



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
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External Evaluation and Review Report

LIFE Leadership College

Date of report: 19 September 2019

About LIFE Leadership College (LLC)

LLC is a long-established PTE historically delivering a range of provision, but has recently reduced its accreditation and delivery. LLC trains people for Christian leadership and ministry roles. Programmes have a strong practical focus. LLC is owned by the LIFE group and the LIFE church is the primary stakeholder and beneficiary of the Christian ministry programmes.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	14 Normanby Road, Mt Eden, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 47 (Pasifika 31 per cent and Māori 10 per cent) International: three students
Number of staff:	Two full-time and six part-time
TEO profile:	See NZQA – LIFE Leadership College Since the previous EER there has been a change of ownership and sale of assets (previously EDENZ Colleges 2016 Limited). The PTE has reduced from seven academies delivering a range of programmes to 50 students, to solely delivering training for Christian ministry.
Last EER outcome:	Not Yet Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	All Programmes
MoE number:	8571
NZQA reference:	C37522
Dates of EER visit:	24 and 25 July 2019

Summary of Results

Educational performance is generally strong. LLC is consolidating and embedding sound systems for academic management and self-assessment processes. Areas identified for improvement are being actively and effectively progressed.

Confident in educational performance

- Achievement at LLC is generally strong. Data is systematically collected, analysed and reported, providing information which LLC is using to improve systems and processes and further lift achievement.
- Students complete qualifications and progress to further study and employment. Evidence of graduates' contribution to their church communities is largely anecdotal and needs strengthening.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Programmes are designed to meet the needs of the LIFE church for leaders with practical skills. However, improved oversight of the practicum component is required to ensure all students are able to develop and demonstrate practical skills at the appropriate level.
- Processes are in place to support students in their learning. The nature of the programme and relationships through LIFE church membership provide a network of support.
- A considered approach has been taken to managing the transition from the larger entity to a smaller, more focussed PTE. LLC has made progress in implementing needed improvements to systems and processes that underpin educational performance. Ongoing attention to embedding self-assessment activities with a clear focus on outcomes for student and stakeholders is required.
- Based on student outcomes, the limited scope of LLC's current programmes, credible evidence of improving self-assessment capability, and good organisational management, NZQA can express confidence in LLC's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students are achieving well in both the level 5 and level 6 diploma programmes in Christian ministry. LLC recognises that there is some disparity in achievement between Māori and other students. Given the fluctuating and low numbers of Māori students, this data needs to be interrogated in more detail to better understand the difference in achievement. There is also a pattern of much higher rates of non-achievement by students from other churches. In response, LLC has improved the recruitment process. It is too soon to measure the impact of this initiative.</p> <p>Achievement targets are stated in the current strategic plan, and achievement is reported and discussed with the board. Non-achievement is discussed by the newly formed academic committee. LLC benchmarks results against Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) reported completion rates. These indicate that LLC is at or exceeds the average for all tertiary education organisations for both programmes. Comparison against similar providers and programmes would be a more useful benchmark to gauge the strength of achievement.</p> <p>Anecdotally, students enhance their personal attributes and improve their wellbeing. Both underpin an increased understanding of the practical skills for leadership, which are monitored and supported as an integral part of the programme and learning environment.</p>
Conclusion:	Achievement is generally strong. Data is systematically collected, analysed and reported, providing information that LLC is using to improve systems and processes and further lift achievement.

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

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>LLC students gain a qualification focused on spiritual and theological knowledge and personal development. Practical leadership skills enable graduates to contribute to the church and wider community.</p> <p>Through a recent and retrospective survey², LLC found sound evidence of quality outcomes in terms of employment and further study. Since the previous EER, 60-64 per cent of graduates, from July and December 2018 cohorts, are progressing from the level 5 to level 6 programme.</p> <p>International students value the opportunity to participate in the New Zealand church community and are confident that the practical skills they are gaining will be useful and relevant in their home countries.</p> <p>LLC is a department of LIFE church and is the LLC's key stakeholder. A primary outcome of LLC is building leadership capability for LIFE church to support its aspirations and growth. Increased leadership capability and other benefits are understood anecdotally through networking within LIFE church. The evidential base to clearly demonstrate the internal accountability, extent and full benefit of outcomes needs to be strengthened.</p> <p>Equally, LLC could improve evidence around graduate strengths to determine how well the partner churches, the two levels of programmes, and the graduates are providing value.</p>
Conclusion:	Students complete qualifications and progress to further study and employment. Graduates' contribution as emerging leaders in LIFE and partner churches needs to be better evidenced.

² Undertaken in 2019 to gather feedback from graduates who completed studies after 2016.

