

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Newton College of Business and  
Technology

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 24 February 2015

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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:	Newton College of Business and Technology (NCBT)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	5 Porters Avenue, Eden Terrace, Auckland
Delivery sites:	As above
First registered:	4 September 1997
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Diploma in Computing (Level 5)</li><li>• Diploma in Computer Networking and Security (Level 6)</li><li>• Diploma in Computing (Networks and Security) (Level 7)</li><li>• National Diploma in Business (Level 5)</li><li>• National Diploma in Business (Level 6)</li><li>• Diploma in Advanced International Business (Applied Exporting and Importing) (Level 7)</li></ul>
Code of Practice signatory:	Signatory for students 18 years and over
Number of students:	International: 455 students
Number of staff:	16 full-time and seven part-time staff
Scope of active accreditation:	In addition to the courses currently delivered, NCBT has the following programme accreditations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate in Small Business Management</li></ul>

(Level 3)

- Global Assessment Certificate (Level 3)
- NCBT Diploma in Film and Television (Production) (Level 5)

Distinctive characteristics: Currently only international students are enrolled. Most students are from India and are males aged between 20 and 24 years.

Recent significant changes: NCBT has gained NZQA approval to deliver two level 7 qualifications. Both of these provide a pathway for further study in computing and business.

The student population has increased by 23 per cent since the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2011.

Previous quality assurance history: NCBT's previous EER was conducted in February 2011. NZQA was Highly Confident in NCBT's educational performance and Highly Confident in NCBT's capability in self-assessment.

NCBT engages in external moderation with NZQA. Since 2011, NCBT's assessments and assessor judgements have not consistently met the required standard and as a result NCBT has been required to submit more unit standard assessments to NZQA for external moderation, and to implement an action plan. Improvement in NCBT's internal moderation processes, tutor qualifications in assessment, and engagement with an independent external moderator has resulted in an improvement in external moderation results for 2014. NZQA is satisfied with the improvement in assessments and assessor judgements. NCBT now continues on the usual external moderation review cycle.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of this EER included the following mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management and strategy

Other focus areas selected were:

- National Diploma in Business (Level 5)
- National Diploma in Computing (Level 5)

These two programmes contain the highest number of students in the PTE. Combined, both diplomas represent business and computing, the only suite of programmes currently delivered at NCBT. In addition, these programmes provide the foundation of, and students for, the level 6 and 7 programmes.

The level 6 and 7 programmes were not selected, as they either have declining numbers or do not yet have graduates because the programmes have only recently started.

## 3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.*

The EER of NCBT was undertaken by a team of two evaluators over two days, on-site in Auckland. The EER included interviews with the directors, the chief executive officer the head of department of business and computing, tutors, the welfare manager, business relationship manager, student support coordinator, marketing manager, enrolment coordinator, students and graduates.

The evaluators reviewed a range of documentation, including a number of quality assurance processes, procedures and related activities common to all programmes such as: data collection, student evaluations and reporting. The evaluators also reviewed programme reviews, English test-related processes, meeting minutes and individual staff self-assessment reports.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Newton College of Business and Technology**.

Key reasons for this are:

- Student achievement at NCBT is very strong. Student retention and qualification completion rates are consistently high across all business and computing programmes. These results have been sustained since the previous EER.
- NCBT is comprehensively meeting the needs of students in terms of study, work and settlement in New Zealand. These positive graduate outcomes have been tracked over several years and are evident in both the short and long term.
- Programmes offered at NCBT match the needs of international students choosing to study in New Zealand. Business and computing qualifications provide foundation knowledge and skills which pathway graduates into further study and employment.
- Programme design, programme review and the effectiveness of the tutors are important features of NCBT. Teachers are academically well qualified and experienced in their subject area. Most have the minimum assessing and moderation unit standards and either hold or are working towards achievement of the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Level 5) with strands in New Zealand Environment, and International Environment.
- The effective support of students is a priority at NCBT. The welfare of students is ensured through access to experienced staff who have a clear focus on student support. NCBT has functional processes and practices to identify possible student issues, and opportunities to address these in a timely way. Support for students is a major contributor to NCBT's high retention, qualification completions and outcomes.
- NCBT is well managed with a clear purpose and direction. It anticipates change, manages growth and monitors outcomes. The directors ensure ethical practice throughout the PTE, and this is reflected in the values of the organisation, recruitment of staff and resourcing.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Newton College of Business and Technology**.

