



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

Dev Academy Aotearoa Limited

Date of report: 13 June 2024

About Dev Academy Aotearoa Limited

Dev Academy is a private training establishment which provides high-intensity, high-care, career-change training for entry into the software sector. Training is primarily delivered at the organisation's Wellington, Auckland and online campuses.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 2, 275 Cuba Street, Te Aro, Wellington
Eligible to enrol international students:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: in 2023, 236 enrolments (149 equivalent full-time students) including 29 Māori students (12 per cent), seven Pasifika students (3 per cent), and 34 students who reported a disability (14 per cent)
Number of staff:	25 full-time staff, eight part-time staff (29 full-time equivalents)
TEO profile:	<p>See: Dev Academy Aotearoa Limited</p> <p>Dev Academy's core offering is the New Zealand Certificate in Applied Software Development (Level 6) [ID: 127830-2]. This certificate comprises five courses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Foundations2. Core Programming3. Web Development4. Teamwork and Human Skills5. Career Skills <p>Courses 2-4 comprise the 'Bootcamp' portion of the certificate.</p>
Last EER outcome:	At the last external evaluation and review in 2020, NZQA found Dev Academy Limited to be

	Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	New Zealand Certificate in Applied Software Development (Level 6) ID: 127830-2 (leading to qualification 4663)
MoE number:	9163
NZQA reference:	C55659
Dates of EER visit:	13-15 February 2024 (conducted online)

Summary of results

Dev Academy comprehensively meets the most important needs of learners and stakeholders through strong achievement and graduate employment outcomes. Responsible decision-making ensures that areas of priority need are effectively identified and reviewed, that students are well supported, and that programmes are relevant and responsive to industry.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Learner achievement is strong, with overall course completion rates consistently above 90 per cent and with learners gaining useful technical and soft skills. Data is used effectively for self-assessment purposes, such as the analysis of non-completions, benchmarking and addressing targeted achievement-related issues.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Graduates gain relevant employment at high rates and add value to the tech sector. The PTE engages well with a wide range of stakeholders and uses data effectively for self-assessment in this area.
- Programmes maintain relevance to stakeholders on the basis of strong programme review. Learning environments are mostly planned well, although teacher contact time and feedback on student progress are both limited in some areas. Programme expectations are mostly communicated well to the students, although information on some matters is managed by verbal communication only. Regular internal moderation ensures that assessment is appropriate, fit for purpose, fair and consistent.
- Student support processes ensure that learner goals are well understood, that facilitators are highly responsive to wellbeing needs, and that the learning environment is inclusive. Learning activities are engaging and enable students to apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts. Students also form enduring social and academic support networks.

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- Dev Academy carefully manages its resources to support teaching and learning. Governance and management effectively support educational achievement. Staff across all levels contribute well to the realisation of the PTE's mission. Recruitment of staff is effective. Development of staff is mostly effective, although professional development opportunities are not being fully used by staff.
 - Dev Academy has displayed improvements in the management of its compliance accountabilities, including the sharing of responsibility for compliance among the leadership team. The PTE has effective processes for managing key areas of compliance and continues to develop capability and awareness in this area, including through the building of relationships with external organisations.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learner achievement at Dev Academy is strong. Throughout the EER period, the PTE's overall course completion rate remained consistently above 90 per cent and reached 96 per cent in 2023. In addition to completing courses at high rates, Dev Academy's learners gain confidence along with useful technical and soft skills. The PTE fully understands the reasons for non-completion.</p> <p>Achievement for priority learners is also strong at Dev Academy. Course completion rates for Māori and Pasifika learners remain at or near parity with other learners across all years, aside from 2021, when Māori learner completions temporarily dropped to 80 per cent. Achievement for learners with disabilities is particularly strong, with the course completion rate for this group remaining consistently above 95 per cent for 2021-23.</p> <p>Achievement data is used effectively, with Dev Academy benchmarking its performance against other providers. The PTE analyses the reasons for non-completion to better understand how to support these students.</p> <p>Additionally, Dev Academy uses data to identify, understand and respond effectively to targeted, achievement-related issues. For example, the PTE recognised the 2021 drop in achievement for Māori learners and attributed this to decisions around the enrolment process at the regional, Māori-focussed Bootcamps. Dev Academy responded by reducing the number of accepted enrolments to better align with the level of support available to the students. The completion rate for the PTE's Māori learners has since improved to 94 per cent in 2022 and 96 per cent in 2023.</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.

Conclusion:	Learner achievement is strong, with overall course completion rates consistently above 90 per cent and with learners gaining useful technical and soft skills. Data is used effectively for self-assessment purposes, such as the analysis of non-completions, benchmarking and the addressing of targeted achievement-related issues. Improvements have resulted in positive outcomes for the learners.
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1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Dev Academy graduates gain relevant employment at high rates and add value to the tech sector. As of 2023, 87 per cent of graduates were employed in developer, non-developer and contracting roles in the sector within 18-24 months of graduating. Dev Academy also uses data to benchmark the employment outcomes of its graduates against those from other providers.</p> <p>The value of outcomes for Dev Academy's key stakeholders is high. Many employers report that the PTE's graduates are well prepared for employment, with technical skills that are appropriate for entry into the sector. Many employers also report that Dev Academy's training equips graduates with distinctive and highly valued communication and conflict resolution skills. Graduates report that the PTE's training sets them up well for the workforce, with exposure to industry-relevant practice and with capstone projects as demonstrations of their capabilities.</p> <p>Dev Academy engages well with stakeholders and uses data effectively in this area. Since the last EER, the PTE has introduced an 11-member employer advisory group with whom it regularly engages. As part of its engagement, Dev Academy analyses how to respond to changes in the industry. These insights have led to improvements in the PTE's training materials that better reflect current practice.</p> <p>Dev Academy has built relationships with some Māori organisations, and has also initiated relationships with</p>

