



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report



Air New Zealand Limited trading as Air
New Zealand Academy of Learning

Date of report: 11 September 2025

About Air New Zealand Academy of Learning

Air New Zealand Academy of Learning (AoL) offers a full-time, one-year, pre-employment programme in Aeronautical Engineering. The PTE is part of the Air New Zealand Maintenance Training Organisation (MTO) which provides theory and practical training to the aviation industry in New Zealand and internationally. Graduates gain apprenticeships with a range of aviation, engineering and aerospace businesses including Air New Zealand.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Locations:	7-13 Rennie Drive, Airport Oaks, Mangere, Auckland 125 Orchard Rd, Harewood, Christchurch
Eligible to enrol international students:	Yes (none enrolled)
Number of students (2025):	48 equivalent full-time domestic students (32 in Christchurch, 16 in Auckland) Student profile: Māori four, Pasifika two, self-reported disability nil; male 42, female six
Number of staff:	Two full-time, 23 part-time; 16 full-time equivalent staff
TEO profile:	Air New Zealand Academy of Learning
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Highly Confident in the educational performance and Highly Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Air New Zealand Academy of Learning in 2021.
Scope of evaluation:	New Zealand Certificate in Aeronautical Engineering (Pre-employment Skills) (Level 3) ID. 119928. The PTE delivers this 133-credit, one-year programme to 48 students. This is an increase from 32 in 2024, in response to strong industry demand for apprentices. The PTE receives funding from the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).
MoE number:	8588
NZQA reference:	C61471
Dates of EER visit:	1-3 July 2025

Summary of results

AoL has consistently high student retention, qualification completion, and relevant employment outcomes. This is underpinned by student-centred, timely educational and pastoral support. Self-assessment processes are mostly well embedded, with clear strengths in identification of gaps and weaknesses, and evidence that actions taken lead to improvements or maintenance of quality.

Highly Confident in educational performance

AoL has high course and qualification pass rates. Self-assessment is highly effective, involving fair and robust student selection and onboarding, maintaining course currency, assessment rigour, and monitoring rates of progress.

Graduates, industry stakeholders and the funder (the TEC) gain high value. The programme prepares students well for employment and apprenticeships in aviation engineering.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

AoL provides suitable course design and delivery materials. Academic quality processes are deeply embedded. Instructors are current in the industry. Student satisfaction is high, leading to positive rates of retention and success.

Staff closely monitor student engagement and progress and appropriately intervene to assist the students. There are some opportunities to strengthen aspects of self-assessment, mostly regarding the Code of Practice for pastoral care.

AoL governance and management is effectively leading and supporting educational achievement. Self-assessment practices across all areas of the PTE are mostly well understood by staff. They are highly effective in maintaining standards and supporting high student achievement.

AoL manages well a range of accountabilities in aviation, funding and educational quality assurance. Closer attention to NZQA expectations is warranted.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>For the period 2021-24 inclusive, the median qualification completion rate was 96 per cent. Only seven students (<5 per cent) withdrew without achieving the qualification during that time. The PTE effectively maintains student data to both monitor progress and review achievement.</p> <p>Māori and Pasifika students show similar high achievement levels to other cohorts. The female qualification completion rate (2022-24) was impacted by three Pasifika female withdrawals in 2023. This has contributed to a 75 per cent female completion rate in the same period, which is lower than the male rate. Female enrolments have increased since the last EER, which is a strategic goal.</p> <p>Several factors support the high retention and success: student selection occurs on this oversubscribed programme² and involves a day of initial entry tests and an interview with instructors. There is also a high attendance threshold, which students need to meet before courses can be deemed 'achieved'; additional teaching time is invested when students are struggling.</p> <p>That said, students enrol from a diversity of backgrounds, and not all have experience with tools and materials. Most of the students enrolled are recent school leavers, but some are making a later life career change.</p> <p>To achieve the qualification, students must comply with aviation regulations applicable to aeronautical engineers, such as those set in place by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Practical tasks are completed within a training environment that replicates an aeronautical engineering workplace. Soft skills development is notable.</p>

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

² Routinely there are over 200 applicants for the 48 available places.

	Service IQ indicates that the PTE meets their moderation requirements. All units moderated since the last EER are high use, and the sampled student assessments were verified as acceptable, or acceptable with changes.
Conclusion:	Most students successfully pass the courses and achieve the targeted qualification. Self-assessment is highly effective, involving maintaining course currency, assessment rigour, and monitoring rates of progress throughout the training.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Graduate destination data is well maintained, and the outcome for almost all graduates is known. The EER findings mirror what was found by the NZQA consistency review report in 2022: 'AoL supplied clearly presented data showing positive outcomes for [their] graduates by year. Most graduates [gain employment] in the aviation industry'.</p> <p>AoL graduates are sought after by numerous aviation, engineering, marine and aerospace organisations. Employment outcomes are strong: ranging from 87 per cent to 93 per cent in aviation employment for 2023-24 graduates. All 12 female graduates have gained programme-related employment since the last EER. This is notable as the workforce has been traditionally male dominated.</p> <p>AoL says the size of the programme intake is matched to industry demand to maintain strong employment prospects for graduates. A common pathway from the AoL level 3 qualification is into a paid apprenticeship at level 4, managed by ServiceIQ. Graduates described a smooth transition between the two programme levels. This system of training is critical: a Scarlatti Aviation workforce insights review (for Ringa Hora Workforce Development Council) in 2022 found: 'Demand for aviation engineers has increased steadily since 2000, with a significant dip during COVID-19 – due to the drop in aircraft utilisation and thus lower maintenance requirements. Currently, the model [used by the researchers] estimates a shortage of around 500 aviation engineers, with the gap between supply and demand growing by 7 per cent on average each year'.</p>

