



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

Strategi Institute Limited

Date of report: 21 November 2024

About Strategi Institute Limited

Strategi Institute Limited has provided training for the financial and advisory services sector in New Zealand since 2010 as part of the Strategi Group. Current courses are delivered primarily online, with some work-based learning.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Building E, 17 Corinthian Drive, Corinthian Office Park, Albany, Auckland
Eligible to enrol international students:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: as at end of July 2024: 698 students – 314 equivalent full-time students (EFTS); Māori 22, Pasifika 26, learners with a disability six International: nil (2024)
Number of staff:	Full-time nine, part-time two; full-time equivalent staff 10.4
TEO profile:	Strategi Institute Limited - provider profile on NZQA website Strategi Group is an industry leader in the financial and professional services sector. Strategi Group comprises two divisions: Strategi Institute offers training and education, and Strategi Compliance provides licensing under the Financial Markets Conduct Act, AML/CFT audits/training (anti-money laundering), and compliance services to the financial services and other professional services industries.
Last EER outcome:	In 2020 NZQA was Highly Confident in Strategi Institute's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in Financial Services (Residential Property Lending)

(Level 5) – 65 credits leading to Qual 2315-2 [ID: 120537-2]

- Compliance Officer Course (Micro-credential) (5 credits) Ref: 4062-1 [ID: 125280]

MoE number:	7963
NZQA reference:	C58067
Dates of EER enquiry:	24-26 July 2024

Summary of results

Courses are delivered in a range of modes to cater for learners who are primarily employed in financial and professional services. Strong engagement with employers and industry groups provides confidence that the education delivered is of high quality and meets learner and stakeholder needs.

Highly Confident in educational performance

Learners complete courses and gain relevant and up-to-date knowledge that enables them to progress in their careers and meet the legal requirements for giving financial advice in New Zealand.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Strategi Institute engages well with the financial services sector. Industry engagement is supported by Strategi Compliance which provides licensing, audit and compliance services to the financial services industry. The PTE has a comprehensive understanding of sector needs and is highly valued for the contribution it makes.

Strong leadership and effective processes, including rigorous application of academic standards, support educational achievement. The board of Strategi Group is well connected to industry and provides effective governance to support educational performance. Academic leadership is strong, and productive relationships with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and workforce development councils (WDCs) mutually support growth and development.

Comprehensive, evidence-based self-assessment leads to effective changes and improvements to programme design and delivery, student support and contributing processes. Self-assessment uses data effectively to understand educational achievement and organisational performance.

Exemplary reporting frameworks are integrated throughout the organisation.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learners are achieving well, particularly in a context of primarily online or work-based delivery.² All learners in work-based programmes successfully complete their courses. For learners enrolled in programmes leading to New Zealand qualifications, completion rates have been at 85 per cent for the past two years.</p> <p>Processes are in place to monitor and support learners to complete within expected timeframes. Extensions are given where needed for learners who are in full-time work.</p> <p>Learner withdrawals are tracked and followed up. Consequently, the PTE has a clear understanding of the reasons why learners do not complete. Most withdrawals are a result of changes in learners' work contexts.</p> <p>Priority learners, including disabled learners, are identified and their performance is monitored. Māori and Pasifika learners participate at significantly lower rates than other students and have lower completion rates than non-Māori or non-Pasifika students. Strategi Institute recognises the importance of raising participation as well as providing appropriate support for priority learners to be retained and to succeed. The PTE understands the reasons for lower achievement by these priority learner groups, and has implemented initiatives to improve participation, retention and completion.</p> <p>Strategi Institute understands that it has an important role in maintaining industry standards. Rigorous assessment ensures those who are awarded the qualification meet and exceed industry expectations.</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 Data tables are included in Appendix 1.

	Very strong data analysis and reporting is used to understand learner achievement in real time to enable interventions and to provide additional support where needed. Achievement data is also used in systematic review to identify any required improvement to programme resources, delivery and support.
	Learners achieve well. Most learners complete courses and qualifications online while they are in full-time work. Strategi Institute uses data effectively to develop a comprehensive understanding of learner achievement. Strategi Institute also uses data to identify the need for learner support and opportunities for timely improvements.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Staff of Strategi Compliance work with employers to ensure organisations are compliant with legislation, regulation and codes in the financial services sector. This knowledge informs programme design and delivery, so that the skills and knowledge gained by learners are current and relevant. Information gained from these relationships also tells Strategi Institute that their graduates perform very well in their roles and meet or exceed industry expectations.</p> <p>Strategi Institute effectively supports the financial services industry by educating learners who graduate with the skills and knowledge required to become licensed advisors and to maintain professional standards and compliance within their workplaces.</p> <p>Most learners enrolled in qualifications and micro-credentials are employed in related roles (60 per cent), with others intending to move into specific financial roles. Successful completion of programmes increases career opportunities for graduates and improves their work performance.</p> <p>The Strategi Institute work-based programme offers significant benefits for employees, enabling them to learn</p>

