



# Report of External Evaluation and Review

New Zealand Management Academies

Date of report: 2 December 2009

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# Purpose of this Report

*The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.*

## Brief description of TEO

- Location: Auckland and Hamilton
- Type: Private Training Establishment
- Size: Medium, fewer 1000 EFTS; 850 students (of whom 200 are international)
- Sites: Main campus Auckland Central Academy (ACA). Three satellite campuses: Auckland South Academy (ASA) at Otahuhu, Auckland West Academy (AWA) at Henderson, and Waikato Academy (WKO) in Hamilton.

New Zealand Management Academies was founded in 1985 and delivers hospitality, business, and contact centre learning. The vision is: "To be a leader in New Zealand education by making a meaningful difference to the lives of our students and their communities". The ACA student population of about 300 is predominantly international students. The other academies are predominantly New Zealand students and have a strong Māori and Pasifika ambience. All NZMA premises were attractive and well maintained, with vibrant training materials making a strong visual impact.

NZMA offers the following courses:

### **Level 5**

National Diploma in Business; National Diploma in Hospitality Management; NZMA Certificate in Supervision; National Diploma in Business – Extension

### **Level 4**

Certificate in Business and Employment Skills; National Certificate in Hospitality

### **Level 3**

Certificate in Business Administration and Employment Skills; Certificate in Contact Centre and Employment Skills; Certificate in Hospitality and Employment Skills

NZMA Foundation Skills

# Executive Summary

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **highly confident** in the educational performance of New Zealand Management Academies.

Key reasons for this are:

- Results sheets show that course retention and qualification completion rates are good and improving. There is strong evidence that students enhance their “soft skills” and self-confidence while studying at NZMA. The students achieve an output that enhances their employment opportunities and evidence suggests that this has positive community outcomes.
- NZMA has strong links to stakeholders in business and industry and there is sound evidence that employers seek NZMA graduates because they have the relevant skills and the right attitude to work.
- Tutors have wide industry experience, and undertake ongoing professional development relevant to the courses delivered by NZMA. As a result, they are well placed to analyse student needs and are able to provide appropriate, effective, and varied learning experiences for their students.
- Student support is a major strength of NZMA. The students spoken to on all four campuses reported that they are well supported by all staff. This increases the likelihood that students will settle in to their work and the community, and develop their self-confidence.
- NZMA has a clear vision and values. These were recently regenerated by a “bottom-up” consultative process. The process was clearly meaningful for all the staff spoken to, and has resulted in a positive attitude toward NZMA and a clear commitment to going the extra mile for the students.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **highly confident** in the capability in self-assessment of NZMA. Key reasons for this are:

- NZMA lives by the value, “we continuously evolve and develop to better meet our stakeholders’ needs”. There is considerable evidence that staff are always looking to improve what NZMA does and that this leads to better learning and better outcomes for students.
- NZMA has a comprehensive timetable for focusing on self-assessment activities. These include student surveys and employer consultation. There is considerable evidence that these activities have the support of NZMA staff, students, and employers, and help improve the whole educational experience of NZMA’s students.

- A system of reviewing student performance every five weeks, which was instituted as an outcome of self-assessment, generates further, continuous self-assessment data which is used to make worthwhile improvements. The five-week review is powerfully motivating, and not just for the deadlines it creates. For many students it is welcome evidence that NZMA cares about them.
- Students meet in the absence of tutors every five weeks. The class representatives take their concerns to regular meetings. Minutes, including agreed actions, are published. Students thus participate in NZMA's self-assessment, and see that it works.

## Requirements and recommendations

There are no requirements or recommendations.

# Basis for External Evaluation and Review

*Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1) (d) and (e) of the Act.*

*In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.*

*NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITPQuality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and 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 policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.*

*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)).*

# Findings

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

*Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>*

## Outline of scope

The agreed scope of the external evaluation and review of New Zealand Management Academies included a blend of qualifications and organisation-wide issues, specifically:

- National Diploma in Business (Level 5)
- National Certificate in Hospitality (Level 4)
- Certificate in Contact Centre and Employment Skills (Level 3).

