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External Evaluation and Review Report

Alphacrucis Limited

Date of report: 1 June 2021

About Alphacrucis Limited

Alphacrucis Limited operates under the same governance, management and faculty as Alphacrucis International College (AIC). Alphacrucis Limited is owned by the Australian-based tertiary institution, Alphacrucis College, and the Assembly of God New Zealand, and delivers one programme – the Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4).

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	60 Rockfield Road, Penrose, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 2020, 5.50 EFTS ¹ (0.9 EFTS Māori, 3.5 EFTS Pasifika)
Number of staff:	Five full-time and 30 part-time (joint with AIC)
TEO profile:	Alphacrucis Ltd
Last EER outcome:	June 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confident in educational performance• Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of this evaluation:	Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4)
MoE number:	8932
NZQA reference:	C45362
Dates of EER field work:	1-5 March 2021

¹ Equivalent full-time students

Summary of results

Alphacrucis Limited (Alphacrucis) is well connected with its Christian ministries community. The programme is highly relevant and valued by learners and Assemblies of God churches. Academic processes are in place. The evidence to demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of self-assessment information and processes is of inconsistent quality and is a work in progress.

Confident in educational performance	<p>Course completions are consistently strong. However, the quality and coverage of data analysis and findings, while improving, is inconsistent.</p> <p>Alphacrucis is clearly meeting the most important needs of key stakeholders. Learner outcomes are also apparent and generally well evidenced.</p> <p>The Christian ministry programme and design matches the needs of learners and Assembly of God church communities. Academic progresses are in place. However, the evidence to demonstrate the extent to which processes are effective remains a work in progress.</p>
Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment	<p>Learners are comprehensively supported in their learning in the substantial field work component of the programme. The effectiveness of online support and guidance is less strong.</p> <p>Significant and useful changes have occurred in governance and management and in organisational processes and practices. Self-assessment is strong, and areas identified for improvement within the Christian ministry programme are well articulated and understood.</p> <p>Effective processes are in place to manage core compliance obligations and accountabilities.</p> <p>Although gains have been made in self-assessment, there is continued variability in the quality of information, coverage and analysis of the only programme delivered by Alphacrucis Limited. This affects the level of confidence NZQA has that self-assessment will be effectively used to guide and inform performance going forward.</p>

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Christian ministry level 4 learners are predominantly Māori and Pasifika, although Māori enrolments are declining. Course completions³ range from 92-77 per cent over 2018, 2019 and 2020. Alphacrucis uses the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) target of 80 per cent as a benchmark, which is exceeded in two of three years.⁴ The less reliable qualification completion data for these part-time learners is generally low, ranging from 58-12 per cent. Alphacrucis learners are in cohorts with learners from AIC, and course and qualification completions vary between both entities. At face value, Alphacrucis' enrolled learners appear to perform better, and reasons for non-completion are generally understood.</p> <p>The monitoring of achievement data is improving. Detailed analysis has only relatively recently occurred, so the identification and understanding of trends is somewhat limited, and there are no significant comparisons in terms of analysis undertaken with AIC data. Alphacrucis recognises areas that require further detailed review, such as revising processes to select learners and ensure factors that impact achievement are sufficiently explored at entry.</p> <p>Some areas of understanding achievement are underdeveloped. Alphacrucis' own internal benchmark for this programme is to be confirmed and the identification of other tertiary education organisations to provide meaningful comparison is a work in progress. Internal moderation as a quality assurance mechanism has not occurred consistently across this programme as a system of validating assessment</p>

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ See Appendix 1.

⁴ Alphacrucis Limited is not TEC funded.

	practice. Alphacrucis recognises this as a gap and is prioritising to address this.
Conclusion:	Course completions are consistently strong. However, the quality and coverage of data analysis and findings, while improving, is inconsistent and has impacted the self-assessment rating for this key evaluation question.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Assemblies of God churches look to Alphacrucis to increase the capability of church members through the provision of training and education. Alphacrucis engages with Assembly of God membership at all levels of the church, formally and informally. Alphacrucis council is made up of stakeholders who ensure the PTE is well aligned with the church's values and supports the strategic direction and mission. The recent appointment of a national director whose primary focus is on stakeholder engagement is having a positive impact on changes made in the organisation. Stakeholders report an increase in contact with Alphacrucis and positive discussions focusing on future need and innovative training pathways. Alphacrucis effectively supports the church in this capacity to fulfil its mission and ministry.</p> <p>In 2019, following one year of delivery, NZQA consistency review deemed that the Christian ministry programme provided sufficient evidence that the graduate profile outcomes are met. Since then, destination data for learners from one year indicates that the majority of students moved to volunteer work in their church, while the programme also prepared students for success in their workplaces. Twenty-nine per cent found paid employment in their church, and 25 per cent continued with study at level 5. This outcome data is a combination of Alphacrucis and AIC data, and it is not clear what can specifically be attributed to Alphacrucis learners and graduates. Engagement with employers and understanding the extent to which graduate skills and knowledge are evident in employment was identified as an area for improvement in 2019 but is yet to</p>

	<p>be realised.</p> <p>In addition to gaining qualifications, personal and spiritual growth are recognised as important outcomes for learners, as they contribute to the graduate's capability to engage in Christian ministry. While Alphacrucis values these outcomes, the PTE has still to develop ways to collect information to demonstrate the extent of these outcomes.</p>
Conclusion:	Alphacrucis is clearly meeting the most important needs of key stakeholders. Learner outcomes are also apparent and generally well evidenced.