Key reasons for this are:

- NCBT has a significant number of processes which inform the PTE about the key areas that support the educational performance of students. These processes include monitoring and analysis of: student achievement, graduate outcomes, programme and tutor reviews, and academic and non-academic support.
- The processes, practices and activities within these areas are purposeful and embedded, providing meaningful information for review. There is evidence of ongoing improvement in most areas.
- There is systematic collection of useful data and information, and this information is analysed by the appropriate staff in the PTE. Affected staff are informed of the results. The directors and chief executive officer model highly effective self-assessment at management level.
- The identification of trends provides NCBT with a profile of the students and courses. Identifying these trends also helps the organisation to anticipate needs and plan for both academic and pastoral support, ensuring the ongoing educational performance of all students.

Self-assessment at NCBT is clearly effective and authentic. The quality and validity of the information is generally good. NCBT could strengthen its self-assessment around how well the programme matches the needs of students, as well as teacher effectiveness, by:

- more fully evidencing the impact of the changes made to programme content and delivery completing the cycle of review
- demonstrating that improved moderation outcomes will be sustained over the upcoming rounds of national external moderation
- gathering specific information from employers and graduates about NCBT programmes to feed systematically into programme review
- refining the collection and analysis of student achievement data, allowing a more detailed analysis of achievement as nearly all students achieve their qualification.

# Findings<sup>1</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 **Excellent**.

NCBT has demonstrated sustained qualification completions from 2011 to 2014. Completions are consistently over 90 per cent for all programmes offered by NCBT, with two minor exceptions in one year, where low student numbers in both programmes affected the number of completions.

These achievement results reflect those reported at the previous EER, and have been sustained over six years. In that time there have been fluctuations in the number of students enrolled, and changes in teaching staff.

Qualification completion and retention of students for the focus areas is presented in the table below.<sup>2</sup>

Years	NDB <sup>3</sup> Level 5		NDC <sup>4</sup> Level 5		All courses at NCBT	
	Retention	Completion	Retention	Completion	Retention	Completion
<b>2011-2012</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	98%	98%
<b>2012-2013</b>	89%	89%	89%	89%	100%	92%
<b>2013-2014</b>	95%	100%	96%	95%	97%	98%

Achievement data is tracked individually for each student. This includes a review of attendance, as well as a student's progress in achieving unit standards. Students who are not meeting NCBT's attendance requirements account for the small number of non-completions. Tutors monitor and report achievement; this data is collated, and the heads of department analyse individual achievement every five weeks. Overall achievement results per programme are reviewed and benchmarked.

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<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> Percentages have been rounded up or down to present whole figures.

<sup>3</sup> NDB – National Diploma in Business

<sup>4</sup> NDC – National Diploma in Computing



NCBT undertakes external benchmarking against Education Counts<sup>5</sup>, Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) dashboard data, and internal comparisons made with NCBT's previous programme results.

NCBT's directors, the chief executive officer and heads of department use all this achievement data, alongside additional student data and information, to inform NCBT of students' academic and pastoral needs and to track the overall educational performance of students.

NCBT undertakes external moderation with NZQA and has a three-year history of external moderation results inconsistently meeting the required national standards. NZQA is currently satisfied with the improvement in assessments and assessor judgements. NCBT now continues on the usual external moderation review cycle with NZQA. NCBT is doing regular internal moderation of assessment and this process is thorough in covering all unit standards on a scheduled basis. Most tutors have been upskilled or refreshed in moderation and assessment practices.

While academic misconduct has not been identified as an issue, NCBT has very recently introduced plagiarism software. This is being used for some programmes to further assure the integrity of assessments. NCBT plans to use this resource in all programmes by the end of 2014. Protocols and sanctions around plagiarism are clear.

NCBT programme results and broader qualification completion rates are credible.

## 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 **Excellent**.

Graduates are seeking outcomes that will support them in their longer-term goals. These goals are mostly to gain employment and, for many, settle in New Zealand. Enrolling at NCBT and successfully completing a qualification in business or computing provides the basis to achieve the long-term goals of living and working in New Zealand.

