



Report of External Evaluation and Review

New Zealand Institute of Education
2007 Limited trading as New Zealand
Institute of Education

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 18 January 2011

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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:	Takapuna and Botany Downs, Auckland
Type:	Private training organisation
First registered:	2007
Number of students:	Domestic: 77 equivalent full-time students International: 43 equivalent full-time students; 37 aged over 18 years, five aged between 14 and 17, and one aged between 11 and 13 years.
Number of staff:	15 full-time equivalent teachers and ten administration staff
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in General English (Intermediate) (Level 3)• Certificate in General English (Upper Intermediate) (Level 3)• Certificate in General English (Advanced) (Level 4)• National Certificate in Business Administration and Computing (Level 3)• National Certificate in Business Administration (Level 4)• New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 6) with the NZIM Diploma in Management (Level 5) nested within
Sites:	Two as above
Distinctive characteristics:	The New Zealand Institute of Education (NZIE) offers programmes that are primarily focused on business administration and computing, business management,

general English, and preparation for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examinations.

Recent significant changes: NZIE was purchased by the current owners in November 2007. The Takapuna site has been occupied since the beginning of 2009. This site was totally refurbished prior to this move. A new principal with overall responsibilities for the two sites was appointed in June 2010.

Previous quality assurance history: The most recent quality assurance visit to NZIE by NZQA was an audit in 2008, and the organisation met all but two requirements at the time. The two requirements not met related to personnel documents.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

This external evaluation and review included the following mandatory focus areas:

- Governance, management and strategy
- Student support including international students.

The following programmes were included as focus areas:

- New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 6)

This qualification was chosen because it is the highest-level programme offered, and is of high interest to international students.

- General English

This was chosen because NZIE enrolls a significant number of both international students and domestic students (new migrants).

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/>

This external evaluation and review included two NZQA lead evaluators, and was conducted over three days on site, primarily at Takapuna, and one half-day at the Botany Downs site. The evaluation team interviewed management, teaching staff, three groups of students, and reviewed a sample of the organisation's documentation to confirm and validate the evidence discussed with the personnel above. Stakeholder input was received

from NZQA's Tertiary Assessment and Moderation unit and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), including comparative performance data from the TEC website.

New Zealand Institute of Education 2007 Limited, trading as New Zealand Institute of Education, has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and submissions received have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

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

Students at NZIE achieve very well. In 2009, 76 per cent of students at NZIE achieved the qualification for which they were studying, and 91 per cent of students completed the courses they enrolled in. These figures compare very well with the overall private training establishment subsector averages of 71 per cent and 74 per cent respectively. While the current year statistics are not yet finalised, the organisation notes that students are on track to achieve at similar levels. Students interviewed said they are learning relevant skills and knowledge and gaining confidence to apply this knowledge in the workplace. The organisation provides extra support for students to develop skills such as writing their curricula vitae.

NZIE provides an excellent physical learning environment, which is well resourced with up-to-date computer hardware and software, reference material, and teaching resources such as data projectors. The organisation has recruited and retained appropriately qualified staff, both in regards to technical qualifications and adult teaching qualifications. The evaluation team observed a very positive and active learning environment and a high level of engagement between students and staff. Both staff and students interviewed expressed a high level of respect for each other.

Valid and reliable assessment tools and assessment methods are used, and these are regularly checked for consistency, reliability, and fitness for purpose. NZIE has taken appropriate action to rectify identified weaknesses.

NZIE has a proactive approach to business improvement. A contracted business mentor company meets with management regularly to set and review three-monthly educational and business goals. The organisation has a very clear focus and ethical approach to high student achievements. This fact was also apparent to the evaluation team during staff interviews, where staff expressed their high regard for the organisation as well as their high expectations for student achievement.

NZIE has recently committed to updating its student management system in order to improve its ability to track and monitor student achievements. This is a major financial commitment, and management expects that the new product will add significant value to the organisation's ability to monitor and report on its educational performance.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

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

NZIE has adopted a model for organisational self-assessment and has substantially put this into practice. There is currently some evidence of ongoing improvements occurring, but the organisation has not yet fully developed the self-assessment process in order to review its effectiveness and improvements resulting from its quality initiatives in all areas.

