

Report of External Evaluation and Review

St John's Theological College

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 18 February 2016

Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	3
Introduction	3
1. TEO in context.....	3
2. Scope of external evaluation and review	5
3. Conduct of external evaluation and review.....	5
Summary of Results	7
Findings	9
Recommendations	17
Appendix	18

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Final Report

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

Name of TEO:	St John's Theological College
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	22 January 2009
Location:	202-210 St Johns Road, Meadowbank, Auckland
Delivery sites:	In addition to the Meadowbank site, there are temporary delivery sites in Wellington, Gisborne and Taupo.
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diploma in Anglican Studies (Level 5)• Diploma in Anglican Studies (Advanced) (Level 6)• Diploma in Anglican Studies (Applied) (Level 6)
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 45 equivalent full-time students International: 12 equivalent full-time students (11 students are scholarship students enrolled in degree programmes at other institutes but who may also enrol in diploma papers for interest).

	Pakeha	Māori	Pasifika
Resident (full-time)	10	4	1
Regions (part-time)	67	11	0

Number of staff:	14 full-time; four part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	See courses currently delivered above
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>St John's Theological College is an Anglican theological college which has been delivering training for church ministry for over 150 years. The constitution of the Anglican Church enables self-determination through Tikanga Māori, Tikanga Pakeha and Tikanga Polynesia. An agreed curriculum of theological and ministerial education builds on a shared Anglican Christian identity and respects differences within Tikanga. Students are either full-time residential at the St Johns Road campus or attend part-time through three to four-weekend wānanga each semester in the regions.</p>
Recent significant changes:	<p>At the previous external evaluation and review (EER), a change in governance had begun in response to a review reported to the General Synod, Te Hinota Whanui of the Anglican Church. Outcomes of the review included the dissolution of the College Board of Oversight and the disestablishment of the three Tikanga colleges including the College of the Southern Cross, Te Rau Kahikatea and the College of the Diocese of Polynesia to be replaced by one college with provision for all three tikanga (Tikanga Pakeha, Tikanga Māori and Tikanga Polynesia).</p> <p>In 2013, the Manukura (principal) was appointed, who in the interim has been the conduit between governance and staff. In 2014, Te Kotahitanga (the college governors) appointed Te Kaunihera (management team), including Te Manukura (principal), to be the management reference group for St John's College with some governance functions such as policy development. Te Kaunihera has signed off its strategic plan for 2015-2019. These changes have taken time to action and resolve as the General Synod only meets every two years.</p>
Previous quality assurance history:	St John's College was most recently evaluated by NZQA in October 2011, when NZQA was confident in both the educational performance and capability

in self-assessment of the college.

There is no national standard-setting body for the qualifications that St John's College offers, therefore the college has set up its own moderation processes, internally and externally moderating every course. The college has made appropriate and timely changes to correct any matters identified.

Other:

St John's College Trust Board funds all education and training at the college. Residential students attend the college on full scholarship covering tuition and living expenses, and students in the regions enrol in fee-free, part-time programmes. Non-residential students must be endorsed by their bishop, ministry educator, or local priest in their diocese or Hui Amorangi (church region) as part of the enrolment process. Regional students may come from the seven Tikanga Pakeha dioceses or the five Hui Amorangi. At this stage students are enrolled in the following regions: the Dioceses of Wellington, Waipapu, Waikato/Taranaki and the Hui Amorangi o Te Tairawhiti.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Prior to the EER, discussions were held between the director of administration and the NZQA lead evaluator. The programme focus area selected was the Diploma in Anglican Studies (Level 5). This focus area delivers to the majority of students. Students are either full-time residential students at the Auckland campus or part-time students out in the regions.

Governance, management and strategy was also included in the EER scope as a mandatory focus area in accordance with NZQA policy for all tertiary education organisations. This focus area provides an overview of the strategic and operational levels of the organisation.

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 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.

A team of two evaluators visited the organisation's delivery site in Auckland over two full days.