These are all high priority programmes for NZMA, affecting significant numbers of international and New Zealand learners. In addition, the following mandatory focus areas were also included:

- Governance, management, and strategy.
- Student support (including international students).

# Part 1: Answers to Key Evaluation Questions across the organisation

*This section provides a picture of the TEO's performance in terms of the outcomes achieved and the key contributing processes. Performance judgements are based on the answers to key evaluation questions across the focus areas sampled. This section also provides a judgement about the extent to which the organisation uses self-assessment information to understand its own performance and bring about improvements, i.e. capability in self-assessment.*

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

### **Context**

As a result of self-assessment, NZMA has implemented a system of evaluating students every five weeks. It has also instituted its Phoenix programme, which introduces students to community information and support services. NZMA has introduced a participation programme to replace attendance recording. Students are required to telephone in if they are going to be late or absent. Staff telephone students who fail to do this, on the same day, and find out what the problem is.

### **Explanation**

With only a few exceptions, learners who attend to the end date of the courses included in the focus areas, pass the qualification. Ninety-two per cent of the most recent National Diploma in Business class (mainly international students) stayed the course and completed the qualification. The learners' achievement rate in this area was excellent.

Many of the New Zealand students are second-chance students who bring with them the "baggage" from their previous unsuccessful education experience and their community and home life. This sometimes makes it difficult for them to complete the course so the qualification achievement rates for these learners are lower. However, in the focus area courses, qualification completions for these students have increased from around 60 per cent in 2007 to 68 per cent in 2008.

The five-weekly review system provides teaching staff and management with information for taking timely remedial action when required. The students spoken to on all four campuses were very positive about this system and for many it showed that NZMA was concerned for their welfare and progress. There is plausible evidence from staff and students that this system has improved learner achievement.

The Phoenix programme is an initiative organised by support staff. Students must attend presentations from government and other support agencies. Thus, for example, all students receive the message on domestic violence, whereas in the past those who most needed this advice would often absent themselves from voluntary sessions. There is evidence that this

programme has empowered students to re-organise their lives in ways that have enabled them to stay on course and achieve qualifications.

NZMA says that the participation programme has more impact than the old attendance system where students received warning letters. The warnings did little towards solving most problems. Now, staff check students' participation every hour. Students who are asleep are recorded as not participating. The students said they saw their participation as being "just like work" and thus an important part of learning employment skills. There is clear evidence that staff are actively involved in promoting student attendance in order to improve completion of courses and achievement of qualifications.

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

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

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

### **Context**

NZMA has strong commercial links. It hosts industry groups at all sites very regularly and uses information from these meetings as part of self-assessment. The satellite campuses have strong links with their local councils and also work proactively with other TEOs in their districts. Contact centre students conduct a "cold-calling" campaign on behalf of a charity during the final stage of their training.

### **Explanation**

NZMA has a strong employment focus for its learners. One hundred per cent of the hospitality graduates were employed at the end of their programme in 2008. Employment rates for the contact centre and employment skills course are also very high.

NZMA invites consultation by industry advisory groups four times a year, and acts on the advice received. For example, as a result of student feedback, the advisory groups have recently recommended the inclusion of a new software package in the business programme. There is evidence that students and employers value this initiative.

The value of NZMA training is reinforced by information gained from "graduate tracking". Tutors telephone graduates six weeks and 12 weeks after course completion to ascertain whether they are employed or have gone on to further training and to gather opinions on the relevance and utility of their learning at NZMA. NZMA uses information from these calls to inform its self-assessment processes and ensure that its courses are of value to learners and employers.

Students' participation in catering and bar service events, both on and off-site, enhance the value of the hospitality programmes for stakeholders and learners. Students and staff praised the value of this real-life experience for both students and employers. This is important for the acquisition of relevant skills and confidence and enhances students' employment prospects.