	Currently there is no effective, formal process to obtain feedback from employers external to Air New Zealand regarding the roughly one-third of graduates who gain employment outside the PTE's parent company. Tracking graduates beyond initial employment may yield valuable information to further inform programme improvements and help build a broader picture of employment and higher qualification pathways. Employers contacted by NZQA indicated only incidental engagement with AoL, other than various sector-related activities (see Recommendations).
Conclusion:	Graduates and industry stakeholders gain high value from the level 3 programme. This is meeting a critical workforce need, preparing graduates well for employment and apprenticeships in aviation engineering. Graduate outcome tracking is robust and comprehensive, but there is an opportunity to gather graduate employer feedback to build a more comprehensive picture for self-assessment.

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>AoL continues to be closely involved with the design and upkeep of a range of aeronautical engineering qualifications and the requisite unit standards. Key stakeholders that help to maintain course currency and training alignment include: Ringa Hora WDC, ServiceIQ and Air NZ Maintenance Training Organisation (MTO). Other providers of aviation-related trades training as well as CAA are also involved in this quality assurance and wider discussions.</p> <p>Student surveys and focus groups provide AoL with ongoing insights into student satisfaction with the learning and assessment activities. Evaluator interviews with groups of students from both sites confirmed a high degree of satisfaction with the instructional skills, resources and responsiveness of the instructors.</p> <p>The PTE staff are attentive and supportive, and offer help when students find some topics more challenging than others.</p>

	<p>Learning resources and tests are available online. Training rooms and workshops are of a high standard, well maintained, and contain an appropriate, comprehensive array of resources. The instructors are innovative in their approach; they continually reinforce soft skills development (accuracy, adherence to documented procedures, ethics and so on). Students have ample opportunity to also participate in work experience in commercial aviation workshops during term breaks.</p> <p>Instructors hold appropriate professional qualifications and have experience aligned to and exceeding the qualification being offered. This includes certificates in adult education and the instructional techniques course offered through the Air New Zealand MTO. All AoL (and MTO) staff participate in continuing professional development.</p>
Conclusion:	The course design and delivery is well resourced, and academic quality processes are deeply embedded. Instructors are current with industry practice. Student satisfaction is high, contributing significantly to the year-on-year high rates of retention and success.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students and graduates spoke positively about the key student support role based in Christchurch, which provides coverage across both campuses. However, a more regular and nuanced support presence in Auckland would be beneficial.</p> <p>There are scheduled one-to-one 'performance reviews' with each student throughout the programme. At these meetings, academic progress is discussed, any social and personal aspects can be surfaced, and any needed interventions designed with the students, including extra tuition. The Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool is used early in the programme to identify any student with literacy and numeracy support needs. As a result, the Pathways Awarua resource is used by some students.</p> <p>The study environment encourages socialisation between</p>

