External Evaluation and Review Report

Crown Institute of Studies Limited

Date of report: 9 December 2019

About Crown Institute of Studies Limited

Crown Institute of Studies teaches programmes in travel and tourism, hospitality, and business studies. Crown shares a building with another provider, including joint use of some office space and student common areas including a café.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	80 Anzac Ave, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	158 full-time equivalents in 2018[1]
	Domestic: 66 and International: five at the time of the on-site visit.
Number of staff:	11 full-time and 10 part-time equivalents
TEO profile:	See: Crown Institute of Studies Limited on the NZQA website
Last EER outcome:	In 2018, NZQA was Not Yet Confident in both educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	Travel and tourism, and hospitality programmes. This covers NZQA-approved programmes from levels 3-5.
MoE number:	8644
NZQA reference:	C34947
Dates of EER visit:	10 and 11 September 2019

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[1] As per the 2019 NZQA Annual Fee form

Summary of Results

Crown's stated mission is to provide 'holistic tertiary education services which build both knowledge and wellbeing. [And connect with] with industry and community to help students into a great career'. This evaluation found many positive signs that this is being achieved for numerous students, but there are some weaknesses in educational performance and inconsistencies in self-assessment which are not yet fully addressed by the improvement plan being implemented.

Not Yet Confident in educational performance

Crown is going through a change of ownership. Although numerous aspects of the improvement plan developed since the previous EER have been achieved, educational performance has been variable and important aspects of self-assessment have yet to be embedded as normal practice.

While student achievement is good overall, attendance and completion within the focus area programmes has been weak, leading to ratings of marginal educational performance in the focus areas.

Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment

There is good evidence of pathways operating from secondary school through level 3 to diploma programmes, and students are refining their understanding and direction within the specific area of vocational training. However, there is limited comprehensive data on employment outcomes. Self-assessment regarding value is also currently limited.

Well-structured connections with relevant industry partners are being strengthened and provide students with opportunities to experience the workplace. Connections with secondary schools are also strong.

Programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, are suitable. There are efforts to retain and engage students to help them succeed.

Students are supported and involved in their learning. Crown has invested in facilities to improve this. Governance and management are investing in facilities, planning and making changes carefully, and managing compliance satisfactorily.

Key evaluation question findings[2]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Since the previous EER, Crown has recorded good course pass rates. In 2017 the EFTS-weighted course completion rate was 93 per cent[3], and in 2018, 84 per cent. The much-reduced number of international students at Crown (who come from a range of source nations) are passing and gaining a qualification at rates exceeding 90 per cent.
	Using qualification completion by cohort, focus area achievement rates are variable. More recently, a significant proportion of students have had patchy attendance and so do not progress through the programmes and complete a qualification at expected rates (see Appendix 1). That said, numerous students successfully complete their programme, and progression to higher levels is tracking upwards. There is good evidence that the programmes include relevant content, exposure to industry practices, and incorporate career guidance and connections to potential employers.
	Data was reasonably well aggregated and represented at focus area levels, but it was unclear how well this compared with the more commonly used Tertiary Education Commission measures, and how effectively achievement data is currently used. Crown expressed uncertainties around the comprehensiveness and accuracy of its data. Crown management hopes that the full implementation of the new student management system will resolve this issue. The evaluators used a range of sources to gain a clearer picture of achievement.
	Self-assessment and reflection have occurred regarding improving Māori and Pasifika achievement rates. A number of

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	carefully considered and constructive measures have been taken as a result. However, there is no particular evidence (such as upward trends in attendance or achievement) to indicate that this is working as yet.
Conclusion:	Although the skills and knowledge learned are vocationally relevant and match the NZQA-approved programme, more recently too many students have not completed their programme or gained a qualification. Data quality and use is currently limited.