The cold-calling campaign is a valuable part of contact centre training. Staff and students attest to the value of this real-life experience of talking to the public on behalf of a good cause. Certificates from the charities and comments from them to tutors are clear evidence of the value to the charities.

All these processes help to increase the value of NZMA training to all stakeholders, including learners.

### 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**.

#### **Context**

NZMA identifies students' needs by initial testing and discussion. All programmes are tailored to the individual learner's needs, are very practical, and include group activities. Hospitality and contact centre programmes have excellent practical facilities so that students work in an environment that mimics the workplace. Students and courses are evaluated every five weeks. NZMA has strong links to employers to ensure that its programmes match their needs.

#### **Explanation**

NZMA seeks feedback regularly through meetings with industry advisory groups, course evaluations, and the five-week reviews. This feedback is systematically reviewed to ensure that the programmes match the needs of learners and other stakeholders.

Feedback from business students and employers has led NZMA to teach a more up-to-date business programme ensuring better pathways to further education. NZMA is working with the UK education provider Edexcel and expects to offer Edexcel's business qualifications from 2010. This will provide students with an internationally recognised qualification and better pathways to further education.

NZMA recognises that internet facilities are important for students both for study and to replicate conditions in the workplace. It has a comprehensive programme for replacing hardware in a timely manner and has established a "student common" with links to useful websites. These initiatives enable students to study using the most up-to-date material.

The five-weekly review system provides teaching staff and management with good information on how well students' needs are being met. Staff and students talked about the benefits of these frequent checks and evidence indicates that this system has contributed to improving course completion rates.

NZMA has strong links to employers. A good example of the benefits of these links is that at least one company has employed seven of NZMA's contact centre graduates. One of the graduates has been promoted to supervisor. This supports the notion that NZMA's contact centre and employment skills programme matches employers' needs.

There is strong evidence that the training given to hospitality students is similarly valued.

## 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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**.

### **Context**

All tutors have been employed in relevant businesses and industries. They are financially supported to attend professional development courses and those who do not already have educational qualifications are studying towards certificates such as the National Certificate in Adult Education and the National Certificate in Adult Literacy Education (Vocational).

### **Explanation**

There is a strong collegial relationship between tutors and a strong commitment to continuous improvement of their teaching. The tutors spoken to gave many examples of sharing and commenting on each others' work. They review each others' session plans and ensure the plans cover learning styles and individual student needs. The senior tutors and the managers at each site also observe staff. Tutors felt that this collegial culture contributes to consistency of learning. Learners reported that for them this culture produced a learning atmosphere very different to anything they had experienced in secondary education and they felt that the tutors supported them and "believed in them".

NZMA has combined-campus professional development days where best practice and exemplars are shared. There is evidence of informal mentoring and a formal system is being implemented. These practices increase the skills of tutors and enhance the experience of teaching and learning at NZMA.

All the tutors interviewed in the course of this review came from industry and had either achieved relevant teaching qualifications or were studying for the National Certificate in Adult Education and the National Certificate in Adult Literacy Education (Vocational). NZMA supports this study by paying the fees. Tutors report that studying gives them a bond with their learners, especially during discussion about managing time to meet priorities.

Students generally found the teaching effective and interesting. They liked the practical activities and the group work and the readiness of the tutors to respond to their needs. Staff and students said that the practical facilities for hospitality and contact centre training were authentic, practical, and greatly enhanced the learning.

Student success in competitions such as the Culinary Fare and other awards are further evidence of the effectiveness of the teaching at NZMA.

Staff are involved in industry training organisation moderation activities with the ElectroTechnology Industry Training Organisation and the Hospitality Standards Institute. The problems that NZQA had with some earlier assessment materials have now been identified and NZMA's action plan has now been accepted and implemented.

