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External Evaluation and Review Report

Pathways College of Bible and
Mission

Date of report: 21 February 2020

About Pathways College of Bible and Mission

Pathways College of Bible and Mission (Pathways) is a charitable trust. It is also the educational arm of the Christian Brethren Church of New Zealand. The college offers student internships at approved locations (churches and non-governmental organisations) nationwide, with block courses at Pacific Park Camp, Papamoa.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	7 Oak Lane, Judea, Tauranga
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	37 domestic and one international student at the time of the on-site visit; 40 EFTS (equivalent full-time students) in 2018. Māori students, 18 per cent of annual enrolments, and Pasifika 15 per cent. Most students are aged under 25.
Number of staff:	Five full-time, and three part-time equivalents
TEO profile:	See: Pathways College on the NZQA website
Last EER outcome:	At the previous external evaluation and review (EER) of Pathways College (November 2015), NZQA was Highly Confident in the PTE's educational performance and in its capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Level 5). This is the only NZQA-approved programme, and the only Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)-funded programme being delivered. ¹
MoE number:	8285
NZQA reference:	C36743
Dates of EER visit:	22 and 23 October 2019

¹ In the body of this report, achievement in these programmes will be referred to as 'course completion'.

Summary of Results

Pathways College is effective in delivering a diploma-level internship programme for students placed in faith-based organisations around New Zealand. Students are well supported and achieve well. Student and stakeholder needs are increasingly well matched. Adherence to TEC and NZQA policy and processes, and the PTE's own procedural expectations for quality and accuracy, needs improvement.

Confident in educational performance

- Pathways has a very strong understanding of the needs of Christian ministry organisations who wish to host interns, who may in time develop into staff and future leaders. This is now well established in the programme.
- Knowledge of graduate destinations is comprehensive. Most find relevant employment or progress to higher-level study elsewhere.

Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Student and stakeholder needs are well matched by the programme offered. Teaching is effective, and overall programme academic quality is also well managed.
- Although class cohorts are small, there is strong retention, and qualification pass rates are high overall. Māori and Pasifika pass rates are lower than for all other students. This needs improving.
- There is an exceptional level of student care and oversight through well-honed mentoring arrangements. Programme documentation and guidance material for students is good quality.
- Overall, governance and management are effective. Administration, academic quality and the learning management system are also effective. However, weaknesses in compliance, as identified by a TEC audit, undermine NZQA's confidence in compliance management and overall self-assessment at Pathways College.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Completing the programme³ and gaining the qualification and experience are the desired student goals. There is high retention of students (only three have withdrawn to date in 2019), and since the previous EER qualification achievement has exceeded 90 per cent annually (see Appendix 1). Strong student selection and strong support processes are contributing factors to the high qualification achievement.</p> <p>The diploma programme has specialisations which assist students and Christian ministry organisations to build capability in (particularly) younger people to work reflectively in their setting, for example in youth work, camps and children’s ministry. The skills and knowledge gained are relevant.</p> <p>Monitoring and review of student achievement is appropriate to the scale of the provider. Each student’s progress, assessment grades and participation in the internship are monitored closely. The system allows for a real-time view on students’ engagement with course work. Qualification achievement is benchmarked year-on-year and against similar colleges, and compares favourably. Course completion rates differ between Māori and Pasifika and all other students. Participation by these priority group learners is increasing. There is positive attention to strengthening a bi-cultural dimensions at the PTE. It is too early to determine whether this will improve pass rates.</p>
Conclusion:	Overall, pass rates are high. Careful student selection and support assists with retention and success. Māori and Pasifika have slightly lower pass rates. Self-assessment is occurring.

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation’s activities.

³ This means passing all courses as well as successfully completing the internship.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Reliable data is maintained on outcomes for almost all graduates, with the 2017 and 2018 sample sighted by the evaluators.⁴ Almost all graduates proceed into employment (both related and not related to the qualification) or higher-level study. Based on the comprehensive information gathered by the PTE, it appears the internship is quite often a kind of 'gap year' of community service for many participants.</p> <p>The internship model enables students to apply new knowledge and skills in voluntary positions throughout the study year. There is likely to be some variation in skills development due to the diverse range of internship situations, but this is reasonable given the elective specialities available (camping, worship, missions, youth ministry, etc). Some graduates have gained permanent employment in the placement organisation at the end of their study. Graduates have moved into roles in pastoral ministries in churches, missions work, camps and church ministries. In time, this includes leadership roles. Pathways' graduates have a strong record of community service, such as running public youth-orientated events and values programmes within primary schools.</p> <p>The PTE is preparing for NZQA consistency review to evaluate graduate outcomes. Pathways has considerable knowledge of its graduates, and will now need to more firmly establish the links to the graduate profile of the New Zealand diploma.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Graduates pathway into employment, apprenticeships and higher-level study in related programmes at other providers, in particular Carey Baptist College but also various universities in New Zealand or colleges in the USA. The skills, knowledge and personal growth of graduates are compelling, and are monitored and evaluated during and after the programme.</p>

