

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 23 February 2016

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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

Name of TEO:	Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute (CITTI)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Ngatangia Campus, Avarua, Rarotonga, Cook Islands
Delivery sites:	As above and Arorangi, Cook Islands Trading Company (CITC) and Cook Islands Hospital
First registered:	15 July 2014
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hospitality (City and Guilds)</li><li>• Trades (linked to New Zealand standard setting bodies; Skills Organisation, and the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation)</li><li>• Diploma in Nursing (Local programme)</li><li>• Community Education on Rarotonga and the outer islands (arts and crafts)</li></ul>
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	972 students studying part-time, 172 equivalent full-time students (EFTS)  99 per cent Cook Island Māori, 1 per cent Argentinian and Fijian
Number of staff:	14 full-time and seven part-time staff
Scope of consent to	<a href="http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-">http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-</a>

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assess:

[accreditations.do?providerId=801866001](http://accreditations.do?providerId=801866001)

Distinctive characteristics:

CITTI sits within the Cook Islands Ministry of Education and states its mission and purpose as:

*'We are inspired by our unique status in the Cook Islands and our ability to draw upon the traditional knowledge, culture and language of this nation's deep heritage to inspire the learning of today.'*

CITTI was originally formed in 2013 as a result of two government departments merging, the Department of Natural Human Resources and the Ministry of Education. CITTI is now the national tertiary training institution of the Cook Islands.

CITTI offers a range of courses to meet industry requirements. Some courses include assessment against New Zealand Qualifications Framework unit standards (for example, electrical engineering, building and construction and automotive). Other courses are based on skills and knowledge requirements as determined within the Cook Islands (for example, the Diploma in Nursing, which meets the Nurse Registration requirements of the Cook Islands Nursing Council).

There are a wide range of Community Education courses: Tivaivai making, weaving, baking, cooking, website development, fixing small engines, making new furniture and Māori language. These courses are potentially offered on six outer islands. The courses are designed to support local people to stay on the outer islands.

There are also some longer term courses currently offered on Rarotonga (for example, City and Guilds courses in hospitality). There are also plans to offer City and Guilds media studies in Mangaia, starting in 2016.

There is a long history of education and training in the Cook Islands. This includes the training reviewed in the current evaluation.

Recent significant changes:

Since CITTI registered as a PTE in July 2014, there have been new courses approved, new staff appointed and a growth in student numbers. Employment contracts for staff are generally of a two year duration renewable with conditions, as

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per the Ministry of Education standard contracting process. This has an impact on the education and training offered in the Cook Islands. There are both fresh ideas and energy entering the organisation, as well as discontinuity of personnel, in a cultural environment that depends strongly on relationships.

Previous quality assurance history:

This is the first external evaluation and review of CITTI since it was registered. The previous PTE was also set up within the Cook Islands government, under a different government ministry. The previous PTE was known as the Association of Cook Islands Tertiary Institute, and NZQA carried out an EER for that PTE in 2010. At that time, NZQA was highly confident in the educational performance of the PTE and confident in their capability in self-assessment. However, the Association closed and deregistered with NZQA shortly after that evaluation visit.

City and Guilds and the Skills Organisation have also visited CITTI to review quality assurance and moderation of assessment. Both organisations have identified areas the PTE needs to improve in CITTI is addressing these areas.

BCITO has not yet visited the organisation or conducted external moderation, but has been involved with the PTE through a Memorandum of Understanding (now expired).

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of this evaluation included the mandatory focus area of governance and management, which provides an overview of the strategic and operational levels of the organisation.

The other three focus areas included the three main programme faculties offered on the main island of Rarotonga:

- the Faculty of Hospitality and Services
- the Faculty of Nursing, and
- the Faculty of Trades.

This sample included a review of the formal programmes with the most students.

The Community Education short courses offered on the outer islands were not included in this evaluation. There are smaller numbers of students involved, and the training is informal and not assessed.

