



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

# External Evaluation and Review Report

BOP School of Welding Limited

Date of report: 20 February 2024

# About BOP School of Welding Limited

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*BOP School of Welding Limited trading as New Zealand Welding, Trades and Services (NZWTS) is part of the wider Aspire2 Group of private training establishments. NZWTS provides welding and engineering trades programmes in South Auckland and Bay of Plenty.*

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Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	BOP School of Welding Limited, 30 B Ash Road, Wiri, Auckland
Eligible to enrol intl students:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: in 2022, 829 students (401 equivalent full-time students) including 300 Māori (36 per cent), 180 Pasifika (22 per cent), 19 Māori/Pasifika (2 per cent), 136 female and 693 male; 63 students identified with a disability  International: 28 students (14 equivalent full-time students)
Number of staff:	28 staff members, 14 shared services staff members (with Aspire2 Group), and one casual part-time trades assistant
TEO profile:	<a href="#">BOP School of Welding Limited</a>  In 2019, NZWTS and Solomon Group amalgamated governance. In 2022, Treehouse was purchased and added to the governance structure. Shared services include buildings, IT, teaching materials, academic support, staff training and development.
Last EER outcome:	At the last EER in 2019, NZQA was Confident in both NZWTS' educational performance and self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Career Preparation for Engineering Trades (Level 3) and the replacement</li></ul>

programme the Certificate in Welding  
(Level 3) 128145-1 (4605-1)

- Career Preparation for Specialised  
Welding (Level 4) and the replacement  
programme Certificate in Specialised  
Welding (Level 4) (128146-1) (4606-1)
- International Student Support and  
Wellbeing

MoE number: 8270  
NZQA reference: C52688  
Dates of EER visit: 6-8 November 2023

# Summary of results

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*NZWTS' learner achievement has been consistently strong since the last EER. This strong performance is underpinned by well-developed self-assessment practices which provides NZQA with a high degree of confidence that the findings from these practices will continue to guide and inform excellent performance.*

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## **Highly Confident in educational performance**

- Learners' completion rates for courses and qualifications at NZWTS are strong. Internal targets are generally being achieved, and the parity gap for Māori learners is reducing.
- NZWTS' learners are gaining valued technical skills and recognised industry tickets, and are well prepared for employment. Graduates are meeting skilled shortages in the industry.

## **Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment**

- NZWTS designs and delivers its programmes well to match learners' needs and to align with industry's changing requirements. Improvements to assessment design and moderation practices support the validity of assessment results.
- There is strong evidence that learners are effectively supported and engaged in their learning. This stood out to the evaluators as a real area of strength.
- Aspire2 and NZWTS are governing and managing the PTE effectively, supporting strong educational performance and maximising improvement opportunities.
- Strong performance is underpinned by well-developed self-assessment that is informing purposeful interventions and leading to improved learner achievement and graduate outcomes, as well as meeting industry needs.
- NZWTS is effectively managing its important compliance accountabilities. No gaps were identified during this EER.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZWTS' learner achievement target is 80 per cent for both course and qualification completions. This target is well socialised and understood by staff. NZWTS has in place strategies<sup>2</sup> to lift achievement rates, including a focus on early withdrawals and withdrawals during the course. Results from the project are reflected in early withdrawals and in-course withdrawals decreasing from 353 in 2021 to 248 in 2022. Targets have been achieved, or are on a positive trajectory. Importantly, the parity gap for priority learners has consistently reduced.</p> <p>Since the last EER, course completion rates for Māori and Pasifika learners have increased from 70.2 to 76.2, and 74.1 to 81.3 per cent respectively. Over the same period, achievement rates for non-Māori and non-Pasifika learners have generally exceeded the internal target (refer to Appendix 1, Table 1).</p> <p>Qualification completion rates for the programmes in scope for this EER have also been strong (refer to Appendix 1, Table 2). While there remains a small gap in achievement, particularly with Māori learners, NZWTS is strongly committed to removing this, increasing the target to 100 per cent and supporting all learners to achieve success.</p> <p>Improvement in literacy and numeracy capability has been a significant achievement for some learners at NZWTS. Results from the 2022 Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool for 485 learners, showed that 63 learners (21 per cent) progressed a reading step, and 81 learners (28 per cent) displayed a numeracy step gain.</p>

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

<sup>2</sup> NZWTS participated in the Tertiary Education Commission's Learner Success trials, focusing on reducing the number of withdrawals, with the goal of increasing completions and improving parity.