The organisation is in the process of establishing benchmark data in order to measure its performance internally over time, such as against successive student cohorts and against external measures with another PTE under common ownership, as well as against a polytechnic.

NZIE has facilitated a local advisory group to provide local industry input to its programmes. While this has provided a connection with industry, management considers that improvements are needed and has recently appointed a dedicated staff member to liaise with local employers in order to lift the organisation's profile in the community, and also to have a more direct process for external input to the programmes offered. This is a new initiative and the effectiveness of this approach is not yet known.

The organisation's planning and monitoring processes focus primarily on identifying issues and implementing appropriate actions. While this is a planned and well-structured process, the organisation is primarily focused on implementation at this stage and is yet to fully develop its processes to track the effectiveness of these initiatives over time.

TEO response

The TEO has accepted the factual accuracy of this report.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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 **Excellent**.

Students at NZIE achieve very well, with the average qualification completion rate for 2009 being 76 per cent. The two programmes at the top and the bottom of the range each had very few students, with five in one and eight in the other. The balance of programmes achieved qualification completion rates ranging between 79 and 93 per cent, with this group representing the vast majority of students. This is a very commendable achievement for NZIE, and compares very well with the mean achievement for all government-funded private training establishments (PTEs) of 71 per cent. Against other measures, such as course completions, NZIE has achieved well, with 91 per cent completion rates compared with 74 per cent across all PTEs. While the data for 2010 is not yet complete, management confirms that students are on track to complete at similar rates. Staff and students interviewed at this evaluation expressed a high level of confidence in qualifications being completed this year.

NZIE tracks and monitors students' achievements accurately and effectively within its student management system and supporting manual processes. Management receives status reports through the programme and team leaders on a weekly basis, detailing student progress, course achievements, and any other issues arising. This is a new initiative designed to track student achievement more closely and to improve the organisation's monitoring of educational performance. The extent to which this is bringing about improvements is not yet known. The appointment of programme team leaders is similarly a recent initiative to improve student placements and improve communications to management.

The evaluation team noted that the organisation has a clear focus on student achievement as a primary organisational goal, and programmes are very well resourced, including recently refurbished classrooms, computer hardware and software, and teaching resources. Programmes include the integration of personal development in areas such as timekeeping and self-esteem, to develop work-readiness skills. Staff interviewed discussed setting clear expectations of high achievement rates with their students.

The organisation is in the process of establishing benchmark data in order to measure its performance internally over time, such as against successive student cohorts and against external measures such as with another PTE under common ownership, as well as against a polytechnic.

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

NZIE seeks to improve its systems for measuring student progress. The organisation has recently reviewed the effectiveness of its self-assessment processes and identified that the student management system will not meet future requirements adequately. A new student management system has been chosen and is to be implemented in early 2011. Management expects that the new system should significantly improve the organisation's ability to extract meaningful data and for reports on educational performance.

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 **Excellent**.

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

NZIE offers programmes of study which have been quality assured by NZQA, including national qualifications such as the National Certificate in Business Administration and Computing (Level 3), the National Certificate in Business Administration (Level 4), and the New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 6). Three NZQA-approved English language courses are also offered at intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced levels.

Students gaining employment is a valuable outcome for NZIE. Staff are aware of local employer comments regarding students needing to build work-readiness skills such as self-confidence and interpersonal communications, and NZIE has integrated these within the programmes offered. These skills and the increased likelihood of employment contribute to the economic and social well-being of the students and the community.

NZIE has a reasonable level of confidence that its programmes prepare students for success in employment. Staff interviewed at this evaluation discussed several recent graduates who now hold management positions locally, and others who had gone on to study at Massey University. A graduate survey has been conducted by NZIE to establish how well programmes are valued and how well programmes have enabled students to gain employment or access to higher study. The results of this survey have not produced as complete a picture as the organisation would like. However, the combination of this survey, informal feedback through the organisation's Facebook page, and ongoing informal contact by past students has contributed to a reasonable level of knowledge of student outcomes. Staff and students interviewed noted the growth in students' confidence to apply the skills and knowledge gained at NZIE in their communities and future workplaces.

