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# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Vineyard Christian Fellowship Trust  
trading as Vineyard College

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 17 January 2017

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*Final Report*

# 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:                 | Vineyard Christian Fellowship Trust trading as Vineyard College   |
| Type:                        | Private training establishment (PTE)  |
| First registered:            | 8 January 1998  |
| Location:                    | 1/221 Lincoln Road, Henderson, Auckland<br><a href="http://www.vineyardcollege.org.nz">www.vineyardcollege.org.nz</a>   |
| Delivery sites:              | Distance education using an internship model  |
| Courses currently delivered: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate in Christian Ministry (Level 4)</li><li>• Certificate in Christian Ministry (Advanced) (Level 4)</li><li>• Certificate in Spiritual Formation and Pastoral Care (Introductory) (Level 4)</li></ul>  |
| Code of Practice signatory:  | No  |
| Number of students:          | Domestic: 52 enrolled interns in 2015, equivalent to 48 full-time students (EFTS). The student makeup was 16 per cent Māori, 13 per cent Pasifika and 74 per cent aged under 25 years. These proportions have changed (as at 1 April 2016) to 26 per cent Māori, 15 per cent Pasifika and 74 per cent aged under 25 years (some students are included in more than one category). |
| Number of staff:             | Two full-time and three part-time staff   |

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Scope of active accreditation:      | Accredited to assess Christian Studies to level 4 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.  |
| Distinctive characteristics:        | <p>The Association of Vineyard Churches Aotearoa/New Zealand governs Vineyard College, which is a not-for-profit trust. The focus of the PTE is developing the leadership of Vineyard and non-Vineyard churches. The core training activity is three level 4 Christian ministry qualifications targeting young people, and providing training in pastoral care, youth work and social service skills. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funds these three qualifications.</p> <p>The two full-time Certificate in Christian Ministry (120 credits) programmes consist of a church-based practicum internship (80 credits) and the study of Christian theology<sup>1</sup> (40 credits). The schedule is 20 hours of practical work each week. A fortnightly reflection session with a church-based supervisor provides academic and pastoral support. An additional 10 hours is devoted to academic study. Two four-day teaching block courses are held each year.</p> <p>The Certificate in Spiritual Formation and Pastoral Care (Introductory) programme is 40 weeks of part-time study.</p> |
| Recent significant changes:         | The college has recently developed and delivered short-term, non-government funded programmes to build the leadership capability of older adults holding positions of responsibility in various churches.   |
| Previous quality assurance history: | The first external evaluation and review (EER) of the college took place in 2012. NZQA was Confident in both the educational performance and capability in self-assessment of the PTE.  |

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<sup>1</sup> Christian theology includes the study and interpretation of the Bible, church history and spiritual formation.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The lead evaluator scoped this EER after reviewing a range of documents submitted by Vineyard, as well as NZQA and TEC-held data. A scoping meeting was then held with the college leadership team. The two key focus areas selected and the rationale for them being chosen were:

- Governance, management and strategy, as this was a mandatory focus area at the time of the EER.
- Christian ministry training, as this provider offers three interrelated NZQA level 4 qualifications with a clear Christian ministry focus to a relatively small number of interns. This is their primary educational activity.

## 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 NZQA team of two evaluators visited the administrative office of the college over one and half days. The team met face-to-face with the chair of the Association of Vineyard Churches directors, the principal/board director, the systems and operations coordinator, the office manager/academic registrar, one of the contracted markers and the student records administrator. Phone interviews were conducted with two interns and three supervisors.

The evaluators reviewed documentation and data held by NZQA and the TEC and the published EER reports of a few comparable tertiary education organisations. The PTE provided a wide range of documents and data about their governance and management, stakeholder engagement, educational performance, curriculum and programme delivery, moderation, and the support and guidance provided to interns. The team also reviewed summaries of surveys and interviews conducted with supervisors, interns and graduates; and reviewed the provider's website.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Vineyard Christian Fellowship Trust trading as Vineyard College**.

The key points supporting this judgement include the following.

Vineyard College programmes contribute well to its core purpose of developing capable ministry leaders to meet the need of participating churches for renewed leadership programmes, reliably producing ministry 'practitioners with a thinking base'.

Educational achievement is high compared with past achievement rates, exceeds contracted targets and compares very well with the completion rates of other education organisations offering similar training programmes. Interns complete their qualifications at a high rate of over 90 per cent.