The evaluation team interviewed two bishops representing governance (Te Kotahitanga), the management team (Te Kaunihera) including the principal (Te Manukura), the dean of Anglican Studies, the director of administration, the three deans (Tikanga Pakeha, Polynesia and Māori), and a selection of lecturers, stakeholders, graduates and students.

In addition to the self-assessment summary submitted prior to the visit, a wide range of the organisation's records and documents were also reviewed. These included achievement data, Board of Studies minutes, annual programme reviews, moderation records, assignment tracking reports, Tikanga dean reports, and the five-year programme audit for the diploma.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **St John's Theological College**.

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **St John's Theological College**.

The following reasons contribute to this confidence:

- The college provides theological education in the traditions of the Anglican Church and has a special focus on the formation of candidates for ordination as a priest. The diploma is in its fifth year of delivery, and course completion achievement has averaged 75 per cent except for last year, when it dipped to 60 per cent. However, the college is aware of the reasons for this variance and is addressing them.
- Graduates are achieving valued outcomes. Ninety-two per cent of graduates are either employed or in further study. Of the 45 per cent who gained employment, 38 per cent are employed in the sector, which speaks positively to the relevance of the training to the Christian ministry. In addition, graduates return to their church communities as lay readers, church leaders and ordained priests.
- Well-qualified, experienced staff, small cohorts of students and strong academic and pastoral care help students to succeed in their studies. Ongoing professional development has helped teaching staff strengthen their reflective practice to help students succeed. Students were actively engaged in the learning and there was clear evidence of positive, respectful relations between students and staff, contributing to an effective learning environment.
- Students and graduates attest positively to their learning experiences at the college and their increased confidence and personal growth. In addition, they reflected on their growth in spiritual formation towards their goal of ordination.
- The college provided well-evidenced self-assessment activity, including formal and informal feedback with actions to improve processes and information, robust internal and external moderation, quarterly Board of Studies reviews, annual programme reviews, and a five-year external programme audit. However, some areas to strengthen include more detailed achievement analysis of regions to inform ongoing programme improvements and planning; formalising graduate feedback and broadening feedback mechanisms further by including employers; quicker resolution of

the enrolment issues with regions; resolving the issue of Māori content; and clearer timelines to close identified actions.

- The governance and management structure of the college has been under review for some time. At this evaluation, it is possibly too early to see the full effects of recent significant changes to governance and organisational restructure, including the formation of Te Kaunihera in 2014 to oversee the joining of the three colleges under one governance and management body for the three Tikanga strands.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

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

St John's College collates comprehensive student achievement data, and this is used for reporting to its senior leadership team, faculty meetings and the Board of Studies. The data is generally used to gauge progress and to identify where students are not achieving and require additional support. This is providing relevant information for management to monitor learner achievement and organisational performance. However, now that delivery has been extended to training in the regions, and as these numbers are growing quickly, there is room for using this rich set of data for more detailed analysis. Analysis could compare relative performance across delivery sites, student cohorts, part-time and full-time course achievement, by lecturers and by tikanga in order to also maximise learnings from high performance.

The diploma is in its fifth year of delivery, with course and qualification completions ranging from 60 to 75 per cent. The college had averaged 75 per cent completions until 2014 (dropping to 60 per cent). It is fully aware of the reasons for the variance and has taken steps to address them. The number of delivery sites has increased as have enrolments in the regions which has affected achievement. However, the key reason was an anomaly in the enrolment process. Achievement has been calculated, including those students who are enrolling on courses for interest only with no intention of taking assessments, or who are taking specific courses only with no intention of completing the qualification. This has seriously affected achievement statistics. Auckland staff are working urgently with regional staff to clarify student intent and the consequences of incorrect enrolment information, and they expect improved achievement for 2015 and improved accuracy for new enrolments for 2016.

The first graduates from training in the regions (part-time students) are expected this year and will boost overall qualification completions, currently averaging 75 per cent. The college has not benchmarked its educational performance against similar private training providers, although it can access publicly available performance data. It has set itself an achievement target of 100 per cent. The analysis of data as previously described might assist the college in setting

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

progressive targets comparable with like providers of ministry training as it works towards attaining its achievement target.