The evaluation team noted that a number of English language students return for further study, indicating that they have confidence in the programmes offered and have gained value from them.

Achievement of the New Zealand Diploma in Business contributes to immigration points for international students seeking to gain residency in New Zealand. This diploma also has nested within it the NZIM (New Zealand Institute of Management) Diploma in Management (Level 5) as an early exit qualification. Many international students see value in this qualification because they can achieve it within one academic year.

English language students seeking to sit International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examinations have in the past achieved very good results, such as average scores of between 5.5 and 8.0. While no comparative data was available, these scores match those commonly required for entry to many tertiary courses.

The organisation's self-assessment in this area is developing. Surveys have been well planned and conducted and are resulting in a good level of knowledge of student outcomes. However, there are some gaps in the process. The evaluation team considers that the organisation's plans are likely to produce ongoing improvements.

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**.

NZIE has developed its programmes with a high level of attention to the needs of local industry, the current employment environment, and students' study and personal needs. This was confirmed at this evaluation through high course completion rates, high qualification completion rates, and student and staff comments.

NZIE has a well-established local advisory committee with representation from local employers and NZIE staff with good connections to local industry. However, management is currently considering how to better match employers' needs and requirements and how to better prepare students for gaining employment locally. As already noted, a new staff member has been recently appointed with specific responsibilities to liaise with local employers to ensure programmes meet the needs of employers and include relevant and current business skills and knowledge. This appointment is likely to achieve these goals, but it is as yet too early to see results.

Staff with good connections to, and experience with, local industry have been employed, and topical case studies involving current business issues and situations are included within the diploma programmes. This ensures that students' theoretical background knowledge is well grounded and applied to real and current business situations.

Student admission to diploma-level programmes is set as requiring an IELTS average score of 5.5. This is applied consistently and is noted as a contributing factor to students' success. When students apply with lower than 5.5 average scores, they are referred to the general English programme to raise their English language levels in order to improve the likelihood of academic success at the diploma level. This is a very sound strategy and is consistent with the organisation's focus on student achievements.

NZIE has a current investment plan with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and is in the process of negotiating its plan for the next three years to meet the Tertiary Education Strategy priorities.

Students entering the English language courses undertake an online Oxford placement test to assess the appropriate level class to enter. This test is supplemented by staff interviews,

and students' placement in class is confirmed after a week's placement to ensure they are in the appropriate level. This process has been successful and has resulted in few students being moved from their initial placement to a higher or lower-level class.

As in other areas, the organisation's self-assessment has been more focused on processes and planning than the review of effectiveness. However, there is a reasonable level of anecdotal and informal knowledge and awareness of how well students and other stakeholders' needs are being met.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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 **Excellent**.

NZIE has appointed very well qualified teaching and administrative staff with appropriate academic and teaching qualifications and experience for the programmes offered. Staff performance is reviewed annually through teaching observations by the principal, and staff carry out a self-review which includes identifying areas for improvement and professional development. These processes are working well and resulting in students achieving well. Staff and students interviewed commented on the high level of engagement between teachers and students. The evaluation team noted the high level of mutual respect in evidence between students and teachers, along with well-documented high attendance rates.

Professional development for staff is arranged individually with a mixture of formal and informal arrangements in place. This appears to be working well, with some staff completing tertiary qualifications and others engaging with professional associations and attending local courses and in-house development as these become available.

The high achievement rates and course completion rates noted in section 1.1 above provide evidence of the effectiveness of teaching. Teaching staff have access to well-resourced rooms with current computer hardware and software, teaching texts, and other appropriate learning support material. NZIE management provides a high-quality and stimulating learning environment.

Assessment tools and processes are well matched to the learning objectives, and are appropriately checked and monitored for their fitness for purpose and consistency of marking. Where issues have been identified, appropriate actions have been taken to rectify these in a timely manner. Engagement with the standard-setting body is appropriate and ongoing and is resulting in meaningful improvements to assessment practice and processes.

NZIE is exploring moving to a blended learning model involving the use of online study material and reference material to supplement face-to-face study, but not to replace face-to-face study at this stage. The organisation is taking a considered and careful approach to moving in this direction. The new student management system being implemented early in 2011 will have the capability to facilitate this.