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

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	At the time of the on-site visit by NZQA, 43 students had graduated from Crown in 2019. This is positive, but there is a lack of comprehensive and aggregated data on historical employment outcomes to determine the value graduates gain from their qualifications. A small number of positive, individual examples of relevant employment outcomes within New Zealand and overseas were provided. Crown has been somewhat hindered by a very low response rate to its most recent graduate survey, and needs to develop other means of gathering this information.

There is good evidence of pathways operating from secondary school, including participation in Crown-facilitated STAR and Gateway programmes, entrance to level 3, and progress to diploma programmes. Students are also refining their understanding of industry and their choice of direction within an area of vocational training. This is further influenced by strong connections with relevant businesses (particularly in the Auckland CBD), where students are exposed to industry by visits, work experience and structured internships.

Connections with industry are relevant, healthy and being strengthened by the concerted effort to re-engage with existing partners and to identify others who can link to the 'real world experience' goals that Crown includes in all its programmes. Connections with secondary schools are also healthy and are well stewarded by a designated staff member. All stakeholders interviewed (from a broad range of organisations) spoke |

	positively about Crown students, interns and graduates, and their interaction with the PTE.
Conclusion:	Graduates have the skills, knowledge and qualifications that link to employment in areas of strong demand. The variable qualification pass rates (see Appendix 1) diminish the potential value for many of the students who enrol. Self-assessment regarding the volume and types of employment gained by graduates, and how well they match the programme to better establish value, is not yet robust.

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, are currently sound and are improving. Good programme pathways exist from level 3-5 (with a plan to bridge the current level 3-5 pathway in hospitality).
	Staff are suitably qualified and undertake professional development. The majority of teaching staff are new to Crown since the previous EER. While new staff have been able to suggest improvements or changes, they have also at times been hindered by administrative glitches, such as not having accurate class lists. Programme reviews have been developed for each programme by the coordinator. These are of good quality, but are varied in their treatment of data. Consultation logs are detailed and are a good example of capturing interaction with industry.
	Programmes include embedded credentials such as City & Guilds, the licence controller qualification, and travel marketing certifications. Achievement data did not present a picture of how many students achieve these and what value may accrue as a result. 'Real world experience' is an active feature of delivery – targeted participation hours of workplace exposure or placement are included in each programme. Self-assessment indicated some tensions around the deliverability of this within the programme hours, but generally this is a credible feature.
	Students are provided with good guidance on programme

	content and assessments. Students reported that their assessments are fair, planned and vary in approach. Hospitality students made up a very small cohort and so are individually coached at present. Anonymised student surveys are used to monitor student satisfaction and teaching performance.
	Crown is operating an internal moderation system, the volume of which appears appropriate, and there is engagement with external moderation systems, both formal external quality assurance and Crown-initiated as required (see 1.6 for more detail).
	Extensive, broad stakeholder engagement to strengthen the PTE, and in particular the student experience, has occurred.
Conclusion:	Programmes are increasingly matching student needs. Retention is improving. Some of the more positive aspects noted under 1.1 and 1.2 also apply here.

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Crown is a student-centred and caring PTE. The evaluators found numerous instances of students being supported with significant life challenges, including mental health, learning disabilities and life circumstances.[4] Crown's individualised help and attention is evident in many aspects of its approach to resourcing roles, pastoral care and support.
	The 'catch-up classes', which have involved deliberate contact to re-engage former students and to offer free tuition to complete the qualification/s, is good follow-up, but unsustainable. Data presented on site indicates that 15 of the 33 students re-engaged have now completed or will potentially complete. These are completions occurring outside the approved programme duration, and so the students are unfunded.
	The Crown campus is lively and attractive; the common areas shared with a neighbouring PTE add to a positive dynamic for

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[4] Out of the ordinary support was provided to a student who was seriously injured in a family violence attack near Crown in 2018.