The training is delivered through a blend of church-based internships, supervisor sessions and block courses that support learning and the high levels of achievement. Teaching practices support the learning, and academic processes validate assessments. However, the college has recently identified a gap in the internal moderation processes that has the potential to reduce the validity of achievement results.

The needs of stakeholders are well met through the programmes. The wrap-around pastoral support and careful selection of interns contribute to the high levels of completions and intern satisfaction. Interns develop a range of personal and work attributes that enable them to contribute to the work of their church and community during training and following graduation. Two-thirds of graduates gain new and relevant paid work, which is a positive result.

However, one significant outcome, the progression of the graduates to further training or paid work, was clearly weaker than other areas. For example, the proportion of 2014 graduates progressing to further training was lower than most of the providers offering similar Christian ministry programmes.

The board and management teams respond well to sector needs, and their leadership supports high levels of educational achievement. Strong relationships with local and international churches, and well-established links with Christian ministry training providers and other tertiary education stakeholders ensure the currency of training.

The small team is effectively managing the delivery of the programmes, although gaps were identified in their understanding of the value of the outcomes and in quality assurance.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Vineyard Christian Fellowship Trust trading as Vineyard College**.

The key points supporting this judgement include the following.

Vineyard College is a small organisation with a clearly reflective culture. Performance is reviewed and processes are refined across key areas, leading to improvements. A good example of very effective self-assessment was the regular monitoring of academic progress, prompting interventions to support individual interns. This has led to increases in programme completions.

Similarly, changes to the intern selection process followed the analysis of educational results that showed a strong correlation between timely and well-prepared course applications and subsequent high levels of educational achievement.

The college annually benchmarks its performance against past achievement, contracted targets, national medians and educational organisations offering similar training programmes. The PTE periodically gathers detailed feedback and destination information about the interns/graduates in order to refine the programmes.

However, the quality of the college's self-assessment information did vary. Some processes were more effective than others in providing information on which to base improvements. For example, some aspects of key survey and written feedback tools were flawed; the analysis of key destination outcomes was incomplete; and evidence of the impact of the interns on their church communities needed strengthening.

Improvements to other key quality assurance areas to be considered by the provider include moderation practice and teacher appraisals.

# Findings<sup>2</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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**.

Vineyard College interns are trained in Christian ministry using a church-based internship model. In this context, there is comprehensive evidence that the educational achievement of the interns is exemplary when compared with past achievement, contracted targets and education organisations offering similar training programmes.

**Table 1. Course and qualification completion rates (% of total interns) 2012-2015**

| Year  | Course completion | Qualification completion <sup>3</sup> |
|-------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2012  | 93                | 97                                    |
| 2013  | 89                | 87                                    |
| 2014  | 91                | 100                                   |
| 2015* | 99                | 100                                   |

Source: TEC published and PTE performance data

\*Provisional achievement data

The above table, based on published data and robust analysis, shows that a high proportion of interns consistently complete their course and qualification, with completions improving since 2013. These rates nearly equal, and more recently surpass, the TEC contracted target of 89 per cent.

Achievement rates for the period 2012 to 2014 have been benchmarked against more than 15 providers offering similar Christian ministry qualifications. This comparison shows that Vineyard College rates have been consistently above these providers'. Māori and Pasifika interns have achieved at the same rate as other interns. Retention rates are very high, with few, if any, withdrawals. Evidence is available to show that interns gain significant knowledge and develop valued life skills and positive changes in their attitudes while on the programme.<sup>4</sup>

The provider has a rich and in-depth understanding of educational achievement and the factors that impact on achievement. The academic quality processes in

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<sup>2</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>3</sup> Some students complete their qualification the year following their enrolment, which inflates the qualification completion rate for the year in which they complete.

<sup>4</sup> See Findings 1.2 for further details.

place assure the overall validity of the educational results, although some gaps in the follow-up actions resulting from internal moderation were recently identified by the provider as needing resolution.

There is timely, detailed and effective tracking of module-by-module achievement of individuals and classes. Prompt action is taken when achievement falls below expectations. There is clear reasoning for a range of actions that have been taken and the impact on educational achievement. For example, in 2014 Vineyard identified a strong correlation between well-prepared course applications submitted on time and the later high achievement of these individuals. The PTE found that these interns needed less pastoral support. Since then, the college has made this application a key factor when selecting applicants, and attributes the increase in achievement rates to this change.

## 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 **Good**.

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

The college, through its established and active relationships, has identified that the (targeted) churches need young and capable people to lead in various ministries. The value of the programme outcomes for these churches is demonstrated by the fact that of the 2014 graduates surveyed<sup>5</sup>, nearly all were active in ministry roles, often unpaid, which is typical for this context.