The college would benefit from customising its achievement database to produce easily retrievable data and results to assist teaching staff and management with their achievement analysis. Subsequent progress reports can then be used to inform ongoing planning and improvements.

The educational performance data (see Table 1) shows Māori students have been achieving variably compared with all students. In 2012 there was only one enrolment; however, in 2013 Māori enrolment increased to 10, with a 70 per cent completion rate. Māori enrolments for scholarship places reduced again in 2014, and again this year, causing concern. This is in part due to the lack of paid stipendiary positions for graduates in Hui Amorangi compared with paid stipendiary positions for graduates in the diocese, and may also have been affected by the college's structural changes.

Table 1. St John's educational performance, 2012-2014

	Student numbers	Student numbers	Course completions				
	Resident	Region	Tikanga Pakeha	Tikanga Māori	Tikanga Polynesia	Regions	All students
2012	5	0	94.73%	37.50%*	95.45%	0	75.89%
2013	24	73	73.33%	71,73%	95%	62.60%	75.66%
2014	16	59	76.62%	46.34%	72.22%	48.81%	60.74%

*Only one Māori student enrolled in 2012, and did not complete.

Average course completions over three years, 70.76%.

Regional students are part-time and are expected to complete the qualification over three years. First regional graduates (nine) are expected to complete in 2015.

Students, stakeholders and graduates provided consistent evidence that, in addition to academic gains, students have grown personally and spiritually. Ninety-one per cent of graduates have either gained employment or continued in further study.

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**.

St John's College learners, graduates and stakeholders achieve a range of valued outcomes. Of the 24 graduates to date, nine have been employed in the sector, two employed in other fields, and 11 are in further study. These are very good outcomes. Students and graduates note, however, that the value of the training – in addition to academic achievement – is in their personal and spiritual growth

which they readily share with their peers through reflection. Of particular value is 'the development of a cohort of people who share their personal journeys of orientation, disorientation and reorientation as they are challenged and formed in a community of care and prayer'. The college's self-assessment processes include student evaluations and informal and formal contact with clergy, lecturers and ministry educators. These processes are providing strong indications that students are gaining significant value from the training provided.

Graduates gain knowledge of Anglican theology and practice. Those employed in the sector return to the church community that endorsed their enrolment. This enables the graduates to fulfil their churches' goals by being actively involved in contributing to building the church community as lay readers, church leaders and priests.

Graduates identify value to the family through shared reflective experiences. For some, it has been continuing the family tradition, and for others, returning family members to the church.

For a number of graduates, completion of the diploma continues their learning pathway to tertiary study. At least one university has acknowledged the diploma study as cross-credits towards a degree. St John's College is in a fortunate position as the resident diploma graduates continue their residency while they pursue their degree studies. The college can therefore monitor and assist the progress of the diploma graduates in their ongoing tertiary studies.

Following the five-year programme audit earlier this year, data has been collated to show the destination outcomes of graduates. The college would benefit from surveying graduates, employers and the university liaison team to learn how the training has benefited the learners and whether any improvements could be suggested to support employment or ongoing study. For example, the evaluators heard from graduates interviewed that including a course on business and financial practices could help them manage such practices back in their parishes.

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 **Adequate**.

The programmes and activities delivered by St John's College are kept relevant to the Anglican Church through the ongoing engagement between each Tikanga dean and their respective Ministry Councils and bishops and the Board of Studies.

Following initial delivery of the diploma to residential students only, the Diocese of Wellington in 2013 requested delivery of the diploma part-time in its region. Success led to extended delivery in 2014 to include the regions for the Dioceses of Waiapu,

Final Report

Taranaki and Waikato and Te Hui Amorangi in Te Tairāwhiti. As full residential scholarship numbers are limited at the Auckland campus, this expansion and growth enables the college to increase delivery numbers to match the needs of the church and the regions. Students are encouraged to enrol to meet church community goals of increased lay readers, church leaders and ordained priests.