	<p>Learners also gain soft skills, including adaptability, time management, confidence and cultural awareness, as a result of their training. NZWTS understands these skills to be as important as obtaining industry-specific skills when preparing for work.</p> <p>NZWTS has significantly strengthened its review and analysis of learner achievement and trends since the last EER. Investment in personnel and systems, together with focusing on understanding the data and contributing factors, are leading to improved outcomes for learners.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Learners' completion rates for courses and qualifications at NZWTS are strong. Internal targets are generally being achieved, and the parity gap for Māori learners is reducing. Comprehensive self-assessment is informing purposeful interventions and leading to improved achievement.</p>

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learners are gaining valued technical knowledge and skills through their training at NZWTS. These improve their employment opportunities and overall wellbeing. The outcomes are valued by the learners, their families and communities, as well as employers. NZWTS is also contributing to meeting shortages of skilled labour in the engineering and allied trades industries in New Zealand.</p> <p>Graduate outcomes data is captured by NZWTS through feedback from tutors, recruitment and connections with employers. For the level 4 welding programme, between 2019 and 2022, 92 per cent of contactable<sup>3</sup> graduates were in employment or continuing in study. International graduates are also successfully moving into employment.<sup>4</sup> These are excellent outcomes, and the PTE was also able</p>

<sup>3</sup> NZWTS was able to contact 397 of 579 graduates during this period, amounting to 68 per cent of graduates from this programme.

<sup>4</sup> There were 18 international graduates from the level 4 welding programme in 2022. Thirteen were contacted and were in employment in the industry.

	<p>to illustrate<sup>5</sup> that the graduates either meet or exceed national industry salary levels. This is a useful benchmark.</p> <p>NZWTS' outcomes data for the level 3 welding programme highlighted that the graduates recruited into employment from this lower-level programme were likely to receive lower than average salaries, although this salary gap reduced the longer the graduate is employed in the industry. To support learners to continue their learning and enhance their earning opportunities, NZWTS is implementing Pathways to Work and work-based delivery. This shows effective use of internal data, comparing it with external data and designing programmes and delivery approaches to improve value for the learners.</p> <p>NZWTS supports learners to achieve industry welding tickets through the completion of 'test plates'. Based on an analysis of the data, NZWTS demonstrated that in the three-year period 2020-22, 567 learners took part in the test plates, with an 82 per cent pass rate. These tickets are highly valued by employers, and increases the learners' employability and their career pathways.</p> <p>NZWTS is contributing to increasing the number of women working in welding-type positions in New Zealand.<sup>6</sup> NZWTS identified that a significantly lower percentage of women, compared with males, entered employment or continued with further study following graduation. To understand whether a cohort-based approach would have a positive impact on female graduate outcomes, a women (wāhine)-only programme has been introduced this year. The results of this initiative will inform future programmes.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>NZWTS' learners are gaining valued technical skills and recognised industry tickets, and are well prepared for employment. Graduates are meeting skilled shortages in the industry. Highly effective self-assessment is informing new initiatives focused on improving graduate outcomes and meeting industry needs.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Ngā Kete data as of 1 August 2023.

<sup>6</sup> 2018 Infometrics data indicated there were 67 women working in welding positions in New Zealand.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZWTS has responded well to the challenges learners faced over the Covid-19 pandemic period and, more recently, with economic pressures. Programmes have been redesigned to accommodate part-time and in-work training options, offering learners more flexibility and supporting them to continue their learning while they earn. The Tertiary Education Commission has supported this shift through funding for work-based learning and Pathway to Work delivery.</p> <p>NZWTS is well connected with industry and regularly consults with employers to understand their changing needs. Specific programmes and delivery approaches are developed to align with these needs. An example is the new pipe welding course that was in the approval process with NZQA at the time of the EER, designed to develop specialised skills in advanced pressure pipe welding.</p> <p>Tutors use a range of delivery strategies to provide learners with a positive learning experience. Practical skills are developed in the industry-standard workshops, and theory classes provide learners with the underpinning knowledge. Learners reported enjoying their learning, although they prefer the hands-on activities. Their tutors make the classroom work interesting, using a range of strategies such as ice-breakers, quizzes, role plays and simulations and toolbox meetings.</p> <p>Assessments are clear and well structured. NZWTS has effectively used the learnings from NZQA's monitoring and assessment review in 2021 and their own self-assessment to improve the alignment of assessment materials, marking guidelines and learning outcomes. At the same time, NZWTS has strengthened its internal moderation practices and built tutor capabilities. These enhancements are being</p>