There is sound evidence that the college has met many needs that are significant and relevant for their interns, churches, and the funder. However, a key valued outcome, the progression of the graduates into further training or paid work, was clearly weaker than other areas. For example, 30 per cent of the 2014 graduates enrolled on the Vineyard's advanced certificate or progressed to higher-level studies elsewhere. This proportion was lower than most other providers offering comparable Christian Ministry education programmes.

Results for other graduate destinations were good. The college collects detailed evidence via exit interviews, and two surveys of graduates found that nearly three-quarters of the 2014 graduate respondents<sup>6</sup> were in some kind of part or full-time paid work. Two-thirds of these were new roles (after graduating), and a few were in paid ministry roles, which is typical for this sector. This was a positive result. However, the college's analysis of destination outcomes was incomplete and some survey questions were not clearly constructed. The evaluation team

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<sup>5</sup> The combined surveys of the 2014 graduates had a credible response rate of 47 per cent.

<sup>6</sup> See the previous footnote.

concluded that more than half of the 2014 graduates were studying or in paid work or both, which was a good but clearly not outstanding result.

While the college has a sound knowledge of the outcomes the individual interns help produce through their internships, this understanding would be strengthened by more systematically comparing the changes in the interns from before and after the internship. Similarly, the range and degree of impact of the interns on their churches and communities could be better demonstrated through analysis of the individual information gathered.

Vineyard collects a broad range of rich evidence showing the development of the interns' capability across a range of attributes, skills and knowledge, and significant personal spiritual growth while on the programme. Some key changes include: increased confidence, the ability to delegate, to reflect on their behaviour, to seek support, and increased knowledge of theology. There is good evidence that with these skills and attributes the interns/graduates make clear contributions to their churches and communities, both during the internship and after, through the services they undertake. Examples include: administrative work, unpaid work supporting church youth, paid work in an overseas orphanage and a Christian radio station, and involvement in projects targeting marginalised people. There were some indications that the work of the interns frees up church staff to carry out other tasks.

There is evidence that the Vineyard programmes are offering their interns good value for money: high achievement rates, good outcomes, positive feedback and lower fees than similar programmes on offer. The annual waiting list of applicants is another indicator of value. The college has exceeded the TEC contracted performance targets over an extended period; and achievement has been strong for Māori, Pasifika and under-25s, who are the TEC priority groups. In 2016, the college targeted and significantly increased the participation of Māori. This performance contributes well to the key objectives of the 2014-2019 Tertiary Education Strategy.

### 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 **Excellent**.

The programmes match well the important needs of the interns, churches and other stakeholders. The college has a clear rationale for adopting a distance-learning, mentor-supported internship programme design and delivery. Its success since the last EER is seen in the consistently high levels of intern and church satisfaction, outstanding qualification completions, and strong evidence of intern development and good destination outcomes.

The college has an in-depth understanding of the needs of the churches it serves. Active church pastors lead the PTE and undertake regular and meaningful engagement with current and potential church partners. The provider also has strong and established relationships with international churches and other Christian ministry education stakeholders.

The college contributed to the development of newly listed Christian ministry qualifications as part of the Targeted Review of Qualifications and is collaborating with other providers to develop new programmes for delivery in 2018. The college has also developed some short-term non-government funded programmes to meet the needs of the churches it serves.

The aim of the internship programmes is to 'to equip students to work and serve in all types of churches and community organisations'. The college has developed and refined the internship model to assist the young interns to bond with their local church, where they have support to succeed and apply their learning. Two-thirds of the curriculum is focused on internship. Individualised internship plans are developed with a personal supervisor. A marker assesses these plans, the students' journals and the end-of-semester supervisor interview. The remaining one-third of the curriculum focuses on acquiring theological knowledge, requiring written assignments on a particular subject. The theology content is taught by direct face-to-face teaching on the block course, supported by resources provided online.

The college has developed a successful approach to enrolment, selection and programme management. Numerous and diverse refinements of the programme and related activities were identified during the EER visit. The college reviews each delivery area and regularly assesses the impact of the changes made. The most recent initiative, responding to intern feedback, is the development and increased use of good quality audiovisual resources. In 2016 the college has targeted an intern cohort with lower previous academic achievement and has provided them with additional support. For example, for the first time, the interns began their written assignments while still on the first block course, being assisted by their tutors.

