis and use of this information to gain insights into challenges or areas of strength. There are opportunities to further enhance self-assessment to better understand the effectiveness of student support.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Student support is appropriate for the 16-week language courses, provided by academic and management staff who maintain a strong focus on student success. Clear processes support students' learning and wellbeing in small hybrid classes. NZIOS could strengthen self-assessment to better understand areas of strength and opportunities for improvement of student support activities.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZIOS is well supported by competent, longstanding leadership in operational and academic matters. The managing director has been leading NZIOS for 15 years, and the PTE is currently focused on the sustainable delivery of high-quality tertiary pathway programmes. Academic leadership is effective, supported by useful and timely information, with regular meetings and clear communication in person and online.</p> <p>Covid and associated border closures have had a serious and ongoing negative impact on NZIOS. Changes have enabled NZIOS to enrol students in offshore-online programmes. This hybrid delivery to both face-to-face and online students is supported by significant investment in</p>

	<p>technology resources to enhance operations and the learning environment.</p> <p>Staff undertake multiple roles to ensure sustainability while the PTE rebuilds student numbers following closed borders and the ongoing impact of Covid on students' ability to travel for study.</p> <p>Staff feel valued and are well supported to use their strengths in a small, agile team, where most tutors also have additional organisational roles. These include Code and compliance administration, and teaching and learning support. Some staff have undertaken professional development in assessment and moderation, and the principal is supported by a mentor and external advice from members of a local advisory group.</p> <p>NZIOS has improved the collection of data for self-assessment and now has some relevant data sets. At the time of the EER, some analysis of this data was available. Analysis could be strengthened to develop further insights about achievement, graduate destinations and how well NZIOS meets student needs.</p> <p>It would be useful to review how data is gathered and analysed, with a focus on using information that helps NZIOS to understand what matters most in the PTE's context. This review could be used to enhance operations and educational performance, and to identify areas for improvement. Actions for improvement could also be monitored in an organisational improvement plan to support reflection and review over time.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>NZIOS is a well-led, lean operation that is meeting the most important needs of students and stakeholders. Resources include sophisticated technological hardware and software support for quality education delivery and effective operations. Data analysis is still developing to support effective self-assessment and to understand opportunities for improvement in educational performance.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZIOS has focused on compliance since the previous EER and has implemented improved structures for compliance management. A compliance calendar ensures timely responses to meet required tasks. Responsibility for compliance is now shared by the compliance administrator and the principal. Information and processes are managed effectively within software systems to support overall compliance management and provide quality assurance of academic processes.</p> <p>Policies and processes have been reviewed and are largely fit for purpose. Staff are aware of compliance requirements relevant to their roles, and information and systems are available to support them to meet these requirements.</p> <p>Staff demonstrated clear understanding of the processes used to ensure programme hours are met and attendance is monitored and checked daily. All NZCEL programmes have the same structure at NZIOS, with four modules, each of four weeks' duration. This simplifies management of compliance relating to student record-keeping, attendance and adherence to programme approval requirements.</p> <p>A check of student files and the student management system shows that NZIOS has effective systems and processes to manage all aspects of student records and digital management of associated documents.</p> <p>A clear process is in place to manage agent agreements well, and to check that they are meeting expectations. An example was given of an agent who was removed because NZIOS was not happy with their performance.</p> <p>Assessment and moderation practices have improved significantly following NZQA monitoring. Training has been provided for teaching staff involved in assessment, assessment design and moderation. NZIOS plans to continue providing relevant training for existing and new staff.</p>

Conclusion:	Compliance is a key focus for all staff of the PTE and is being effectively managed, with no concerns relating to compliance management identified during the EER.
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Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area 1: New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 4) ID:115891-3; Qualification 1883-2

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area 2: New Zealand Certificate in English Language (Academic) (Level 5) ID: 125881-2; Qualification 1884-2

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.3 Focus area 3: International students: support and wellbeing

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

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 Limited:

- Consider developing internal capability to use and analyse data and information effectively to enhance organisational understanding of:
 - how achievement and withdrawal data could be used to inform areas for improvement
 - how existing sources of information could be used to strengthen self-assessment of valued outcomes
 - ways to better understand areas of strength and opportunities for student support.

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. Achievement data (provided by NZIOS)

Year	Programme	Total enrolment number	Course completion		Qualification completion		Withdrawal		Termination	
2020	NZCEL L3									
2021										
2022		5	4	80%	2	40%	1	20%	0	0%
2023		9	6	67%	5	56%	2	22%	1	11%
Total		14	10	71%	7	50%	3	21%	1	7%
2020	NZCEL L4	73	67	92%	61	84%	5	7%	1	1%
2021		56	48	86%	41	73%	6	11%	2	4%
2022		24	20	83%	20	83%	3	13%	1	4%
2023		32	26	81%	24	75%	4	13%	2	6%
Total		185	161	87%	146	79%	18	10%	6	3%
2020	NZCEL L5	14	14	100%	14	100%	0	0%	0	0%
2021		37	36	97%	36	97%	1	3%	0	0%
2022		15	15	100%	14	93%	0	0%	0	0%
2023		28	27	96%	26	93%	1	4%	0	0%
Total		94	92	98%	90	96%	2	2%	0	0%

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 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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 excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials 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 2022. 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/>.

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