	<p>reflected in improving moderation results<sup>7</sup>, and provides NZQA with confidence in the validity of the assessment results.</p> <p>Tutors are well-versed in their context, with experience in construction and allied trades. Their teaching skills are developed through peer and manager support, professional development, and structured self-reflection and observation processes. The 2022 staff survey results showed staff consider that one of the best things about working for NZWTS is 'having multiple opportunities to upskill and/or a chance to learn a new skill relevant to helping learners'.</p>
Conclusion:	Programmes are well designed and delivered to match learners' needs and align with industry's changing requirements. Improvements to assessment design and moderation practices are supporting the validity of assessment results.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Tutors understand their learners well and provide welcoming and culturally safe learning environments. Individual learning plans are used to capture learners' goals and career and qualification aspirations, and monitor progress. Learner feedback from the 2022 programme evaluation survey showed that 98 per cent of learners either agreed or strongly agreed that learning activities and resources allowed them to stay engaged with their learning, and 94 per cent either agreed or strongly agreed that their general wellbeing had improved.</p> <p>Learners attested to feeling cared for, and their culture is valued. International students attested to being well supported from the time they arrived at NZWTS and throughout their learning journey. These highly positive</p>

<sup>7</sup> Internal moderation agreement rates have lifted from 59 per cent in 2020 to 75 per cent in 2022. External moderation agreement rates have lifted from 39 per cent in 2019-20 to 90 per cent in 2021-22.

	<p>results and feedback indicate that NZWTS is effectively catering for and meeting all learners’ learning and wellbeing needs while they are studying.</p> <p>All staff are responsible for providing pastoral care and support. Strong networks with local referral agencies support a wrap-around approach. Findings of the Learner Success project indicated that learners with more complex needs and circumstances required tailored responses in addition to those provided by staff.</p> <p>Based on this, NZWTS has introduced specialised staffing<sup>8</sup> to bolster support to those learners with higher needs. Response to needs such as financial hardship support, homelessness, mental health and emotional trauma have been provided and support learners to continue with their programmes.</p> <p>NZWTS completed a comprehensive review of their practices against the Education Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Students (the Code) in 2023. All the outcomes were rated as ‘well implemented’ and an action plan was developed for processes and practices that could be further developed. This indicates that NZWTS is continually seeking opportunities to further enhance their learner support systems.</p> <p>The PTE is currently seeking accreditation of the Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark. This is a clear demonstration of their commitment to supporting learners with disabilities, in particular those with dyslexia.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>NZWTS sees its learners holistically and is committed to meeting their social, cultural, physical and emotional needs. There is strong evidence that learners are effectively supported and engaged in their learning. This stood out to the evaluators as a real area of strength.</p>

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<sup>8</sup> Specialist staff – learner support champions are trained social workers.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZWTS is part of the wider Aspire2 Group and is supported by strong governance, financial and administrative services. There is a clear line of sight from governance through to the organisation, with open and regular communication between the group and NZWTS chief executive.</p> <p>Governance and management’s insightful understanding of the organisation’s performance, learner achievement and drive for continuous improvement was well evidenced in the online discussions during the EER.</p> <p>Aspire2’s five strategic pillars are embedded in NZWTS’ plans, strategies<sup>9</sup> and operational functions, and align well with the PTE’s kaupapa. Progress against strategies and action plans are well monitored and reported.</p> <p>Staff contributions and views are valued, acknowledged and responded to. Regular newsletters, town hall meetings and virtual sessions for more informal communications and occasions ensure staff are well informed and their achievements celebrated. The 2021 staff survey results showed that 93 per cent of staff agreed or strongly agreed that they were proud to work for the organisation.</p> <p>Staff skills are kept up to date through a range of professional development opportunities, provided internally and accessed from external providers. The chief executive delivers an emerging leaders programme to staff across the group. The programme includes mentoring and support, a project to focus on, and the opportunity to complete a frontline management qualification. This</p>

<sup>9</sup> Plans and strategies include a Strategic Plan (revised in 2023), Tūhonotanga (Māori Strategy), Pasifika Strategy, Education Strategy, Learner Success Action Plan, Pastoral Care Code Action Plan, Disability Plan (in development at the time of the EER).