	staff and students. Trips and out-of-class activities give students wider experiences and opportunities for team building and refocusing. Language weeks occur for Te Reo and the largest Pasifika community languages.
	Since the previous EER, Crown has shifted focus from English language programmes towards supporting literacy and numeracy. No compelling evidence was available to show that this is deeply embedded or effective. Examples were provided of using the national assessment tool and Pathways Awarua with individual students. These showed evidence of language gain. A flexible approach is taken (insofar as possible and allowable) to meeting students' pressing pastoral support needs (there are issues such as transience, health status and family commitments which have proved difficult for numerous students).
	Research-based investigation has influenced the implementation of a new approach to managing and monitoring attendance and supporting positive group dynamics. An absence of data to monitor and measure the impact of these changes was surprising.
Conclusion:	Students are supported and involved in their learning. Crown has invested in facilities to improve this. Retention, attendance and consequently achievement and value need to further improve before higher ratings are warranted.

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	At the time of the on-site visit, Crown was undergoing a change of ownership which was affecting some aspects of governance and management. A new student management system was also being implemented, and staff were working in an environment of change. This has reasonably affected the accuracy of some performance data.
	The new ownership and senior management at Crown have demonstrated considerable commitment to modernising and improving the PTE. They are increasingly adept and effective in supporting educational achievement. There has been significant

	investment in facilities which is directly linked to student needs and programme requirements. Classrooms are being refurbished. There is also good support for staff professional development which, along with human resource planning, provides examples of robust, documented self-assessment for this area.
	Crown successfully worked through the conditions imposed by NZQA in 2017.[5] Extensive, broad stakeholder engagement is now being used to strengthen the PTE and, in particular, is improving the student experience. Crown has updated its offerings, having gained approval for programmes leading to diplomas in hospitality and management, and travel and tourism. Crown has also worked through a detailed post-EER improvement plan. This is in addition to strengthened self-assessment, quality management and educational performance.
	A quality management system is in use. There is improved student assessment and strengthened academic quality processes. Various committees relating to academic quality and student wellbeing meet on a schedule, maintain minutes, consider data and make decisions on relevant areas.
Conclusion:	Governance and management processes are improving.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Crown has reasonably effective processes in place to manage compliance. Senior managers are using a risk management analysis, with tracking to meet required timelines. This has some overlaps with both Tertiary Education Commission and NZQA compliance requirements. As an example, the previous majority shareholder was still responsible for signing off the single data return SDR at the time of the on-site visit, but a plan for transitioning such responsibilities to the new owner is in place. It includes the requisite training to ensure understanding of this responsibility. Notifications from agencies are also routinely monitored.

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[5] This related to now discontinued qualifications in business and hospitality.

	The Code of Practice review for 2018 was comprehensive and factual. It includes examples of Crown proactively working on monitoring the quality of agents. A check of international student files showed no major concerns, and almost all required documents were filed appropriately apart from retention of students' prior educational history in relation to programme entry (see Requirement 1).
	Crown is operating an internal moderation system, the volume of which looks appropriate, and there is engagement with external moderation systems as required (principally ServiceIQ, City & Guilds, NZQA national external moderation). In most instances, the assessments are agreed or changes are made as required. Crown neglected to send post-moderation assessment samples to ServiceIQ in 2018, an oversight which has now being rectified – 2017 moderation occurred, and 2019 moderation is in progress, with one sample completed and accepted. As part of managing compliance with City & Guilds requirements, Crown has participated in a succession of audits. The most recent verification visit led to 'full approval' of the particular programme.
	At the time of the EER, the PTE's website did not in all aspects accurately reflect the current status and operations of the PTE (see Requirement 2). Crown's previous EER rating was also incorrectly stated in one document but was subsequently corrected when this was identified by NZQA.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Travel and Tourism programmes

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Good**

2.2 Focus area: Hospitality programmes

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Good**

Ratings for educational performance in both the above focus areas are affected by the patchy qualification completions reflected in Crown's own data on programme performance (see Appendix 1). There is some uncertainty around student readiness for the programmes, as attendance has been an issue for many. Many students have ongoing life challenges which appear to be affecting their ability to stay engaged and complete their programme within the expected (funded and approved) duration. Crown management and staff have planned and implemented a wide range of supports and changes to the way programmes are structured to mitigate this.