	<p>students and staff. It also gives students an opportunity to encounter aircraft maintenance staff and other airline professionals participating in training at MTO. There are also ongoing interactions with maintenance professionals through site visits, guest speakers and work experience opportunities during the programme. A recent female graduate interviewed by NZQA said that in her experience AoL was a safe and supportive environment for women.</p> <p>Some good examples of additional support for students experiencing illness or other challenges were described to the evaluators by students and graduates. One example is a student who was eventually recognised as the Most Improved Student at graduation. There is also recognition of the Top Student each year.</p> <p>The current Code of Practice self-review document is technically complete. The self-ratings are modest but realistic. As the self-review was conducted solely by the PTE co-ordinator and did not culminate in an improvement action plan, it lacks full engagement and input from the small group of student support and administrative staff. It is also critical that the facilitation leaders and instructors contribute input for a more wholistic and integrated self-review. AoL could modify its approach to self-review to build a collective understanding and capacity around matching the multiple expectations of the Code of Practice, as well as identifying themes (e.g. student voice findings) and planning for improvements.</p> <p>Although there was responsive support offered to three Pasifika female students in 2023, the review into their subsequent withdrawal lacked depth, based on the records supplied. It also failed to explore any additional culturally nuanced options that might be put in place going forward.</p> <p>This evaluation identified some limitations in how effectively student voice data was triangulated and analysed, as well as in how any resulting actions taken by management are communicated back to the student body.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>The AoL Code self-review found that staff closely monitor engagement and progress and appropriately intervene to help the students. This was confirmed by students and graduates interviewed by the evaluators. However, overall evidence from self-assessment does not clearly support a higher rating under this key evaluation question that the high rates of retention and success may otherwise indicate.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>PTE governance and management, strategy setting, and monitoring and review are integrated into the wider Air New Zealand MTO staffing. This is providing appropriate, well-informed management oversight. There are a range of scheduled, minuted operational and planning meetings as well as highly specified tracking of audit/improvement actions.</p> <p>The staff employed are qualified for their roles and participate in professional development and performance appraisal to monitor and improve current performance and extend their skills and capabilities. There is also clear evidence of investment in facilities, equipment, training resources and student-facing support and engagement options since the last EER.³</p> <p>Staff recruitment and retention practices are strong. PTE staff attend ITENZ⁴ conferences to maintain currency with sector trends and gain insights from other providers' experiences. As mentioned, some elements of educational self-assessment are not currently well tracked, and some of these are more anecdotal in their evidence.</p> <p>The PTE quality management system is embedded within the MTO, which itself is approved under various rules for continuing airworthiness training – CAANZ, CASA (Australia) and EASA (Europe). The identification of faults, gaps or non-conformities is rigorous, ongoing and closely tracked to closure.</p>
Conclusion:	AoL governance and management is effectively supporting educational achievement. The pattern of high retention and success by students, and high graduate outcomes into programme-related employment is underpinned by mostly highly effective, well-documented self-assessment.

³ Notably, students now have access to the wider corporate's Employee Assistance Programme. Recreational facilities and social activities have also been enhanced.

⁴ Independent Tertiary Education New Zealand.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>AoL operates within what can positively be described as a 'compliance culture'. High standards of compliance must be maintained due to the MTO's obligations under various national and international aviation regulations. The positive CAA audit result of their Part 147 accreditation in 2024 is just one recent example of the PTE's high performance in managing these critical compliance accountabilities. Integrity and accuracy are similarly important within the culture of the PTE, and these are among the values and 'soft skills' underpinning both staff behaviours and the instructional model, as described earlier. There is also sound legal and ethical oversight resulting from the central business support functions of the parent company.</p> <p>All attestations and other NZQA-required documentation have been supplied in a timely manner since the last EER. All training aligns with NZQA approvals, and comprehensive moderation processes are in place. Systems for managing course content and unit standard version changes are notably robust.</p> <p>AoL has met its assessment requirements well, including internal and external moderation activities, NZQA consistency review participation, and the required engagement with both Service IQ and Ringa Hora.</p> <p>The 2022 TEC audit of the PTE's enrolment and funding-related policies and practices achieved an 'Orange' 'improvement required' rating: 'systems, processes and practices are acceptable, with minor nonconformities. Improvements will need to be monitored'. The PTE has a good record of monitoring and delivery of TEC-funded programmes in line with their investment plan since the pandemic disruptions to aviation and aviation-related staff recruiting.</p> <p>MTO maintains a manual known as the PSP (Process/Service Procedures). It broadly outlines procedures and responsibilities for its various functions, and this extends to AoL compliance management. The PSP is used as terms of reference by aviation safety auditors. This is a rigorous system and is significant in</p>

	<p>managing compliance and quality.</p> <p>The PTE has a poor record in timeliness of reporting results to NZQA within the three-month requirement. Pandemic-era disruptions and subsequent changes in role are a factor here. Procedures have been rewritten, and reporting times have been corrected in 2025. No student or graduate was disadvantaged by this delay until the end-of-year reporting procedure, which has now been corrected to align with the NZQA requirement.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>AoL manages well a variety of aviation, funding and educational quality assurance accountabilities. Most often the policy, procedure and human resources combine effectively to achieve this. There have been a few gaps in NZQA and TEC-facing compliance, and the refresh of policy and procedure by the PTE leadership is both timely and necessary. Closer attention to ongoing changes in NZQA Rules and quality assurance processes may be required.</p>

Focus areas

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

2.1 New Zealand Certificate in Aeronautical Engineering (Pre-employment Skills) (Level 3)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

Recommendations

Recommendations are not mandatory, 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 Air New Zealand Limited:

- Gather feedback from graduates' employers outside of Air New Zealand more routinely, analyse this and use it to continuously evaluate the programme to maintain relevance to the wider industry (relates to key evaluation question 2).
- Monitor functionality of the student evaluation QR code, and increase the looping back of student feedback, explaining any changes made or unable to be made in response to their input through surveys and student voice meetings. Capture this process as data to inform future programme and Code reviews (relates to key evaluation questions 3 and 4).
- Consolidate current Code of Practice (2021) understanding across all staff and broaden their engagement in existing internal review practices (relates to key evaluation question 4).

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

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 fraud⁵*
- *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.*

⁵ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). 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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