A range of student needs are being matched. Regional studies enable students to undertake their studies part-time while employed. Residential students tend to be full-time scholarship students who enrol in the diploma as part of a learning pathway that concludes with a degree and/or ordination. Residential students can be on site for up to four years. These student places are limited and cohorts tend to range from 10 to 15 students. Bishop and church communities choose which students will study at the St John's campus (residential) or attend weekend classes in the regions. Tikanga Polynesia students are full-time scholarship students pursuing degree or vocational study and can enrol concurrently in the diploma courses for interest.

In addition to student evaluations following each course, online surveys have been increased to include stakeholders, students, administrators and course coordinators. Feedback was sought on course kaupapa and aims, content and relevance, the learning experience and administration. The online response sample was small and limited the value of responses. Video-conference focus group interviews with students and stakeholders from the regions provided the evaluators with an informed positive critique of programme offerings, administration, teaching, support and areas for improvement to add to the evaluation and survey results.

Following the disestablishment of Te Rau Kahikatea (from the previous governance structure), Māori students report that they have struggled to identify a visible Māori presence at the college. The last EER and subsequent college reviews have noted the need for increased Māori content in the programme. The college responded by increasing the reo Māori component in the programme to 30 credits and explored with the dean Tikanga Māori how content could be increased. The increased Māori content continues to challenge and the dean Tikanga Māori is consulting with a working party to progress this work.

The college identified the need to urgently strengthen its enrolment processes to ensure that students are enrolling correctly. In addition to enrolling in the qualification, a student can enrol for interest only, auditing papers without being assessed, or enrol to receive credit for a course but not enrol in the qualification. These various options have caused confusion for students, and inaccurate or erroneous choices have seriously affected course completions.

There is a clear reflective culture embedded across the college of regularly meeting and considering how well it is performing in matching the needs of students and the church. An area for further development is to move more quickly through consultative processes to close actions. Examples include urgently addressing the previously mentioned enrolment situation as it is also having an impact on overall achievement data, and addressing the concerns of students about Māori visibility at

the Auckland campus and the content of the programme. The college may need to seek external advice for this last matter to address it more speedily.

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**.

St John's College has a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement in learning and teaching. Lecturers are very well qualified and experienced in their field of teaching and are supported by the college to gain adult education qualifications if they do not already have them. Ongoing professional development is well planned and documents reviewed at this evaluation showed the college has a good level of analysis of where or whether value is gained.

The college has robust internal and external moderation processes which give assurance that assessments are fair, valid and consistent. To maintain consistency of assessment, whether this occurs on site or in the regions, all assessment marking is done at the Auckland campus. This activity will also inform the effectiveness of teaching.

Staff meet regularly and review student progress and achievement. This level of self-reflection and review places the college in a strong position to further develop learning and teaching. Each qualification is also reviewed annually and is audited in its fifth year. In addition, Te Manukura appraises all teaching staff informed by student evaluations and classroom observations by the academic dean. Actions taken include specific professional development, and in one instance the termination of a lecturer's contract.

Student evaluations are used to improve practice, as previously noted, with the improved timely return of marked assessments. Actions taken have resulted in consistent feedback within the agreed timelines, which in turn supports students with ongoing assessments and a rigorous assignment tracking system. Some instances were identified of plagiarism and it was unclear how this could be resolved without plagiarism software now that student numbers are growing. The college is working to resolve this. The 2016 student handbook advises students of the inclusion of online software detection as a deterrent to plagiarism. Following external moderation feedback, specialists were contracted to provide in-house training to more closely focus on staff training needs. This mode of professional development worked well and may be extended to include catering for a range of learning styles, approaches to learning such as blended learning, and the use of the current online software (Moodle) as an interactive delivery model.

Evaluations and survey feedback from students endorse the positive comments shared by students in interviews with the evaluators. Students also appreciated the inclusion of guest speakers who bring additional perspective and expertise to the courses.