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 Crown Institute of Studies Limited:

1. Improve the accuracy of achievement data, and the useful aggregation and analysis of that data for use in programme review.

2. Gather more comprehensive data on graduate destinations.

3. Gather attendance data to build a clearer picture on which support initiatives are working or not.

4. Map all self-assessment activities to ensure they are appropriate to the scale of the PTE, are well understood by staff, and use accurate data for consideration at the PTE's various meetings and forums.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

NZQA requires Crown Institute of Studies Limited to:

1. Retain evidence of prior educational history in relation to programme entry, and/or how that was judged (PTE enrolment and academic records rules 2012 - Part 1 - PTE Enrolment records, 4.1 (g)).

2. Review and update the Crown website to ensure that all descriptive information, as well as programme-related information (such as programme entry criteria) is accurate, consistent with the published course guide, and reflects NZQA approvals (Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 - Part 2 - Requirements for maintaining registration 5.1.2 Public information).

Appendix 1

Table 1. Travel and tourism level 3 summary performance

	2017	2018	2019*
Qualification completion (number enrolled)	33% (81)	16% (73)	30% (41)
Qualification completion – Māori	3	1	2
Qualification completion – Pasifika	7	3	4
Qualification completion – Other	14	4	5
Qualification completion – International	3	3	1
Qualification completion – under 25	18	9	1

Table 2. Travel and tourism level 4 summary performance

	2017	2018	2019*
Qualification completion (number enrolled)	60% (33)	53% (28)	27% (55)
Qualification completion – Māori	1	2	1
Qualification completion – Pasifika	13	7	5
Qualification completion – Other	0	5	7
Qualification completion – International	0	1	2
Qualification completion – under 25	8	12	10
Withdrawals/deferrals/expulsions	6	1	0

Table 3. Food and beverage level 3 summary performance

	2017	2018	2019*
Qualification completion (number enrolled)	55% (20)	44% (18)	25% (12)
Qualification completion – Māori	2	1	1
Qualification completion – Pasifika	1	1	1
Qualification completion – Other	5	3	1
Qualification completion – International	3	3	0
Qualification completion – under 25	11	5	3

Table 4. New Zealand Diploma in Tourism and Travel (Level 5) 2019

20 enrolled (streams 1 and 2)	3 withdrawn

Source (Tables 1-4): Crown programme review reports; *2019 'in progress' results.

Final report

Table 5[6]

Table 3. Educational performance indicators sourced from academic records

	All Ethnicities	Maori	Pasifika
Enrolments			
2016	110	14	41
2017	63	6	29
2018	79	14	34
2019 targets		**151 EFTs**	
Completions*			
2016	73 (66%)	8 (57%)	25 (61%)
2017	36 (57%)	3 (50%)	15 (52%)
2018	63 (80%)	11 (79%)	22 (65%)
2019 Targets		**15% increase on 2018**	
(Qualifications**)			
2016	70 (96%)	8 (100%)	23 (92%)
2017	25 (69%)	2 (67%)	10 (67%)
2018	38 (60%)	4 (36%)	13 (59%)
2019 Targets		**15% increase on 2018**	
(Retained in study***)			
2016	40 (55%)	3 (38%)	9 (36%)
2017	11 (31%)	0 (0%)	4 (27%)
2018	25 (40%)	2 (18%)	17 (77%)
2019 Targets		**30% of Level 3**	
		20% of Level 4	

(Completions*) are a percentage of Enrolments
(Qualifications**) are a percentage of Completions
(Retained in study***) are a percentage of Completions

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[6] Crown also provided this tabulated data as part of its self-assessment summary but expressed doubt about the exactness of the figures due to the transition between student management systems.

Final report

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 fraud[7]*

- *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.*

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[7] 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.

Final report

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/.

Final report

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Final report