In all the teaching spaces there are vibrant training materials making a strong visual impact. Public spaces contain informative notice boards, displays to help learners identify staff,

displays of certificates, and details of successful alumni. These give information and inspiration and contribute to an atmosphere of educational achievement.

## 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**.

### **Context**

NZMA has student support staff at every site. Support staff have a self-assessment programme for both domestic and international students. This has led to initiatives such as the Phoenix programme, revised induction programmes and the customer relationship management (CRM) programme, which tracks learner progress.

### **Explanation**

NZMA has a culture of total support for students. This starts with an initial interview and appropriate enrolment, followed by a strong induction programme. These procedures are continually evaluated and have been refined over time as a result of student and other feedback.

Tutors offer first-line support and provide their cell phone numbers to the students to emphasise their willingness to help. There is a strong collegial relationship between tutors and support staff and plenty of dialogue to ensure that students receive appropriate assistance and advice. Support staff are up to date with academic matters. The number of support staff is clear evidence of management's commitment to total support. This support has enabled international students to settle in to New Zealand society and for some students has been instrumental in enabling them to achieve success.

NZMA has introduced the Phoenix programme and the participation programme to increase guidance and support for learners. The system of assessment and evaluation every five weeks also provides guidance to learners and many saw it as supportive.

There is strong evidence to show that NZMA has responded to issues raised during self-assessment and feedback sessions to:

- introduce more cultural days
- increase the security to help students feel safe
- keep employment opportunities in front of students
- increase progress reporting
- monitor computer support and introduce new equipment
- increase community involvement opportunities
- introduce a mentoring programme (fourth-year hospitality students mentor third-years)
- make breakfast available for those who missed breakfast before classes

- introduce the International Student Survival Guide
- introduce a new induction timetable.

NZMA believes that these actions help to reduce barriers to learning and assure learners that NZMA is concerned for their general well-being.

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

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

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

### Context

NZMA is the core organisation in an integrated business group that includes the Fern School of English and Redfish Employment Specialists. In May 2009, all NZMA staff reviewed the organisation's four-year-old vision and values, in order to ensure that they were fit for purpose and responsive to current needs

### Explanation

Senior management and other staff focus strongly on learner outcomes. In combination with Fern and Redfish, management and staff can produce a comprehensive training package for its learners which develops their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable them to obtain qualifications and employment. Staff and students spoke about the power of this experience and the learning outcomes show that NZMA management is very effective in supporting educational achievement.

The executive team is experienced and cohesive and determined to live the vision and values. All interviewed staff spoke favourably about the visibility of the leadership and their availability and openness. These staff clearly believe that the executive team expresses the vision and values in their actions. Staff also believe that the vision and values are a major influence on educational achievement.

All staff consulted spoke passionately about the vision and values they had helped generate. The value, "We work as one team to make a meaningful difference" was clearly in evidence and was understood as a cooperative effort to support educational achievement.

The excellent facilities at NZMA indicate effective support for educational achievement by management.

Management provide staff with financial support to attend professional development courses and study towards educational qualifications, and also arrange in-house professional development days. Staff perceive this as very effective in supporting educational achievement.

NZMA management acknowledges staff achievements through gifts and special meetings. NZMA believes that these immediate acts of appreciation and recognition create a positive attitude, encourage discretionary effort, and thus support educational achievement.

## Part 2: Performance in focus areas

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

### 2.1 Focus area: National Diploma in Business (Level5)

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

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

#### **Context**

This is a one-year programme offered at the Auckland Central Academy and at the Otahuhu campus.

#### **Explanation**

The majority of students on this programme are international students: 92 per cent of the 2008 class completed the course and passed the qualification 66 per cent with distinction. These are excellent results.

Industry advisory groups are invited for consultation four times a year. Presentations and courses from outside organisations such as the Department of Labour and the Accident Compensation Commission (ACC) are included. The students spoken to talked about the difficulty of finding employment during the current recession, but most have part-time jobs. Nine students were doing data entry work for one company. This work had been organised through Redfish, the employment company associated with NZMA. The NZMA website features biographies of diploma graduates. Tutors track the graduates by telephone, six weeks and 12 weeks after course completion. NZMA has good systems for maximising learner achievement.