NCBT uses a variety of ways to gather graduate outcomes data. These methods are highly effective and have ensured that NCBT has tracked almost every graduate. The main methods are encountering NCBT graduates at community or cultural events, and engagement with graduates when they visit NCBT for support and information or when they return to recruit graduates to employ. A handful of graduates have more formal contact with NCBT, such as through serving on an

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Education's online space providing education statistics and research in New Zealand at <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz>.

advisory board or visiting as a guest speaker. All opportunities are used to gather destination information for NCBT graduates. These data collection mechanisms are enhanced through the use of social media. NCBT has one central staff member responsible for gathering and collating this information who can target and follow up those graduates NCBT has no information on.

NCBT identifies the longer-term goals of students at enrolment and is equally interested in admitting students who it believes will make good citizens and contribute to the country economically and culturally. NCBT has monitored and reviewed the outcomes of graduates over several years. Graduates are clearly having their needs met, with 90 per cent of all graduates achieving their longer-term goals (i.e. further study at NCBT or at another tertiary institute, gaining employment relevant to their course of study, and ultimately achieving permanent residency). These outcomes indicate significant value for students at NCBT.

NCBT's further analysis of these outcomes has effectively informed decision-making and business planning in the areas of: understanding NCBT's position within the tertiary education sector, possible programmes the PTE could offer, a review of programme fees, and the support offered to graduates.

### 1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

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

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

Programmes are relevant and well matched to the needs of NCBT's international students and New Zealand's economic development, particularly in the area of information technology. Business and computing programmes provide foundation pathways to a variety of areas of study and work. Systematically applied processes and practices (including feedback from students, tutors and industry) contribute to NCBT's understanding of student and industry needs. There is also organisational support to implement improvements in identified areas.

Scheduled programme review happens quarterly. NCBT systematically reviews and discusses: academic processes (including internal and external moderation), teaching effectiveness, student achievement, and student support across the business and computing programmes. Changes and modifications to the programme, teaching and content are followed through at subsequent meetings.

Recent improvements to subject content, delivery and student self-review have occurred as a result and include:

- Teaching activities to develop students' presentation skills
- Addition of a 'soft skill' component (one hour) to classroom delivery

- Specifically selecting unit standards which will better support the soft skills development of students in the National Diploma in Computing
- Student self-review to monitor the development of their soft skills over the course of the National Diploma in Business
- Contextualising materials and examples, increasing the New Zealand and local content
- Addition of practical components into the National Diploma in Computing programme.

Some of these changes have been reviewed as worthwhile and effective, while others are still to be fully reviewed. The aim is to enhance the positive learning experience of students and develop associated programme skills and knowledge.

The membership of NCBT's local advisory board reflects the programmes, students and values of the PTE. The advisory board concentrates on high-level engagement, including programme development, immigration input and input into possible procurement. This is on an as-needed basis, and individual board members are contacted as their expertise is required. Similarly, the PTE seeks feedback from stakeholders who employ a number of NCBT graduates. These opportunities could be further enhanced by gathering specific information about NCBT programmes and systematically feeding this into programme reviews.

#### 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**.

The teaching at NCBT is effective. Tutors are academically very well qualified and have experience in their area of training. A number of systematic processes monitor the quality of the teaching at NCBT, including head of department, tutor and student feedback. These processes produce useful information. The findings are shared and discussed at the quarterly programme review.

Tutors closely monitor the progress of students. NCBT has clear policies to guide teaching, academic and assessment practices, for example: internal and external moderation, assessment and reassessment, plagiarism and attendance. NCBT's documentation and interviews with staff and students indicate that these policy guidelines are being consistently applied in practice.

NCBT tutors are capable and respected by students. Some tutors could improve their formal teaching qualifications, specifically in the areas of assessment and moderation. Professional development has been provided over the past 12 months to address this. The PTE has a plan to ensure that all staff, including new tutors, complete assessment and moderation of unit standards to support their capability,

and all tutors are working toward gaining the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Level 5). Internal moderation is thorough, and there is a clear process that is systematically applied. The approach is organisation-wide and includes all teaching staff.

NCBT has improved its internal processes by supporting the professional development of tutors and engaging an external moderator to verify NCBT's own internal moderation results on an ongoing basis. External moderation has in the past required improvement, and NZQA has noted this improvement. NCBT needs to continue improving to validate the high levels of student achievement it reports.

Teachers and students report that they relate effectively with each other. Tutors provide academic support to students that meets their learning objectives. This support extends beyond classroom hours, mostly through email and phone. Students and tutors report that students commonly use this opportunity to communicate and gain support and guidance for their assessments. Comprehensive student surveys confirm high levels of satisfaction with the teaching, resources and the PTE.