	<p>and be assessed on the job, while the employers gain and retain graduates with the skills and knowledge tailored to their policies and processes. Very high success rates of 96 per cent to date are attributed to relevant content, real-world assessments and in-work mentoring.</p> <p>The value of programmes and their outcomes is well understood. Self-assessment is comprehensive and provides clear information on how well graduates perform in industry. Strategi Institute has implemented improvements to increase the volume of graduate destination data received through formal surveys. Opportunities exist to systematically analyse industry feedback currently held within Strategi Group to extend Strategi Institute's understanding of the value of outcomes, specifically for industry.</p>
Conclusion:	Programmes, qualifications and micro-credentials are highly valued by graduates and employers. Learners gain skills and knowledge applicable to their workplaces during and after their programmes. Strategi Institute courses support graduates and employers to maintain regulatory requirements and quality standards in the sector.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Strategi Institute has established relationships in the sector, many resulting from the interconnection with Strategi Compliance. This regular engagement with employers, industry regulators and other groups ensures programme resources and activities align closely with the needs of the sector. Strategi Institute provides effective education and training that comprehensively meets the needs of industry.</p> <p>Different delivery modes enable flexible access that mostly meets learners' preferences and needs. Most learners choose to enrol in the online learning mode which is primarily self-directed, with options for weekly virtual support workshops. While many learners noted a</p>

	<p>preference for the engagement available in face-to-face classrooms, they generally opt for the online option for convenience and price. Strategi Institute has been responsive to emerging learner needs by introducing initiatives like the weekly virtual workshops that provide guidance on assessments. Attendance at the workshops is growing, and learners were positive about their value.</p> <p>Teaching and learning materials are well designed, with effective document controls in place to ensure information is accurate and up to date. Learner feedback attests to the relevance of real-world assessments and clear, well-presented content that is immediately applicable to their workplaces. Many courses offer ongoing access to resources to support learners' professional development after they have completed their study.</p> <p>Strategi Institute's internal and external moderation identifies areas for professional development, feeds into assessment design, and provides convincing evidence that assessment is fair, valid and consistent. The resubmission policy allows three attempts for each assessment. This process is managed well and supports learners to meet specific assessment requirements. Learners indicated that assessor feedback identified gaps in their submissions and supported them to meet the industry-level expectations needed in their final attempt.</p> <p>Programme review processes are comprehensive and effective. In this area, Strategi Institute uses data and feedback to understand how well programmes and micro-credentials are performing and to identify areas for improvement.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Strategi Institute provides a range of delivery modes to meet learner needs. High quality teaching, learning and assessment resources are designed to be relevant to the workplace, and to ensure graduates gain the knowledge to uphold industry standards and expectations in their workplaces.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learner needs are identified as part of the enrolment process. The support services team is accessible to learners and provides a range of useful academic and pastoral support. This team responds to learner needs and provides academic and pastoral care services via phone, email, chat and face-to-face support. This team also enables learners to connect with the academic team and assessors.</p> <p>However, learners noted that at times the support team seemed under pressure and that access to academic staff was somewhat limited. The PTE has responded to this feedback and has established a range of interventions to support learners to succeed, and to provide better access to staff within the online delivery mode. These interventions include options for one-on-one coaching. Learners also noted that facilitators and assessors were available when needed, and that this support via email or teams/Zoom was helpful.</p> <p>Comprehensive pre-course information has been recently revised and clarifies the specifications of each learning mode, outlines expectations, and provides information about relevant policies and processes.</p> <p>Learner feedback is gathered regularly through formal surveys, classroom interactions and facilitator self-assessment reports. This feedback is reported and tracked to analyse trends, understand learner satisfaction with services, make improvements in real time, and inform periodic reviews. Enrolment processes have recently been improved as a direct response to student feedback.</p> <p>The Code³ self-review is comprehensive and has action plans in place with responsibility assigned to relevant staff</p>