Tutors workshop each others' session plans so that they match the learning styles and needs of the learners. Tutors use many group activities. The five-weekly assessment system identifies problems early and tutors work out a catch-up plan to match the needs of those who are falling behind. The ACC course is certificated and this can help to enhance students' immigration status. There is clear evidence that NZMA seeks to match the needs of its learners and other stakeholders.

Tutors practise open communication and act on feedback from their classes. They also observe each others' sessions and share the learning. On professional development days tutors can discuss what has worked and what hasn't, and they have also workshopped "ice-breakers" for use in class. The five-weekly review system gives tutors an opportunity to reflect on their work and to update session plans, which also have very clear marking schedules and a system of internal moderation. These processes plus the outcomes show that the teaching of this programme is very effective.

Students are given a two-day induction before they start on the coursework. Tutors are the first line of support and give their email addresses and cell phone numbers to learners to emphasise that they are available to provide help. All the students spoken to felt they were well supported and said they would encourage others to study this course at NZMA.

Tutors referred to the positive effects of the vision and values process and remarked that they were very happy with the way management developed and upheld these. They clearly felt that their actions and those of management supported educational achievement.

## 2.2 Focus area: National Certificate in Hospitality (Level 4)

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

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

### Context

This is a 25-week programme (20 weeks for learners who have achieved the level 3 hospitality qualification at NZMA) offered at the Henderson, Otahuhu, and Waikato campuses. The level 5 certificate is offered at the Central Academy

### Explanation

This course has a lower completion rate than the National Diploma of Business. The learners, mainly domestic students, come from quite different backgrounds. If the students stay the course, they also pass the qualification, so the challenge is to motivate them and help them overcome the community and personal problems that keep them away from class. The five-weekly review system, the Phoenix programme and the participation programme all appear to be important in keeping students on track with their studies and motivated to attend the course.

NZMA provides a strong pathway in hospitality. Learners who have come through from NZMA's level 3 achieve well at level 4. There is evidence that the tutors have fostered a culture of strong peer support among the learners and this contributes to their obvious commitment to their studies and the value of completing level 4.

The course is very practical, with good facilities. Students provide catering for outside organisations, including other PTEs, and are assessed during these functions. NZMA students achieve excellent results in the Culinary Fare competitions, which provide a benchmark with other training organisations. Staff have very good industry experience. The students spoken to who had done work experience felt that their training was in line with industry practice.

The staff spoken to were almost all studying for further qualifications. This keeps them up to date with the latest practices and enables them to share with their students the challenges of studying and working. It also helps the students to comprehend what life-long learning looks like.

Moderation is more than paper-based as tutors observe each other while assessing. Tutors also attend Hospitality Standards Institute moderation meetings. There is good evidence that assessments are well moderated and benchmarked with other TEOs.

All the students spoken to said they would recommend the programme and study at NZMA to friends and whānau.

## 2.3 Focus area: Certificate in Contact Centre and Employment skills (Level 3).

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

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

### **Context**

This is a 20-week course offered at the Henderson, Otahuhu, and Waikato campuses. Some students have to complete a foundation skills course before they can start. On completion students can gain employment in contact centres or go on to further study.

### **Explanation**

The course completion rate is very good given the characteristics of the students enrolling. Again, if the students stay the course, they also pass the qualification, so the challenge is to motivate them and help them overcome those community and personal problems that keep them away from class. Evidence indicates that the measures taken by NZMA, particularly the five-weekly review system, are contributing to improved retentions. NZMA awards certificates to students on this course every five weeks. About 50 per cent go on to employment and over 30 per cent staircase to further training, but staff maintain that the most positive outcome of this course is the improvement in students' attitudes, confidence, and self-esteem. The learners confirmed this not only by what they said but by the assured and well-mannered way they engaged with the evaluation team. The tutors have strong community involvement and see their work as having community outcomes as well as outcomes for the individual. The evaluation team often heard of students who, "Came as a nobody: left as somebody". All these good outcomes are celebrated.