Final Report

As mentioned, the college is very reflective. However, more timely resolutions would confirm to students and stakeholders that feedback is listened to and actioned.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

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

The college supports its students well. Small cohorts enrolled in the residential programme (10-15 students) enable students to access the support they need from lecturers to meet programme requirements. In addition, a student support coordinator is available for one-to-one tuition for academic work and study skills, and a chaplain is on site to assist with spiritual guidance and support.

The regions provide support from the lecturers, the ministry educators and clergy from the church community. The student support coordinator also provides one-to-one support via telephone or Skype.

Residential students access very generous scholarships which provide housing and living allowances, a book allowance, some travel allowances and tuition fees. The scholarship also allows for free visits to an approved general practitioner. This holistic assistance enables students to concentrate on their studies. Students form communities of study which provide ongoing help as they transition to their degree studies.

Students studying in the regions access fee-free study. Some of the students interviewed had not engaged in any study for up to 50 years and unanimously appreciated the support they received from staff and peers as they re-engaged successfully with tertiary study.

However, the college acknowledged that information dissemination to students (timetables and handbooks) prior to the start date was not consistent or timely. Double-handling and coordinating multiple sources of information appear to affect the timely distribution of information. Early receipt of this information would help students to make informed course choices. This might also be useful in addressing the enrolment issues which have affected course selection and achievement.

Students identified as not achieving develop learning plans with their respective deans. It would be useful to the college to collate the effectiveness of this support to inform ongoing assistance for students.

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**.

The college has been challenged by substantive changes to governance and management. The major change, from three separate colleges (Māori, Pakeha and Polynesia) on site to a single college operating three tikanga has been slower than preferred because actions and changes are ratified at two-yearly synod meetings. However, the management team led by Te Manukura has worked hard to ensure that these changes have not had a negative impact on students' study.

St John's College is responsive to stakeholder feedback, as shown by the establishment of wānanga in the regions, beginning in 2013 in the Wellington region and extending to Te Hui Amorangi o Te Tairāwhiti and the Dioceses of Waiaapu, Waikato and Taranaki. All regions have a current operational memorandum of understanding and teaching staff in place prior to approving delivery. Less consistent has been the timely and accurate provision of information to students.

The Christian Theological and Ministries Education Society (CTMES) group has worked closely with NZQA on the Targeted Review of Qualifications discussions, culminating in the approval of new Christian Ministry qualifications. The college is a member of CTMES and has supported the ongoing involvement of two staff in the discussions with NZQA. These staff were able to table the inclusion of the strand Te Taha Minita Māori in the new qualification. The recent college appointment of a Missions Educator with additional expertise in curriculum development is timely as she can assist with the transition of the current qualification to the new qualification. Inclusion of the strand Te Taha Minita Māori should assist the college to address the Māori content component raised in student feedback.

The college has continued to support full scholarships for residential students and fee-free tuition for regional students. This financial support minimises barriers to learning.

As part of its self-assessment activities, the college carries out five-year programme audits. The audit for the diploma programme in March this year identified the strengths of the programme and identified a number of recommendations for improvement. The recommended actions are still works in progress, but it is clear that when the college successfully integrates these improvements they will have a positive impact on achievement. Therefore, defined timeliness of response and responsibility for action are necessary.

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: Diploma in Anglican Studies (Level 5)

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

NZQA recommends that St John's Theological College:

- Review its processes to ensure actions are clearly closed off. The college has identified the enrolment issues. Confirm responsibility (who, how and when) for checking enrolments until the new system is embedded, including dissemination of information.
- Address the 12 recommendations identified in the five-year audit report with haste so processes can be changed prior to delivery in the New Year. All actions are still in progress.
- Consider seeking external input to address the matter of increased Māori content into the diploma programme. This group can assist the internal working party currently working on this project. The outcome will be two-fold in that it will meet the needs of students in the current programme and can be included in the Te Taha Māori strand of the new qualification expected to be delivered in 2017.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are 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.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which 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.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 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 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 External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

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).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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