This evaluation does not include on-the-job training for meat and retail delivered by the Cook Islands Trading Company.

## 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-eeer/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.*

CITTI submitted a self-assessment summary and other supporting information to NZQA in the weeks leading up to the site visit. This information, along with documents and information drawn from CITTI's website and NZQA's database, was reviewed by the evaluators to prepare for the site visit.

A team of two evaluators and one NZQA senior risk analyst visited the Rarotonga delivery sites over three full days. The risk analyst's role was to review CITTI's compliance with ongoing requirements for registration as a private training establishment. The evaluative and compliance findings both contributed to the ratings and statements of confidence, and the findings are integrated into this report.

Before the site visit, the evaluation team held a teleconference with the CITTI Director and Quality Assurance Manager. They discussed the Cook Island context and what programmes the PTE currently delivered. NZQA checked the PTE's

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understanding of evaluative quality assurance and explored options for the focus areas for this evaluation.

During the site visit, the evaluation team met with:

- governance and management personnel
- two current Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) volunteers
- heads of faculties
- tutors
- students and
- other stakeholders.

The team reviewed a wide range of CITTI's documents and records to confirm and validate the onsite discussions, and also to validate how well the organisation complied with the requirements for ongoing registration.

# Summary of Results

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

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of the **Cook Island Tertiary Training Institute**.

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **the Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute**.

### Background summary

In the Cook Islands, students need to work while they undertake tertiary training. Some students hold several part-time jobs to be able to meet their daily living expenses and study costs. There are no student allowances, except for nursing.

Most of the population<sup>1</sup> live on Rarotonga, but a significant proportion of people live on the outer islands. For most students, travel costs to Rarotonga are a significant barrier.

However, the outer islands are strongly affected by skill shortages. CITTI regularly needs to adjust their programmes to meet the needs of students, adjusting the timing of courses, and changing the range of options: for example, offering full-time day classes for nursing, part-time day classes for hospitality, night classes for trades and apprenticeship style on-job training for meat and retail. Many students are also in and out of employment, and may travel to New Zealand for work. So enrolments remain open, allowing students to dip in and out of training (in some cases over several years) as they are able. One example was a student returning to study after several years of working in New Zealand. CITTI was able to provide appropriate training to support him towards completing a qualification and gaining employment.

The evaluation team considers that these flexible arrangements are working effectively. The flexible arrangements enable students to gain valuable skills, knowledge, attributes and qualifications appropriate to the geographical, cultural and social context of the Cook Islands.

The following factors have contributed to the two judgements above:

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<sup>1</sup> Population: 2015 13,258, reducing approximately by 500 p.a.  
[http://countrymeters.info/en/Cook\\_Islands](http://countrymeters.info/en/Cook_Islands)

The 2011 census showed approximately 20% live in the southern group of outer islands (6) and 6% in the northern group (6). 8.1% of females and 8.2 of males were unemployed, and 11.2% of females and 9.7% on males had a tertiary education qualification.  
<http://www.cookislands.org.uk/2011census#.Vjgfw0bgijk>

- CITTI meets students' and the wider Cook Island community needs for flexible arrangements for vocational education and training.
- CITTI has developed viable training options for the increasing need in the wider community for a skilled and trained workforce. For example, there is currently only one trained and qualified plumber on the island group, and there is a very high shortage of trained nurses on the outer islands. The Faculty of Trades and the Faculty of Nursing are addressing these shortages.
- Programmes are well planned and meet relevant regulatory body requirements. These include the Cook Islands Nursing Council nurse registration requirements, City and Guilds accreditation, and the industry training organisations in New Zealand (Skills Organisation and the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation).
- There was evidence of students' achievements being well monitored.
- A small percentage of students are completing qualifications. (CITTI can confirm some students are completing qualifications but the specific number was unclear at this evaluation).
- There was evidence of students gaining wider life skills and 'soft skills'<sup>2</sup> required for improving their engagement with and contributing to their communities, both in the outer islands and on Rarotonga.
- Tutors have sufficient and appropriate industry experience for the areas they teach in. All the tutors are undertaking training in adult teaching theory and practice, mainly through distance learning with a New Zealand polytechnic.
- The PTE is validating student achievement through the moderation of assessment materials and of assessors' judgements. The organisation is aware of where moderation needs further development, and has appropriate plans to strengthen these processes.
- Pastoral support flows naturally from the staff having close connections in the local and outer island communities. As one staff commented, "We know the students, their aunties and uncles. We know who to contact when they don't come in".
- There was evidence that staff have a deep knowledge of the training needs within the community, and of genuine efforts to work towards matching the local social and cultural realities with the regulatory requirements from New Zealand (NZQA, industry training organisations and City and Guilds). While