All four classrooms for this course are "sponsored" by contact centre companies, which indicates that they value the outcomes of this course. Industry speakers are invited to the academies to engage with the students once in each five-week block. In response to feedback from self-assessment sessions tutors are broadening their range of industry contacts. This close relationship between NZMA and employers enhances students' employment opportunities.

Tutors work hard to match the needs of the learners. Individual needs are identified when learners begin their course and tutors work together on session plans to maximise meeting students' needs. NZMA offers the course in evening sessions for those who cannot attend during the day. All the students spoken to appreciated the tutors' efforts to meet their needs. When asked if they would recommend the course to others they said, "We are!" or words to that effect.

Learners and teachers reported very positive relationships. The practical and group work engages the learners. There are processes in place to ensure that assessment is valid and fair. Tutors assess part of the final module by monitoring calls on the charity campaign. There is substantial evidence that the teaching is very effective and this is reflected in the outcomes.

Learners are guided and supported. Learners come to value the participation programme seeing it as "just like work". Course time is five hours per day, tutors make themselves

available outside these hours for individual tutorials so that the whole class is not held back and individuals are supported. Tutors act as referees for student employment applications. This strong guidance and support maximises the learner's chances of completing their qualification and achieving a good outcome.

Tutors spontaneously praised the review and implementation of NZMA's vision and values. They also valued management's encouragement of personal and professional development. Tutors clearly perceived NZMA's governance and management as being very effective in supporting educational achievement.

## **Mandatory focus area: Governance, management and strategy**

The overall rating for performance in governance, management and strategy is **Excellent**.

The overall rating for capability in self-assessment in governance, management and strategy is **Excellent**.

### **Context**

NZMA is run by an executive team with oversight of the organisation's overall operations. Each of the component academies is run by a manager, who is accountable to the executive team.

### **Explanation**

The recent review of NZMA's vision and values was very effective in revising and communicating student-oriented purposes to the whole organisation. There is considerable evidence that NZMA continually aligns its policies and practices to serve the vision and values. This motivates all staff to devote more discretionary effort to NZMA and reinforces the vision and values, thus completing a virtuous circle.

Under the unifying umbrella of the vision and values, the separate academies have been able to express their individual character and successfully meet the particular needs of their local communities. Staff felt that this happy blend of corporate unity and local character helped maximise educational achievement in their area.

NZMA manages resources effectively. The hospitality training facilities in particular were excellent and NZMA is trialling a "virtual bar" computer programme at the Henderson academy. All staff and students spoken to were happy with the resources at their disposal.

The website has been overhauled and biographies of alumni included. The website seems to be working effectively particularly for student recruitment.

Interviewed staff were happy with their delegations and decision-making rights. There is considerable evidence that staff felt empowered by the organisation. Staff said they were focused on solutions rather than problems.

The performance management system and process is informed by the results of the five-weekly review system while maintaining a longer timetable for goals and actions. Again, alignment with the vision and values keeps performance management consistent and fair. There is a review and recognition process for staff and there is a range of staff rewards

ranging from cards of appreciation, through shopping vouchers, time in-lieu, to remuneration review. This is important for staff morale.

Staff have the work experience, skills, and attributes appropriate to their positions and there is a strong professional development programme in place. There is a strong culture of working as one team to make a difference and staff office arrangements and meeting timetables facilitate this.

NZMA understands that emergencies and accidents need to be well managed. Responses to such events are reviewed along with procedures. Staff reported that these events had been managed well.

A strong indication of others' perception of NZMA's excellence in governance and management is the number of unsolicited calls from people wanting to join the staff even when no positions are being advertised.