³ The Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice

	and committees. Complaints and resolutions are systematically recorded and analysed, with evidence that improvements are implemented and monitored for impact.
Conclusion:	Most learners engage with Strategi Institute as fully online distance students. This primarily self-directed learning mode provides flexibility for work-based learners. Support is suitable and appropriate for this mode of learning, though learners report that access to academic staff was somewhat limited. Learner feedback is systematically analysed and used to make improvements.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Strategi Institute has a clear strategy and purpose, supported by effective governance from the Strategi Group board. The directors are highly capable, well connected to industry, and well informed about all aspects of Strategi Institute performance through a comprehensive reporting framework. Data is effectively used to inform collaborative decision-making.</p> <p>The executive director has substantial experience in the financial services industry and as an educator. The management team has a relevant mix of industry and tertiary education leadership experience. Strategi Institute recruits experienced staff who feel valued and supported within an organisation that has effective leadership, clear communication structures and a range of development opportunities for staff.</p> <p>Academic leadership is strong, with academic governance led by the academic committee which meets monthly to review academic performance, enrolment commitments and other academic matters. Connections and relationships with the TEC and WDCs are being strengthened to support and grow educational performance. WDCs have engaged with Strategi Institute as sector leaders in ongoing involvement in qualification and standards reviews.</p>

	Strategi Institute has demonstrated a responsiveness to changing sector needs, with examples being the shift in delivery modes following Covid. A commitment to provide training to well-educated workers who will maintain professional standards in the financial and other professional services is fundamental to the organisation. It is also evident in initiatives to enhance Māori and Pasifika participation in training.
Conclusion:	Leadership and management are strong and highly effective. These parts of the organisation support Strategi Institute to deliver relevant education and training that provides competent, qualified staff for the financial and professional services sectors.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>A comprehensive compliance obligations register ensures all tasks are completed regularly. Management provides quarterly compliance attestations to the board. Suitable delegations and controls are in place to support the detailed compliance assurance framework that includes relevant legislation and rules including NZQA and TEC obligations. Compliance is a strength, and processes are well understood by staff across the organisation.</p> <p>The Code self-review is an organisation-wide process which has resulted in improvements to enrolment processes, student information and learner support. This was reflected in comments from staff and students, and demonstrated within IT systems and relevant documents.</p> <p>Strategi Institute has recently become a tertiary signatory to the Code in order to provide access to study for potential learners in New Zealand who do not meet domestic student requirements. The application process was used to extend the self-review and to strengthen processes and practices aligned to the Code.</p> <p>The quality management system is comprehensive, regularly reviewed and fit for purpose.</p>

Conclusion:	Strategi Institute has very strong, highly effective processes for managing its important compliance accountabilities. Compliance is well understood within the organisation and is a key focus for all staff.
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Focus areas

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

2.1 0537-2 New Zealand Certificate in Financial Services (Residential Property Lending) (Level 5) – 65 credits leading to Qual 2315-2

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

2.2 Compliance Officer Course (Micro-credential) (5 credits) 4062-1 [ID: 125280]

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

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.

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review.

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. New Zealand Certificate in Financial Services – Core strand

	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total 2021-24
Enrolled	505	368	74	37	984
Finished and completed	392	261	59	8	720
Withdrawn	8	12	7	-	27
Completion %	78%	71%	80%	22%	73%

*2024 results cover seven months from January to July

Table 2. New Zealand Certificate in Financial Services – Residential Property Lending strand

	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total 2021-24
Enrolled	193	149	94	52	488
Finished and completed	137	122	59	13	331
Withdrawn	6	1	5	-	12
Completion %	71%	82%	63%	25%	68%

*2024 results cover seven months from January to July

Table 3. New Zealand Certificate in Financial Services – Residential Property Lending programme

	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total 2021-24
Enrolled	498	432	657	193	1780
Finished and completed	279	278	402	11	970
Withdrawn	8	27	19	2	56
Completion %	56%	64%	61%	6%	54%

*2024 results cover seven months from January to July

Table 4. New Zealand Certificate in Financial Services – Residential Property Lending; total results – RPL strand and RPL programme

	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total 2021-24
Enrolled	691	581	751	245	2268
Finished and completed	416	400	461	24	1301
Withdrawn	14	28	24	2	68
Completion %	60%	69%	61%	10%	57%

*2024 results cover seven months from January to July

Table 5. Compliance Officer course (Micro-credential) (Level 5)

	2021	2022	2023	2024*	Total 2021-24
Enrolled	20	23	15	9	67
Finished and completed	9	15	6	7	37
Withdrawn	-	2	1	-	3
Completion %	45%	65%	40%	78%	55%

*2024 results cover seven months from January to July

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 fraud⁴*
- 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.*

⁴ 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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