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<sup>2</sup> Skills related to gaining and holding employment and engaging in the wider community, e.g. interpersonal, social, critical thinking, literacy and numeracy.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft\\_skills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_skills)

this is an ongoing area for development, CITTI staff have a proven passion for providing pathway programmes pertinent to their Pacific island context.

- CITTI works closely with employers on Rarotonga and the outer islands, receiving regular feedback on skill training requirements and the impact of training in the workplace.
- The organisation surveys students regularly and analyses the responses for patterns and trends. CITTI makes appropriate action plans resulting in improvements, for example to teaching, timing of classes and resources.
- CITTI uses brokers on the outer islands to arrange training there. Currently training is mainly focussed on community education courses to provide a range of skills to support people to stay on their home island and maintain the small populations (some islands as low as 60 people<sup>3</sup>).
- CITTI has developed a strong organisational culture of reflection and ongoing improvement, resulting from a combination of formal meetings and informal feedback and discussions. This approach is appropriate for the size and context of the organisation.
- Staff demonstrated a high level of understanding of why students enrol and want to improve their skills, and where the key skill gaps are in the wider community.
- CITTI is in the process of accessing the New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission Adult Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Tool to further develop their needs assessment of students' learning needs.

This evaluation found that NZQA can have confidence in CITTI. It has developed, and is further developing, self-assessment processes and practices appropriate to the PTE's context. These actions are resulting in staff having a robust knowledge of what is working and what areas need to be changed to better meet government, community and student needs. The educational results achieved in the 15 months since CITTI registered as a PTE are strong, and the value of these results to the individual students and the wider community across the Cook Islands group is very clear.

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<sup>3</sup> While Community Education programmes were not a focus of this evaluation, the co-ordinator was interviewed, and there appears to be a strong demand for these courses, with a good level of enrolments. These Pa Enea courses are non-assessed courses, for community and youth education and general skill development: for example, in traditional crafts, Tapakau weaving Kikau mats, fix my motor, fix my home and a suggestion for a fix my husband course. These are community based and responsive to the unique needs of each island.

# Findings<sup>4</sup>

## 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 **Good**.

Achievement at CITTI must be viewed with the understanding that all students (except the nursing students) have jobs. They are enrolled in work-related courses that occur outside work time, in the evenings or during the day for students working in hospitality (see also Background Summary pg 8).

Students have a range of reasons to study:

- Many wish to gain skills to improve their opportunities at work: the evaluators heard many anecdotes of this scenario, including students being promoted as a result of their study.
- Many students also wish to gain credentials for the skills and knowledge they have gained over many years working in a particular industry. This was also a common theme within this evaluation.
- Many students also enrol to gain a qualification or complete a qualification (the evaluators sighted evidence to confirm this). There was strong anecdotal evidence that students also achieve meaningful growth in 'soft skills'.

The faculty of nursing currently has two cohorts enrolled since the nursing school was re-established in 2014 (it previously closed in 2009). Of the 12 students initially enrolled, eight remain and are now in their second year of study. All eight nursing students anticipate graduating in 2016. The lead tutor considers that this is highly likely given their current performance and achievements. Nursing is different to the other faculties because it offers full-time study. Nursing students receive a government allowance to facilitate this.