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

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The Christian ministry programme is highly relevant and matches the needs of learners and the primary stakeholders: Alphacrucis Australia, Assembly of God churches and their communities. The programme has a significant experiential component purposefully aligned to the learning outcomes, credibly integrating learning into practice in a way that is meaningful for the learners. Innovative programme design provides several options for learners to engage in study from within the local church, in bundles and on campus.</p> <p>Programme design and delivery has been a focus for the programme manager and national director, who have been in these roles for well under a year. That said, improvement is noted. Systems and processes are being established or are now in place, some more embedded than others. Academic oversight primarily falls to the new programme manager who recognises areas that require improvement, such as the need to ensure internal moderation occurs systematically and is robust. The academic committee is not having an impact on the rigour and quality of teaching and learning to support the programme manager.</p> <p>Academic staff are experienced in teaching and in their area of delivery. Annual programme review was undertaken in 2020.</p>

	This practice is scheduled to continue and provides a sound overview of the programme and outcomes. Data and information prior to 2020 has been lost or is not available for comparison, limiting the ability to consider trends or use information insightfully.
Conclusion:	The Christian ministry programme and design matches the needs of learners and Assembly of God church communities. Academic processes are in place; however, the evidence to demonstrate these processes are effective remains a work in progress.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Field and practicum components of the Christian ministry programme are well designed and provide comprehensive support through arrangements with churches and other placements. This is important as learning occurs within the learner's own church and community.</p> <p>The effectiveness of support for online learning is less well evidenced. As the primary mode of delivery for the academic content, feedback mechanisms do not substantiate strong support in this area to the same extent. Alphacrucis recognises a need to consider additional prerequisites that ensure learners' capability to study online at level 4, and Alphacrucis' capacity to support them.</p> <p>Surveys have been systematically undertaken since the last EER, and all are useful. The data collected is recent, and collation and analysis are limited but indicate Alphacrucis is supporting learners generally well. The full extent of these outcomes, as anecdotally reported by Alphacrucis, are not yet convincingly demonstrated.</p>
Conclusion:	Learners are comprehensively supported in their learning in the substantial field work component of the programme. The effectiveness of online support and guidance is less strong.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Over the past 18 months Alphacrucis has undertaken a number of reviews, resulting in a strengthened governance and management structure, and improvements in stakeholder engagement, processes and reporting since the last EER.</p> <p>The council is active within the PTE; a member sits on the revised executive committee providing support and advice on a weekly basis. The recruitment of a national director has refreshed the links and quality of communication with stakeholders, resulting in improved understanding of future need.</p> <p>There are clear lines of responsibility and the programme manager has oversight and support to undertake this role, including plans to implement changes to support improvement across quality processes within the Christian ministry programme. This is a work in progress.</p> <p>Implementing changes and ensuring consistency in the application of effective processes – such as internal and external moderation and data analysis (outcomes and feedback) – are at various stages of maturity. Overall, appropriate processes and mechanisms are in place or are being planned. The PTE's need to respond to additional demands placed by COVID-19, and significant staff and restructure changes have impacted the pace of change for Alphacrucis, but it is on an upward trajectory.</p> <p>Strengthening the academic committee responsibilities and the appointment of an academic director are priority areas where work is in progress. In the short term, any risk associated with educational performance is currently being managed by the programme manager, national director, faculty dean and outgoing principal. This is important to ensure current areas – including detailed programme oversight and assurance on the quality of teaching – are effectively monitored.</p>
Conclusion:	Significant and useful changes have occurred in governance and management, stakeholder engagement and organisational

	processes and practices. Areas identified for improvement within the Christian ministry programme are well articulated and understood.
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1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Compliance accountabilities are managed by the executive committee. The council is aware of its compliance obligations and has an appropriate degree of oversight. Monitoring of this programme is through the academic committee which reports to the executive committee.</p> <p>Processes are sufficiently robust to manage compliance accountabilities, for example complaints, financial viability and legal matters. Until an academic director is appointed, the national director and faculty dean undertake more responsibility for some monitoring, for example the interim domestic Code of Practice⁵. As noted in 1.5, strengthening the academic committee's responsibilities and the appointment of an academic director will bolster these processes going forward.</p> <p>NZQA requirements are managed and include some improvements important for the Christian ministry programme, such as a schedule for internal and external moderation. These are a work in progress.</p>
Conclusion:	Effective processes are in place to manage core compliance obligations and accountabilities.

⁵ Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019

Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory, but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Alphacrucis Limited:

- Strengthen evidence-based analysis of performance data to explore variances and understand patterns and trends.
- Improve evidence-based analysis and understanding of value for learners and stakeholders of the Christian ministry programme to demonstrate the extent of the outcomes.
- Embed academic quality assurance processes and demonstrate the extent to which they have an impact and are effective.

Requirements

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Completion rates for New Zealand Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4)

	2018	2019	2020
Enrolment No.	25	12	17
Course completion	89%	92%	77%
Qualification completion	24%	58%	12%

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- Identify organisational fraud⁶
- Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources
- Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.

⁶ NZQA and the TEC comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education Act 1989 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 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.

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.

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

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

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

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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