⁴ This data includes attestations from internship hosts, self-reflections by students, surveys and qualitative interviews at graduation, and events held with graduates around 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:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The programme design is well established and effectively matches the needs of students and relevant stakeholders. The latter are a range of faith-based organisations working mainly with children and youth, as well as church congregations.</p> <p>Teaching staff are knowledgeable and well qualified to teach the course material. They are practitioners who bring current, real-world experience to their teaching, as well as an informed understanding of the development of Christianity in New Zealand over the past 200 years. Lecturers focus on modelling good practice in their teaching. Course content and assessment integrates theoretical concepts with practice relevant to the internships. Knowledge of Te Ao Māori is strengthening. Oversight of teaching quality is sound. Surveying is frequent/routine and used to get feedback at numerous points of the student journey.</p> <p>A learning management system is also now well established, and is being used effectively. The quality of materials and usage has improved in quality since the last EER. Turnitin is used to manage plagiarism and assessment submission and return. This enables prompt feedback to students, who are dispersed throughout the country.</p> <p>Internal moderation is occurring as planned. Samples viewed by the evaluators showed appropriate levels of feedback on marking, good student achievement, and a credible spread of grades. Although no recent external moderation has occurred, this is somewhat mitigated by the fact that the assessments are either revised or are new since the programme was developed for first delivery in 2019.</p> <p>Internships occur at approved locations nationwide. One-week block courses are run six times a year at Pacific Park Camp, Papamoa. Internship placement providers have been providing internships for single or small groups of students annually, with these relationships enduring for five years or more. This is a</p>

	<p>good indication that internship providers' needs are being met, and that the well-documented structures in place to provide mentoring and support to students, and review placements, are operative and not too onerous.</p> <p>These internships enable students to apply what they learn on a daily or weekly basis. Each assessment includes a practical application which is valued by learners and teachers as a useful tool to check on progress and the use of knowledge gained in block courses and through required readings. Students spoke of the value of the assessments in consolidating learning, particularly the requirement to formally reflect on the application of knowledge in their internship and their own growth.</p> <p>Regular, quality connections with internship providers are actively managed. Internship providers are visited by the principal and pastoral care staff regularly. Documentation of this is sound and is used to monitor and improve each situation as well as providing a significant feedback loop to Pathways on issues and trends in the various ministry areas. An annual faculty meeting also provides a forum for review and reflection and planning.</p>
Conclusion:	All students and graduates and internship providers interviewed by the evaluators strongly endorsed the programme as meeting their personal learning, spiritual and academic needs. The additional evidence described under 1.2 also supports this view.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Convincing evidence was presented of Pathway's regular contact with each student and working through issues and challenges as well as celebrating successes and milestones with them. Mentor reports also provide useful monitoring of student engagement at their internship. Student support is shown in a number of areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high degree of interest is shown in each students' welfare and journey through the programme.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each student is prayed for regularly by Pathways staff. • Female and male students have a differentiated pastoral care approach, designed to meet their particular needs. • Personal challenges and life questions are welcomed and constructively responded to. • Prior to starting the programme, students write an ungraded 'spiritual autobiography' that encourages reflection and also gives lecturers an opportunity to assess learners' abilities and needs. The two-day noho marae at the start of the year encourages reflection on te Atua and bi-cultural issues. • Staff display good awareness of the range of learner needs, including a developing understanding of Pasifika and Māori learner aspirations and mental wellbeing. <p>Students interviewed showed a high degree of mutual respect and awareness of the challenges and successes experienced by their peers. Comprehensive student information is provided in the student handbook and during orientation on the first block course. This information is also available on Moodle. Students indicated that lecturers (and support staff) are accessible, and that they were happy to raise any issues or concerns with them.</p> <p>Pastoral care is provided by two Pathways staff, who visit each student twice during their study. Mentors provide pastoral care within the internship environment. Each student is assigned three mentors – spiritual, ministry and academic – to support their learning throughout the study year. There are suitable processes in place to support learners whose needs are not being met in their mentor relationship or internship context. A comprehensive mentoring handbook supports these activities.</p> <p>Regular student surveys monitor student satisfaction and get feedback on all areas of delivery and teaching. These are well designed, have high response rates, gather rich data and are responded to where change is required.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>The mission and vision/kaupapa of Pathways informs all aspects of student support, which is effective. All staff are expected, and wish to, 'model' the mission and values. This is reflected in achievement, outcomes and students' reflections on their growth and development, which are sought as part of well-planned, ongoing evaluation and review.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Pathways is effectively led by a board which meets regularly, and a principal who is in regular formal and informal contact with the board chair. This evaluation found a general sense that the outgoing principal's tenure has led to growth, 'modernisation' (such as the implementation of a learning management system), enhanced bi-cultural awareness within the PTE, and a more secure financial footing. The PTE is well positioned for the incoming principal who also has experience at another provider.</p> <p>Pathways has been well led over the past nine years. There is a suitable staffing mix. Staff are well qualified and have experience appropriate to their roles. Administrative, planning and academic quality aspects appear robust in the main (see 1.6). Self-assessment is in use and embedded. It ranges from deliberative planning to intuitive and embedded monitoring and responsiveness as needs change.</p> <p>Achievement in terms of qualification pass rates and continuing to meet student and stakeholder needs is positive. Monitoring of stakeholder satisfaction is intentional and orientated to personal visits. Students are also regularly visited. There seems to be a good balance struck between the degree of commitment by internship hosts and Pathways' overall coordination and delivery. Some additional services are also provided through free online course material provided to Brethren churches.</p> <p>Effective self-assessment has included review of board policies; development of mission and values; changes to the trust deed; and a successful principal search. The noho marae and adjunct faculty end-of-year interactions reflect ongoing review.</p> <p>Pathways College actively participated in the Targeted Review of Qualifications process. As well as developing an approved level 5 diploma, Pathways developed a programme leading to a diploma at level 6 but was not successful in gaining NZQA approval. This led to nine students choosing to study towards</p>