## 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 college uses a range of academic strategies to support learning, which have contributed to the high levels of educational achievement. A mix of personnel provides the educational instruction through a blend of practical learning – supported by a supervisor – face-to-face teaching on two four-day block courses, and resources available online. The principal is a highly experienced teacher and well qualified in teaching Christian ministry, and delivers most of the block course sessions.

The intern feedback on the teaching is consistently positive. There are clear and robust processes to select capable supervisors with academic qualifications who support the interns' reflections in weekly one-hour sessions. The supervisors are positive about the support and training received for effective mentoring. Interns appreciate the support they receive from their supervisors for their learning, although the feedback sighted is not yet comprehensive. The marker assesses a wide range of written work and provides detailed, thoughtful and constructive feedback to the interns.

The college has a clear and active internal and external moderation plan. Overall, the evaluation team is confident that assessment practice is sound. However, there are gaps in the college's performance with regard to moderation. Just prior to the EER, the college identified a situation in which a marker had not formally responded and taken action on areas identified for improvement by the internal moderator. Similarly, at the time of this EER an external assessor had not taken remedial follow-up action identified at moderation in 2015. Moderation procedure has been revised to ensure that actions will be carried out in a timely manner in the future.

The college has not completed a recent full review of the current programmes as it has begun work with other PTEs developing programmes aligning with the newly listed Christian ministry qualifications. Every two years the principal undertakes professional development overseas, attending an international conference on Christian ministry teaching. Similarly, regular contact with local and international Christian ministry providers offers some benchmarking for the teaching.

There was evidence of basic formal staff appraisal taking place, but not how well this process contributes to the effectiveness of teaching.

## 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**.

Pastoral support and the academic support outlined overlap considerably in this distance-learning context. There is comprehensive evidence that the college has an integrated student-centred approach which has contributed to consistently high rates of retention, course and qualification completions and levels of student satisfaction.

Effective pastoral care for the interns starts with the college's clear choice to keep these mostly young people in their local church and community, where they have established support networks. Their church-based supervisors are selected to provide effective personal and academic support through fortnightly sessions with the interns. All college email communication to the interns includes their supervisor to keep them up to date with their intern's progress.

College staff, particularly the office manager/academic registrar who has primary pastoral responsibility, maintain regular contact with interns via email and phone. Interns are consistently positive about the support they receive from their supervisors and college staff. The first block course scheduled early in the year enables the small team of four to build good relationships with the new interns. The interns get to know the office manager/academic registrar, who is the primary pastoral care worker, and their assignment markers. Some second-year interns attend to offer their first-hand experience of the programme.

Food and accommodation is provided free of charge, and financial support is offered when necessary to those travelling greater distances. Intern feedback states that they view the block courses as being fun, enjoyable and supportive. Study groups are encouraged where there is a cohort of interns in a common location.

The college has established a monthly routine of educational activity to assist the interns with submissions. There is a clear expectation communicated that assignments be submitted on time. This is systematically and closely monitored and prompt action taken as required. For example, it is established procedure that an intern is emailed or phoned if an assignment has not been submitted by three days after the deadline. There is strong evidence that this approach has been effective.

Over time, the college team has developed an in-depth understanding of the factors that impact on the ability of the interns to achieve. It was clearly evident that the college has made (and continues to make) ongoing refinements to ensure interns continue to stay engaged and successfully complete their programme.

## 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**.

This PTE has a clear purpose: to renew churches through developing capable leaders and supporting the establishment of new churches. The governance and management of the college have helped produce exemplary educational achievement and significant outcomes for the graduates, churches and the funder.

The board of the Association of Vineyard Churches, which includes the college principal, governs the PTE. This body has strong relationships with local and international churches. The principal and leadership team have established links with Christian ministry training providers and other tertiary education stakeholders. The organisation has retained key and capable personnel and has succession plans that are critical to the ongoing success of this small PTE. The management processes described in this report support strong performance, but there are some gaps, such as moderation, appraisal of teaching (see Findings 1.4) and lack of in-depth understanding of graduate outcomes.

There was evidence that the college has a reflective culture that covers the key activities of the organisation. Ongoing refinements to the internship programme have contributed to improving results since the last EER. The quality of self-assessment information is good. However, the data collection and analysis of some survey and feedback and staff appraisals was of lesser quality. These gaps could be more effectively managed by the college.

## 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**.

### 2.2 Focus area: Christian ministry training

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 Vineyard College:

- Use recognised good practice when designing surveys and analysing the data collected.
- More systematically identify the value of the outcomes, in particular comparing the change in interns before and after the programme, and the impact of the interns on their churches and communities.

# 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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