	<p>programme benefits the participants and provides the group with a valuable pool of leaders.</p> <p>NZWTS maximises opportunities for improvement. For example, it was the only PTE to put themselves forward and be selected to participate in the Tertiary Education Commission’s Learner Success trials based on their drive to improve Māori and Pasifika learner success rates.</p> <p>Since the last EER, the PTE has put significant resource and energy into its data collection and analysis processes, responding well to NZQA’s recommendations. Data now effectively supports continuous improvement. Well-developed and useful reports inform learner progress and monitoring and targeting of learner support responses.</p> <p>Quality assurance processes, feedback mechanisms and external stakeholder relationships have also been strengthened in this timeframe. NZWTS is working collaboratively with the workforce development councils, and has contributed to the recently developed welding qualifications.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Aspire2 and NZWTS are governing and managing the PTE effectively, supporting strong educational performance and maximising improvement opportunities. This strong performance is underpinned by well-developed self-assessment and effective use of data to make real improvements for the learners.</p>

### 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZWTS effectively uses organisational systems to assist in meeting its legal and regulatory obligations. An annual compliance calendar is used to track and monitor internal and external requirements. Robust reporting and oversight of compliance matters were evidenced during the EER.</p> <p>Health and safety policies, procedures and practices are well scrutinised. Learner orientation, induction and regular tool box meetings emphasise the importance of health and safety procedures and expectations in workshops and on</p>

	<p>site. The health and safety committee meets regularly and oversees practices and registers. The committee's minutes are reported to the internal leadership group and then to the Aspire2 Group.</p> <p>The Tertiary Education Commission audit conducted in late 2022 had a 90 per cent compliance result. One minor change was required to a reporting field in the student management system. This change has been made and the review closed off.</p> <p>A review of international learners' files conducted during the EER showed documentation was filed and easily accessible, and entry, visa and insurance requirements had been met.</p> <p>NZWTS understands and adheres to NZQA rules and regulations relating to programmes and training schemes. Internal quality assurance and monitoring processes provide confidence that quality teaching and learning is being provided to the learners, and rules and programme requirements are being met. The PTE proactively reviews its policies and procedures and seeks input from staff via a quality and compliance survey for continuous improvement.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>NZWTS is effectively managing its important compliance accountabilities. No gaps were identified during this EER.</p>

## Focus areas

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

### 2.1 Career Preparation for Engineering Trades (Level 3) and the replacement programme the Certificate in Welding (Level 3) 128145-1 (4605-1)

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>

### 2.2 Career Preparation for Specialised Welding (Level 4) and the replacement programme Certificate in Specialised Welding (Level 4) (128146-1) (4606-1)

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>

### 2.3 International Student Wellbeing and Support

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>

## 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. Course completion rates (%) by ethnicity 2019-22**

	2019	2020	2021	2022
All programmes				
Māori	70.2	76.1	74.5	76.2
Pasifika	74.1	70.2	72.5	81.3
Non-Māori and non-Pasifika	83.3	88.2	80.2	81.6
Career Preparation for Engineering Trades (Level 3)				
Māori	67.8	74	69.5	76.3
Pasifika	69.3	75.9	70.4	80
Non-Māori and non-Pasifika	78.2	77.6	76.2	83.7
Career Preparation for Specialised Welding (Level 4)				
Māori	80.7	79.2	82.5	75
Pasifika	96.4	68.7	84.2	84.2
Non-Māori and non-Pasifika	95.4	97.4	83.2	90

Data provided by NZWTS

**Table 2. Qualification completion rates (%) for the programmes in scope for this EER 2019-22**

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Career Preparation for Engineering Trades (Level 3)				
	72	82	70	79
Career Preparation for Specialised Welding (Level 4)				
	65	74	79	83

Data provided by NZWTS



# 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 fraud<sup>10</sup>*
- *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.*

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<sup>10</sup> 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](http://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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