	their second diploma at level 5 in 2019. Students and internship hosts were well informed about the reasons for this unusual situation.
Conclusion:	Pathways is well led and adds value. It has a strong focus on students' educational achievement and spiritual growth. Decisions are made based on shared vision and values, which are also reflected in the contribution students make during internships and long after graduating. Deficiencies in managing oversight of compliance impacts the rating for self-assessment.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Poor
Self-assessment:	Poor
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>A condition of enrolment is 'that students complete a Police Vetting Service Request and Consent form as part of their application'. Pathways are required to administer the necessary clearance. This relates to requirements under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 to help protect the safety of children. This step had not occurred at the time of a routine TEC audit of Pathways on 7 August 2019. This requirement was belatedly actioned by Pathways on 10 October 2019.</p> <p>This means that in 2019 the focus area programme did not meet minimum expectations or requirements in respect to NZQA programme approval and accreditation, and these requirements are also linked to government legislation in this context.⁵</p> <p>The TEC audit also found that important, required information on the one international student was not in place. The NZQA evaluators also found that the information was not readily available, but it was provided after the on-site visit. The student did have the necessary visa and insurance and was correctly categorised as an international student. However, Pathways did not have sound administration and record-keeping of these</p>

⁵ Related evidence: the TEC audit report; Vulnerable Children Act 2014 (Oranga Tamariki guidance); programme approval and accreditation application by Pathways; the programme approval and programme details letter to Pathways from NZQA (26 September 2018); Pathway records, including 6.4.5 of the curriculum document and evidence of police vetting.

	<p>details at either quality assurance visit.</p> <p>More broadly, Pathways demonstrated positive adherence to NZQA requirements in relation to registration as a PTE. The focus area programme is being delivered in line with approval, and there is a good line of sight from the board and principal to daily operations, programme delivery and student success.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Pathways has a history of managing compliance accountabilities effectively. Lapses this year are significant and have impacted the ratings here and reduced NZQA's confidence overall.</p>

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Level 5)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>As shown under 1-5, the focus area programme is performing well. Deficiencies in Pathways' management of a highly important administrative action, for all students in 2019 (see 1.6) justifiably impacts overall focus area ratings.</p> <p>See also Recommendations and Requirements.</p>

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.