## 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 **Excellent**.

Student welfare is a priority at NCBT; it is integrated into school and academic processes. A range of authentic processes effectively address the academic, administrative and pastoral support of students. NCBT documents the outcomes and reports them routinely at staff meetings.

All staff have responsibility for the welfare of students. NCBT has practices that filter student concerns to ensure students can access the most appropriate person at NCBT to address areas of need. NCBT has monitored the waiting time from when a student first approaches NCBT welfare staff until they have a meeting or appointment to address the query or concern. This time has been reduced.

The number of students at NCBT has increased steadily over recent years. Staff numbers have increased and processes in the student welfare area have changed to keep up with demand. NCBT directors, the chief executive officer and senior staff use a variety of collected and analysed data (achievement, programme information, age, ethnicity and gender) to understand and anticipate the ongoing and future needs of international students. This information is shared organisation-wide and recognised by NCBT as contributing to the excellent retention rate and very high qualification achievement.

NCBT staff have a sound understanding of the Code of Practice and take their responsibilities seriously. The PTE rigorously monitors areas such as attendance, determining English language proficiency, and the engagement of agents, and

responds to any concerns. There are additional supports and resources, such as NCBT's engagement of a qualified tutor to provide language support, to effectively meet important areas of compliance and student welfare. Students are specifically surveyed about the support provided by NCBT, and survey results further validate the effectiveness of the PTE's student welfare systems.

The broader individual pastoral care of students is evident in numerous ways, including support for students for personal circumstances, physical and mental health, and job-seeking. Students have several 24-hour contact options in case of an emergency. The pastoral care of students is supplemented by the academic support discussed in Findings 1.4.

Graduates continue to use NCBT administrative and pastoral care support, including the after-hours contact. NCBT sees this as a reflection of the strength of the relationships established while studying at NCBT. NCBT is monitoring the level and type of support provided to graduates and considering the possible impact on staff if this trend continues as the number of graduates increase.

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

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 **Excellent**.

NCBT directors and the chief executive officer discharge their functions effectively, maintaining consistent educational performance and coherence in staff roles and responsibilities. Authentic processes and practices ensure the effective and ethical operation of the PTE.

The PTE has been managed effectively over a period of fluctuations in student and staff numbers in recent years. A core group of staff have been retained over several years; they are valued and recognised as making valuable contributions to the PTE. Staff directly input into the strategic direction of NCBT at staff development days and are aligned to and implement the direction and priorities set by the directors.

Growth at NCBT is anticipated and planned. NCBT has restrained the PTE's growth to enable it to maintain its own standards. Plans for an increase in student numbers have taken into account a review of, and investment in, resources such as information technology, building facilities, a review of teaching spaces, and recruitment of staff. NCBT is focused on further developing more structured review and monitoring processes that are relevant to the context of this organisation, easy to implement, and provide the most benefit to the organisation if it grows as anticipated and planned. For example, the chief executive officer and director are heavily involved in leading staff meetings, communications, and functions such as performance appraisal. These systematic and informal processes have worked

well in identifying areas of strength and areas for development. NCBT recognises that as staff and student numbers increase, these processes will also need to evolve into more formal and structured processes that can be undertaken by senior staff.

The directors and chief executive officer make a point to understand and actively engage within the non-university tertiary education environment. They are committed to keeping informed and abreast of changes and using opportunities to provide feedback to government agencies such as NZQA and Immigration New Zealand on a variety of areas directly affecting NCBT and the PTE sector. NCBT willingly invests time and resources on an ongoing basis in genuine attempts to support quality educational provision for international students studying in New Zealand. The benefit to NCBT includes positioning the organisation to anticipate and manage political, funding and compliance changes proactively.

## 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 **Excellent**.

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

### 2.2 Focus area: National Diploma in Computing (Level 5)

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

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

### 2.3 Focus area: National Diploma in Business (Level 5)

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

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

# Recommendations

NZQA recommends that NCBT:

- Gather strong evidence of the effectiveness of changes and their impact on the educational performance of students by completing the review cycle of the following areas: the programme matching the needs of students, and teacher effectiveness.
- Continue to develop staff capabilities and organisational plans for the moderation of assessments and assessor judgements.
- Refine the collection and analysis of achievement data, allowing a more detailed analysis of achievement, as nearly all students achieve their qualification.



# 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/>.*

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