Other faculties enrol students who are studying part-time. Programmes which students studying full-time in New Zealand might reasonably complete in one to two years must be extended as appropriate for this part-time study. There was evidence of these students making genuine progress towards completing qualifications, and many students had completed a qualification. (See table 1).

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<sup>4</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

In one specific programme the organisation measured success not by achievement, but by the fact that the vast majority of students, many with a troubled past, stayed engaged in the training and out of trouble, and eventually moved into employment.

Currently each tutor tracks students' progress in their own way, usually using Excel spreadsheets. These records are accurate and up-to-date, and provide a sound basis to monitor how well students are achieving. However, the organisation is close to setting up a sophisticated student management system/database to track all students' achievement in one place. This will provide CITTI with the ability to create a wide range of reports, greatly improving the organisation's ability to monitor and review student achievement. Presently, the current process meets the needs of the organisation at its current size and context.

The organisation monitors attendance closely and sends absent students phone text reminders. However, as noted earlier, the organisation keeps students enrolled long-term whether currently engaged in study or not, while students travel to and from the outer islands and to New Zealand for work. The effect of this is that students can easily return to study, and many anecdotes related to this were discussed at this evaluation, including the benefits to students when one barrier to re-entering study is removed.

Overall, students are making good progress. CITTI acknowledges that it is still in the process of developing its systems to track students' achievements at the individual as well as the programme level. CITTI is currently installing and training staff in the use of a new student management system, and expects this to enable staff to more accurately track and report on student achievement.

**Table 1<sup>5</sup>: Achievement data for the last three years**

Faculty	Total enrolled	Course completion <i>Number and percentage</i>	Qualification completion <i>Number and percentage</i>	Relevant employment post-graduation
<b>Hospitality and Services</b>	41	35 85%	22 54%	21 51%
<b>Trades</b>	92	70 76%	28 30%	19 20%
<b>Nursing</b>	19	19	first graduates in 2016	
<b>Community Education</b>	444	444	Approx. 7 Equivalent Full Time Students (EFTS)	
<b>Customer service<sup>6</sup></b>	542	542	Approx. 5 EFTS	

Table 1 shows CITTI students are achieving well.

## 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**.

The vast majority of students are working and studying in the same industry areas, and this is providing real value in the workplace by:

- providing current knowledge and skills for the industry
- improving safety (for example, working in electrical engineering and carpentry), and
- improving students' career prospects.

Some students spoke of being promoted as a result of their studies.

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<sup>5</sup> This data is as supplied by CITTI, via several spreadsheets. The evaluation team acknowledges the organisation is in the process of developing a single student management system for data recording and analysis.

<sup>6</sup> All short courses, and all students complete as a requirement for the work-based training.

CITTI is the only NZQA-registered tertiary training provider on the island (except for the University of South Pacific). Although the organisation has been registered with NZQA from July 2014, similar courses have been running for many years in various forms. While this evaluation is of the registered PTE, there was clear evidence of the ongoing value of industry training being provided on Rarotonga, and the community training offered on the outer islands over previous years. The added value CITTI provides is the New Zealand Qualifications Framework standards and qualifications that are now available. These standards and qualifications provide recognised credentials for students' skills and knowledge in the Cook Islands, and also in New Zealand. As noted, students also gain a range of underpinning soft skills (see footnote, pg 9).

The Diploma in Nursing meets the requirements for nurse registration with the Cook Islands Nursing Council, and will provide graduates with employment following registration with the Nursing Council. The nursing students are mainly from the outer islands, due to the significant shortage of nurses there. The organisation hopes that on graduation the nurses will return to work in clinics on their home islands, providing much needed services there.