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

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>LLC Christian ministry programmes are well designed and developed, are relevant to LIFE church context, and are structured with theory and practicum components to support teaching and learning. The learning from the level 5 programme leads to and is built on in the level 6 programme.</p> <p>The integrity of some academic practices is variable. Annual programme review has not occurred. A retrospective review this year has been undertaken and provides a basis for comparison for the planned review at the end of the year. Internal and external moderation of the theory component is occurring reliably. The quality of feedback from the external moderation partner has recently been improved following prompts from LLC. Moderation of the practicum has not occurred but is being planned.</p> <p>Student feedback indicates satisfaction with their learning experience. Generally, the content and delivery is meeting their needs. Identification and assessment of students' academic needs could be more systematic. Recent strengthening of tutorials, instruction for referencing, a move from block courses to weekly lecture, and use of Turnitin to detect plagiarism are all improvements prompted by student feedback and LLC's own self-review.</p> <p>The practicum component is half of the total programme hours and is undertaken over the length of the programme. High-level project and learning goals and the associated processes and tasks are established before commencing. However, there is a lack of oversight to ensure the practicum remains relevant for the level of study and that projects continue to effectively support the integration of theory into practice throughout the semester and year of practicum. Formative assessment is not occurring to determine whether students are prepared to meet the summative requirements of practicum. Monitoring of attendance and the practicum hours is loose.</p>
Conclusion:	Programme design and delivery matches the needs of students.

Final

	However, inconsistency in the quality of academic processes and limited oversight of the practicum component undermines the quality of the programmes.
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1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>LLC has a clear concern for the wellbeing of students. Generally, all LLC staff have a shared commitment to provide support. As the majority of students and staff are members of LIFE or a partner church, they know each other well and have access to spiritual support and guidance as well as having a strong social network within the church.</p> <p>Academic support is provided by lecturers, while some practicum supervisors also have the capability and capacity to provide a level of academic support. Systematic student feedback processes provide information that LLC uses to make improvements as it builds a more comprehensive understanding of the priority areas to improve. Some support initiatives introduced this year are sound. These include strengthened recruitment and orientation processes and improved information provided in the student handbook for both domestic and international students. It is too soon to see evidence of the impact of these initiatives on completions and the learning experience of the students. International students reported that they felt well informed and supported.</p>
Conclusion:	Processes are in place to support students in their learning. The nature of the programme and the relationships developed through LIFE church membership provides a network of support. The impact of new initiatives is yet to be seen.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>LLC has experienced significant change since the previous EER. The sale of assets, decline in student numbers, reduced accreditation, and the delivery of Christian ministry programmes has brought LLC back to its origin and mission.</p> <p>During 2019 the organisation has gathered information about its performance using self-assessment as a framework for review. In addition to recognising where performance is strong, LLC is identifying through effective self-assessment areas that require improvement and is making good progress.</p> <p>The strategic plan 2019-2020 has clear goals and targets and these are reported against. The chief executive is meeting established key performance indicators. The focus is on sustainable growth. LLC recognises the need to consolidate, embed practices and processes, and continue to progress identified areas for improvement.</p> <p>Although the board does not conduct formal self-reviews, the recent appointment of a trustee with knowledge of education is a good initiative. There are established meeting and reporting processes, and improved information is now going to the board. This includes organisational and educational performance data which is informing decision-making.</p> <p>Academic leadership and capability is developing. Subcommittees support quality monitoring; terms of reference would strengthen the responsibility and accountability of each. Professional development of lecturers' adult education qualifications are in progress.</p>
Conclusion:	A considered approach has been taken to managing the transition from the larger entity to a smaller, more focussed PTE. LLC has made good progress implementing needed improvements to systems and processes underpinning educational performance. The PTE needs to continue embedding self-assessment with the focus on outcomes for students and stakeholders.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The chief executive is engaging effectively with NZQA and the TEC and reporting compliance matters to the board. Compliance accountabilities are tracked in a calendar to ensure no lapses occur.</p> <p>NZQA attestations and returns have been met within required timeframes. Site approvals, approved programme delivery and change of ownership activities indicate no gaps in capability to monitor or manage compliance accountabilities.</p> <p>Code of Practice obligations are understood by relevant staff. The PTE has completed its annual review of the code and review of student files, as well as interviews with the international students.</p> <p>Programmes are delivered as approved and the quality management system is undergoing a thorough review to better reflect the new organisational structure, learners and programmes. LLC has prioritised key policies and procedures for review.</p>
Conclusion:	Compliance accountabilities are well managed for the context and size of the PTE.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: All Programmes

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal

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 LIFE Leadership College:

- Improve the evidence base to demonstrate the extent to which graduates contribute to the leadership of LIFE and partner churches.
- Strengthen academic oversight associated with the practicum.
- Ensure the practicum activities maintain relevance and alignment to the learning outcomes.
- Request the board of trustees to formally self-review its own performance.

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. TEC reported achievement data for LLC programmes³

New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Christian Leadership) Level 5⁴				
	LLC 88 students	Māori achievement	Pasifika achievement	Under 25 years
Course completion	85%	81%	88%	83%
Qualification completion	77%	67%	80%	72%
New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Christian Leadership) (Level 6)⁵				
	LLC 22 students	Māori achievement	Pasifika achievement	Under 25 years
Course completion	92%	72%	100%	92%
Qualification completion	86%	67%	100%	86%

³ Data provided by LIFE Leadership College

⁴ Data between February 2016 and January 2018

⁵ Data between July 2016 and January 2018

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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