NZQA recommends that Pathways College of Bible and Mission:

1. Consider heightening staff awareness of compliance at the adjunct faculty end-of-year meeting and through other mechanisms on a more regular basis.
2. Consider implementing a cycle of academic quality-related internal audits to ensure policies and procedures are adhered to, particularly in the most critical compliance-related areas.
3. Update the memorandum of understanding with Carey Baptist College (dated 2011).

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.

NZQA requires Pathways College of Bible and Mission to:

Implement the police vetting requirement for every new student, as part of routine pre-enrolment requirements, as stated in the NZQA programme approval (26 September 2018), for applicants for the New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Level 5).

(NZQA Reference: C35180 – Sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989 – Grant of application for Programme Approval of, and Accreditation to provide the approved programme, New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Theological Studies) (Level 5): 'It is a condition of enrolment that students complete a Police Vetting Service Request and Consent form as part of their application.')

Appendix 1

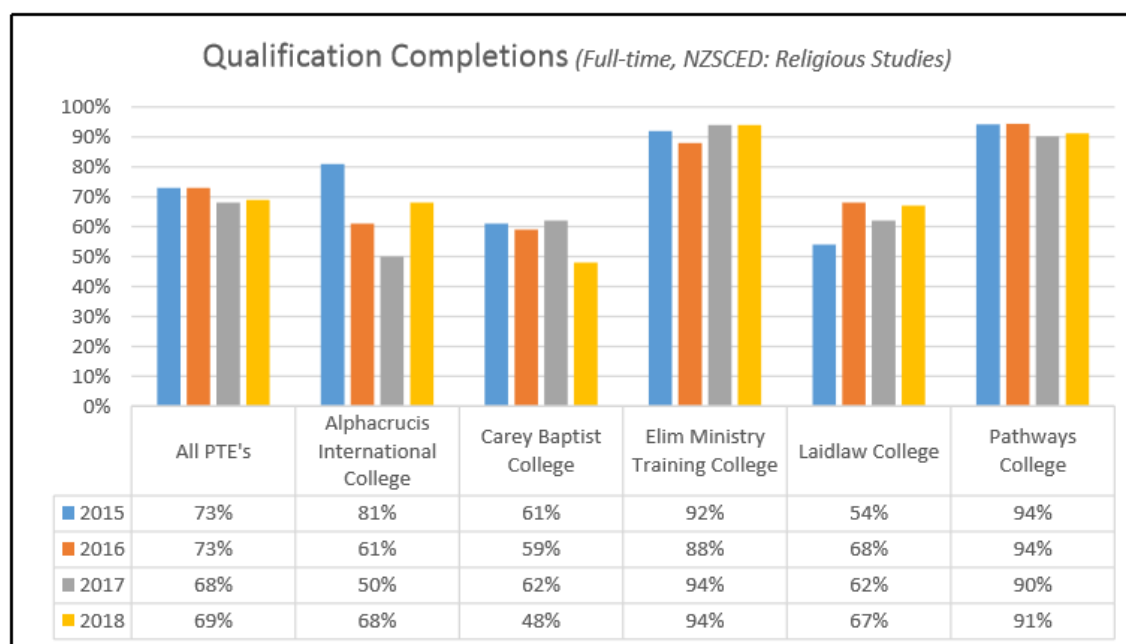


Figure 1: Qualification Completions; a comparison with benchmarked PTEs. Data derived from Nga Kete 2015-2018 except where unavailable, extracted from Pathways College enrolment data instead.

Course completion

Ethnicity Group	Intended qualification Cohort Group	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Māori	Totals	100.0%	72.7%	100.0%	0.0%	83.3%
	Level 4 to 7 (non degree)	100.0%	72.7%	100.0%	0.0%	83.3%
Non-Māori and non-Pasifika	Totals	94.3%	97.4%	93.9%	91.6%	91.7%
	Level 4 to 7 (non degree)	94.3%	97.4%	93.9%	91.6%	91.7%
Pasifika	Totals	100.0%	80.0%	100.0%	79.8%	80.0%
	Level 4 to 7 (non degree)	100.0%	80.0%	100.0%	79.8%	80.0%

Qualification completion

Ethnicity	Intended qualification Cohort Group	2014	2015	2016
Māori	Totals	100.0%	80.0%	80.0%
	Level 4 to 7 (non degree)	100.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Non-Māori and non-Pasifika	Totals	94.4%	87.5%	84.2%
	Level 4 to 7 (non degree)	94.4%	87.5%	84.2%
Pasifika	Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Level 4 to 7 (non degree)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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 fraud⁶*
- *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.*

⁶ NZQA and the 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 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

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 including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes 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 2016. 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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