Not all trades are 'registered trades' in the Cook Islands. For those students enrolled on trades faculty courses and students who do not complete a qualification, the skills gained are still highly valuable in gaining or keeping employment in their respective trades (i.e. providing additional knowledge and skills on the job). Conversations with tutors and students showed this, and student evaluations confirmed it.

The organisation has a good level of knowledge of the value of student outcomes. This knowledge comes from student, graduate, and employer evaluations, which are reviewed and analysed by management. While the number of graduate and employer evaluations completed and returned are very small, the staff and management of CITTI have close connections with employers and the wider community (see also findings 1.5). The organisation receives a lot of oral feedback, which is shared across staff and leads to ongoing improvements (for example, changing the sequence of modules to better facilitate students' knowledge acquisition). The informal self-assessment processes are fit for purpose for the current size of the PTE. However, as the active student numbers grow, or further programmes are added, this informal approach may need to change to track and monitor changes for 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**.

The programmes and activities match the needs of students, employers, and the wider community very well. All programmes offered currently are addressing areas of high skill shortages and providing much-needed skilled employees. This is particularly evident in the hospitality industry, as tourism is the main industry in the Cook Islands. The evaluators also heard many anecdotes of students gaining skills and starting their own small businesses. Recording and reviewing these outcomes would strengthen self-assessment in the organisation.

All students (except nursing students, who are on a full-time programme) have individual learning plans developed to identify the learning needs and learning outcomes desired by the students. In this organisation, completing an individual learning plan is considered a course completion, with the long-term aim of completing a full qualification. This system is working well, as students' needs and interests vary quite widely, and individual planning addresses students' needs well.

Nursing is the only programme to enrol cohorts of students who go through a set programme of learning. In this case, the programme meets the Cook Island's Nursing Council, Nurse Registration requirements.

The organisation times and plans courses to meet the training requirements of part-time students (see Background Summary pg 8). This flexibility is critical to matching the needs both of employers and students and is a key factor in keeping students engaged in their learning. However, there are a large number of enrolled students who do not regularly attend, either because they have travelled to outer islands or New Zealand for work opportunities, or find formal classroom-based learning a significant challenge.

To address these attendance challenges, CITTI is developing plans to offer apprenticeship-style training with the learning and assessment carried out on-the-job. While this is not necessarily a novel idea, there are no Cook Islands industry training organisations to arrange apprenticeships. The evaluators consider that this shift from classroom-based learning to on-the-job learning is likely to be successful. The challenge for the organisation will be establishing the frameworks for employers so they have the skills and material to ensure that learning outcomes are met. Another challenge is to have the personnel to carry out the on-job assessments. There are likely to be some block or evening classes to supplement the on-job learning and assessment.

The range of surveys of students and employers provides the main data for the organisation's self-assessment in this area. However, the stronger informal contacts with industry and students' wider family effectively ensures that the

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organisation has a good knowledge of how well its programmes and activities match students' and other stakeholders' needs.

#### 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**.

Teaching is effective as demonstrated by students completing courses and qualifications, and being promoted in their workplaces.

Tutors are well qualified and experienced in their industry sectors and all are engaged in professional development to improve their knowledge and skills in teaching adults (through distance learning programmes with a New Zealand polytechnic). CITTI currently has a VSA volunteer working with them supporting professional development: this is proving highly successful and valuable.

The organisation has well-planned programmes, some of which are developed in conjunction with certifying bodies such as City and Guilds, the Skills Organisation, and BCITO. This ensures that the teaching and learning matches the learning outcomes and standards required. These organisations confirm that, while there are some areas requiring improvement, the PTE is meeting the appropriate standards for the most part.

The organisation has a detailed moderation plan for post-assessment moderation. However, CITTI is aware of some gaps in the pre-assessment moderation processes. This is not unusual when there are only a few people with moderation experience to provide objective moderation judgements. Also in the Cook Islands there are no other training providers to share moderation activities with. However, the organisation is aware of these issues and is developing improved moderation activities to ensure that all assessments are fair, valid and consistent.