### **Mandatory focus area: Student support (including international students)**

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

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

#### **Context**

NZMA has a culture of total student support. Tutors provide the front-line support and there is a large number of support staff available to help.

#### **Explanation**

NZMA has a very effective system of student support. There is considerable evidence that from initial interview through to graduation the staff of NZMA are available to support students and help them find the solutions to any problems that might affect their academic progress. For international students, this support maximises their opportunities and gives them a favourable impression of New Zealand. Domestic students talked about being treated with respect and staff believing in them. Several asked rhetorically, "Why couldn't school be like this?" For many students this is their first or best experience of the sort of support learners need if they are to succeed.

Student support is well staffed at NZMA. All staff are engaged in active student support and the evaluators noted three dedicated support staff at ACA, five at ASA, two at AWA and two at WKO. The NZMA Foundation Learning staff are also perceived by learners and tutors as essential support staff. Learning to organise and support oneself is an outcome for learners and a goal for support staff. Initially students bring many issues to tutors and support staff but with guidance they are able increasingly to solve their own problems.

A customer relationship management (CRM) tool was installed 18 months ago which enables students to keep track of their educational progress. It provides a comprehensive record since all communications, including emails, can be attached to the system and retrieved by support staff to help with information management. The international students

in particular perceived that NZMA cared for them and could provide information back to them on, for example, immigration issues.

There is excellent continuous self-assessment of NZMA's support systems. For example as a result of a student survey carried out in February 2009 five practical steps to improve induction were identified and acted on.

# Statements of Confidence

*The statements of confidence are derived from the findings within and across the focus areas. A four-step scale is used: highly confident, confident, not yet confident, not confident.*

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **highly confident** in the educational performance of New Zealand Management Academies.

Key reasons for this are:

- Results sheets show that course retention and qualification completion rates are good and improving. There is strong evidence that students enhance their “soft skills” and self-confidence while studying at NZMA. The students achieve an output that enhances their employment opportunities and evidence suggests that this has positive community outcomes.
- NZMA has strong links to stakeholders in business and industry and there is sound evidence that employers seek NZMA graduates because they have the relevant skills and the right attitude to work.
- Tutors have wide industry experience, and undertake ongoing professional development relevant to the courses delivered by NZMA. As a result, they are well placed to analyse student needs and are able to provide appropriate, effective, and varied learning experiences for their students.
- Student support is a major strength of NZMA. The students spoken to on all four campuses reported that they are well supported by all staff. This increases the likelihood that students will settle in to their work and the community, and develop their self-confidence.
- NZMA has a clear vision and values. These were recently regenerated by a “bottom-up” consultative process. The process was clearly meaningful for all the staff spoken to, and has resulted in a positive attitude toward NZMA and a clear commitment to going the extra mile for the students.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **highly confident** in the capability in self-assessment of New Zealand Management Academies. Key reasons for this are:

- NZMA lives by the value, “we continuously evolve and develop to better meet our stakeholders’ needs”. There is considerable evidence that staff are always looking

to improve what NZMA does and that this leads to better learning and better outcomes for students.

- NZMA has a comprehensive timetable for focusing on self-assessment activities. These include student surveys and employer consultation. There is considerable evidence that these activities have the support of NZMA staff, students and employers, and help improve the whole educational experience of NZMA's students.
- A system of reviewing student performance every five weeks, which was instituted as an outcome of self-assessment, generates further, continuous self-assessment data which is used to make worthwhile improvements. The five-week review is powerfully motivating, and not just for the deadlines it creates. For many students it is welcome evidence that NZMA cares about them.
- Students meet in the absence of tutors every five weeks. The class representatives take their concerns to regular meetings. Minutes, including agreed actions, are published. Students thus participate in NZMA's self-assessment, and see that it works.

# Actions Required and Recommendations

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's regular scheduling policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report.

## Recommendations

There are no recommendations.

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