The organisation's ability to self-review its effectiveness in this area is strong and resulting in meaningful and ongoing improvements.

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 **Excellent**.

NZIE has well-established and structured processes to ensure it is compliant with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students, and students and staff interviewed at this evaluation commented on the high level of support and care provided by teachers, administration staff, and management. Students have three staff members' phone numbers for round-the-clock emergency contact. International students have access to first-language-speaking counsellors in the local community and within the organisation's staff.

Students commented that information provided prior to and at the time of enrolling, including a student handbook, met their needs and matched well with the reality when they arrived on site; "there were no surprises". All students receive a two-day induction when they arrive at NZIE, and this includes familiarisation with the institute as well as the local geography and services provided in the local community, which is appreciated and valued by students.

NZIE uses a "mirror survey" to monitor students' well-being, but staff also noted that students typically talk to staff if they need support or have any problems. The mirror survey is designed to gather students' comment about their own general well-being. NZIE offers a friendly, family orientated study environment, with small classes. Students said they liked being at NZIE and usually telephone or text staff if they are going to be late or cannot attend.

All homestay providers undergo a police check every two years to ensure students' safety, and staff visit and survey students at homestays after the first five days to ensure they have settled in well and there are no problems. Students interviewed said that most international students over 18 years of age arrange their own accommodation after an initial time at a homestay. Younger students are accommodated in homestays or live with their parents. These arrangements are very well planned and monitored and no issues were noted.

NZIE has a clear complaints process which is readily available to students; however, no complaints or issues have arisen under the current ownership.

The organisation's self-assessment processes are particularly strong in this area, and include well-documented processes and outcomes. There is a strong organisational culture focused on caring for students, and there are informal processes that facilitate support and care for international and domestic students alike.

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

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**.

NZIE has contracted with a business mentor company to provide support to develop the organisation, to build a culture focusing on educational achievement with clear business goals. These goals are revised three-monthly. The organisation has set high targets for itself, such as “to graduate 20,000 students by 2020”, and these arrangements have resulted in a high level of coherence across the organisation and an understanding of how the organisation is planning to meet learners’ and other stakeholders’ needs, and how well it is achieving these. Communication lines are open and transparent and all staff are kept informed of developments and involved in decision-making processes.

NZIE’s owners took over and completely renovated the new site in Takapuna in 2009. This has resulted in a very well appointed and well resourced learning environment. Staff commented positively on this and noted that management is very committed to offering quality education, stating “...this is a great place to work; I feel supported and valued here”.

Management has adopted a model for its approach to evaluating the effectiveness of its quality assurance and is in the process of implementing this model. At the time of this evaluation, the focus was largely on developing and implementing steps for improvement, with less well-developed processes to monitor the effectiveness of these improvements over time. However, there is a reasonable level of awareness and knowledge of what is working and where improvements are occurring. The evaluation team considers that the steps that management is taking to implement the current plans are highly likely to be successful and should lead to further meaningful improvements over time.

Recent changes and improvements have included extending and combining semester timetables to improve students’ opportunities for achievement, appointing programme team leaders, and introducing new progress reporting to management. Staff and management commented that some of these changes have been implemented following the appointment of a new principal, and appear to be contributing to improvements to student achievements and completions.

Management is aware of the benefits that may result from establishing benchmarks against which to judge the organisation’s performance and is progressing this work.

The owners of NZIE have committed funds to a new student management system and expect this to contribute significantly to improving the organisation’s effectiveness in tracking and reporting on student achievement, as well as facilitating students’ access to online learning materials.

Overall, the organisation’s capability in self-assessment is a work in progress. The owners and management have well-considered plans in place which are being implemented, and early indications are that these are likely to be highly effective in monitoring how well the organisation meets students’ and other stakeholders’ needs and should result in meaningful improvements. However, the evaluation team also noted that the organisation already has

reasonably well-established processes for monitoring the achievement of organisational goals.

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 **Excellent**.

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

2.2 Focus area: Student support including international students

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

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

2.3 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Business (Level 6)

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

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

2.4 Focus area: General English

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

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 implied or expressed within the report.

Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this 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 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).

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-eer/introduction/>

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