Students reported that they felt assessments were fair and they were given clear information about what to expect and the nature and timing of assessments. Some concerns were expressed by CITTI about how long it takes to receive assessment material and students' marks due to paper-based assessment processes and postage times to and from the islands. This is outside of CITTI's control, but they hope the standard setting bodies involved might move to an email or 'cloud'-based process to speed the moderation process up. The organisation hopes the process will be more responsive to students' learning, given that the Cook Islands is relatively remote, and physical postage either way can take some weeks.

Given its location and context, the organisation is reasonably well resourced. Management is purchasing appropriate equipment and updating equipment to meet current industry good practice. Staff and students within the nursing school expressed some concern about the availability of clinical room space being

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dependent on hospital requirements. While this is understandable from the hospital's perspective, it has the potential to impact on students' learning.

The organisation conducts teaching observations to review teaching effectiveness and uses regularly surveys students to gauge students' satisfaction with teaching and resourcing. The student evaluations indicate a high level of student satisfaction. These two processes provide a reasonable level of assurance of the quality of teaching.

While most of the teaching and learning occurs as a continuous process, there are a number of students who learn on a periodic basis depending, for example, on their employment within or outside of the Cook Islands. This discontinuous learning is one of the realities for students in the Cook Islands, but CITTI does not currently review the effectiveness of teaching and learning in these situations.

The evaluators noted the organisation's self-assessment processes identified that there are limited personnel available in the Cook Islands for teaching positions. The default two-year contracts also mean that there is a relatively high turnover of staff, with many expatriate teachers coming to teach for only two years. This makes it challenging to maintain the teaching and learning continuity required for effective learning. However, this is outside CITTI's control.

## 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 **Good**.

Students have appropriate guidance and support from CITTI. Students receive appropriate information through brochures, a student handbook and internet-based information. As noted, tutors have very close connections to communities across the Cook Islands group and there was evidence at this evaluation that staff are able to contact students directly or through their wider family. Tutors often used these networks to support and encourage students to attend or to stay and complete programmes.

Accommodation on Rarotonga is limited. This is an issue for students from the outer islands that has some impact on their learning because students frequently move accommodation while on Rarotonga. However, there are limited options for accommodation due to the very small population in the Cook Islands. CITTI does not have the resources to provide accommodation for students from the outer islands.

There was evidence at this evaluation of a very close rapport formed through one-to-one contact between tutors and students, as well as individual learning plans addressing individual needs. Tutors know their students well and provide personalised support where they can. There is also student peer-to-peer support, particularly strong in the nursing group, where they set up study groups amongst themselves.

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The nursing diploma is well resourced in terms of teaching space and reference material appropriate for full-time nursing training.

CITTI also provides half-day study skills sessions which support students' literacy and numeracy and develop academic writing skills in the early stages of the diploma study.

As noted, the Cook Islands government provides an allowance for nursing students to support them during full-time study.

Student, graduate and employer surveys form the main structured process to review the effectiveness of guidance and support. These mainly show a very high level of satisfaction.

Tutors are effectively tracking students' progress towards course and qualification completion. In this area of support and guidance the same opportunities for improvement exist as in other faculties; with some self-assessment information is undocumented and further documentation may help reflection on what is working well or not. The organisation may find ways to further document the anecdotal information currently held by each tutor. This information could be shared across staff, allow objective analysis and inform ongoing improvements.

## 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 **Good**.

Overall, the governance is appropriate for the organisation's context. CITTI operates within the Cook Islands Ministry of Education, with the director of the organisation reporting to the Secretary of Education. The governance group is the Minister of Education (who is currently the Prime Minister), the Secretary of Education, and the CITTI director. There are strategic and operational planning documents appropriate for the size and context of the organisation. In effect this private training establishment is owned and funded directly from central government, with some finance also being provided through New Zealand aid (,the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade MFAT).

Management within CITTI includes appropriately experienced and skilled personnel both from within the Cook Islands and expatriates. This provides a strong level of local knowledge and understanding of the political realities in the Cook Islands, cultural context, funding restraints, strategic training and skill needs of the Cook Islands group, and the unique situation of students who need to work to be able to pay their living and study costs.

While this organisation has been registered with NZQA for only 15 months, there was evidence that management has been making improvements to the structure of

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programmes, resourcing, as well as exploring options to make programmes more accessible to students. As noted, CITTI is exploring apprenticeship-style training, with delivery and assessment on-the-job, to better meet the needs of students and employers.

The organisation has been working effectively with City and Guilds and two New Zealand industry training organisations to ensure their programmes and assessments meet the standards required by City and Guilds and of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework unit standards.

The organisation's programme planning documents, electronic records, student individual learning plans and records of achievement, meeting minutes and operational and strategic plans clearly indicate a strong and effective focus on student achievement. Internal targets focus on individual students setting individual learning plan targets and achieving these. While this is proving effective in engaging students, there may be value in setting specific achievement targets. These targets could be across a number of factors: for example, enrolments, attendance, and course and qualification achievement rates.

CITTI has also worked with VSA to secure two volunteers. These volunteers work with management to support the development of the organisation's processes and staff. This has proved valuable, for example, in developing quality systems and professional development opportunities.

CITTI is aware of what its strengths and weaknesses are. CITTI is actively working with NZQA, City and Guilds, and the industry training organisations to build its processes and ensure it is providing robust governance, management, and operational integrity resulting in valuable learning outcomes.

At this evaluation NZQA identified areas that require improvement in terms of compliance with NZQA regulations during the visit. These areas include:

- the timeliness of credit reporting
- site approvals
- student fee protection
- quality management system, and
- sub-contracting arrangements.

CITTI is aware of the requirements in these areas and is working to make the necessary changes.

The organisation has a strong focus on providing courses to meet community needs that are less focused on formal qualification achievement than the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The community needs include the longer programmes and short courses (community education and customer service) which are 5-7 hours in total. The community courses attract a high number of participants but equate to approximately 12 equivalent full-time students.

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The value of the community education programme is in providing students on the outer islands with skills that might enable them to work and stay on their home islands. The organisation considers these programmes a significant achievement.

The customer service short courses are more focused on the hospitality and tourism industry. The courses are considered by CITTI to be significant achievements in lifting the quality of customer service in tourism operations, and promoting the Cook Islands as a desirable destination.

CITTI has appropriate minuted meetings at the tutor, management, and governance levels, and has provided examples of the improvements noted in this report. However, there is no formal process to review the effectiveness of governance and management. There is a strong culture of reflection appropriate to the Cook Islands context and size, of face-to-face discussions, and problem-solving. Relationships in the community and church feature highly and have a significant influence within CITTI. Developing a more structured process of internal review and evaluation, appropriate to this context, may provide further strength and rigour to self-assessment.

## 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 **Good**.

The compliance review carried out during this evaluation identified some areas that require changes or improvements. NZQA is working with CITTI to resolve these matters.

### 2.2 Focus area: Faculty of Hospitality and Services

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

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

### 2.3 Focus area: Faculty of Nursing

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

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

### 2.4 Focus area: Faculty of Trades

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 CITTI:

- develop an overall framework for reviewing organisational effectiveness, using the key features of effective self-assessment and the EER key evaluation questions<sup>7</sup>
- explore options for documenting feedback from graduates, employers, and other stakeholders to provide a more objective basis for ongoing improvements, and to ensure organisational knowledge is not lost with staff turnover
- ensure the planned introduction of the student management system/database is timely and well managed, with suitable staff training
- explore options for setting specific student achievement targets, perhaps across a range of factors.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/self-assessment/make-self-assessment-happen/tools-and-resources/self-assessment-for-itos/key-features/>

# 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](http://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/>.*

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E [qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)

*Final.*