	<p>some iwi representatives. Stakeholders from both groups value their relationships with Dev Academy, along with the PTE's training and programmes.</p> <p>Stakeholders from Māori organisations report that they and Dev Academy face common challenges, such as high levels of rangatahi in regional areas who are not in education, employment or training. The PTE is working together with these stakeholders to address shared challenges, and to create pathways for rangatahi into the tech sector. As part of this engagement, Dev Academy is working on a kaupapa Māori Bootcamp, which it aims to launch in 2024.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Graduates gain relevant employment at high rates and add value to the tech sector. The PTE engages well with a wide range of stakeholders and uses data effectively for the purposes of self-assessment in this area.</p>

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:	<p>As indicated in 1.2, Dev Academy's key stakeholders include students, tech sector employers, community organisations and iwi. The PTE's programmes maintain relevance to these stakeholders as a result of strong, iterative programme review. These include retrospective reviews ('retros') which occur after each Bootcamp and focus on strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. Pilot versions of Bootcamps ('experiments') also enable Dev Academy to adjust aspects of its programme offerings in response to feedback and need.</p> <p>The PTE's learning environments are mostly planned well to meet the needs of students. At the Foundations stage, Dev Academy's training is personally and professionally valuable to students, but teacher contact time and feedback on student progress are both limited. At the Bootcamp stage, Dev Academy maintains a high teacher-student ratio and a high number of teacher contact hours.</p> <p>Programme expectations are mostly communicated well to the students. This includes expectations on attendance,</p>

	<p>assessment processes and academic integrity. For the Foundations course, expectations regarding extensions are clearly communicated to students in the student handbook. For the Bootcamp section of the certificate, no information on extensions is provided in the student handbook. Dev Academy manages this by verbal communication only.</p> <p>Assessment at Dev Academy is both appropriate and fit for purpose. Assessment tasks are designed to accommodate students with different levels of prior capability and experience. Assessment tasks also push students to extend themselves in their learning, with the PTE encouraging a 'growth mindset' that is well suited to the tech sector.</p> <p>Internal moderation occurs on a regular basis, is comprehensive, and ensures that Dev Academy's teachers assess student work fairly and consistently across each of the PTE's campuses. As part of this process, moderating teachers cross-mark the work of assessing teachers and note issues that arise during the process. The teaching team thereafter meets regularly to discuss and respond to these issues. In addition to internal moderation, Dev Academy regularly engages in teacher observations to ensure the consistency of teaching practice.</p> <p>Dev Academy does not currently have an external moderation partner, due to a shortage of prospective candidates familiar with the content of the PTE's programmes. The PTE is actively seeking a suitable external moderation partner.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Programmes maintain relevance to stakeholders on the basis of strong programme review. Learning environments are mostly planned well, and programme expectations are mostly communicated well to the students. Assessment is appropriate, fit for purpose, fair and consistent as a result of regular internal moderation.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Dev Academy has a comprehensive interview process which identifies the suitability of prospective students and the content of their learning goals. Facilitators track student progress toward their learning goals. Additionally, the career skills course supports students to achieve their employment goals.</p> <p>Dev Academy's facilitators are highly responsive to the wellbeing needs of the students. Additionally, the PTE is developing its support system to better help students during their studies. Dev Academy's recruitment process prioritises the selection of staff with high levels of emotional literacy, to ensure a safe teaching environment. The PTE also attends to factors such as mental health and maintains an operational risk register.</p> <p>The learning environment at Dev Academy is inclusive, and the PTE has policies and procedures in place to minimise barriers to learning. Dev Academy understands the diverse learning needs of its students and provides staff with relevant professional development opportunities (including training in neurodiversity). The PTE also reflects on its progress toward specific equity goals. For example, retrospective programme reviews for the Human Skills course regularly focus on meeting the support needs of different groups, such as female students and Māori students.</p> <p>Dev Academy's training provides students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts. Learning activities include interactive lectures and experiential learning, with students engaging in challenges and team projects that simulate real-world programming contexts. Learning activities are effective in engaging all students, with facilitators identifying different levels of need early and tailoring their teaching accordingly.</p>

	Students are encouraged to form social and academic support networks, with students working collaboratively with one another throughout their training. Graduates report that the Human Skills course brought them closer together during their studies and encouraged them to talk about events taking place in their lives. Graduates also report that they have maintained professional contact with Dev Academy and its facilitators, and that this has been beneficial to their careers.
Conclusion:	Student support ensures that learner goals are well understood, that facilitators are highly responsive to wellbeing needs, and that the learning environment is inclusive. Learning activities are engaging and enable students to apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts. Students also form enduring social and academic support networks.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Dev Academy has responded effectively to significant external challenges by carefully managing its resources to support learning and teaching. For example, the PTE reduced its teaching staff in 2023 due to a significant reduction in enrolments. Dev Academy also ensured that the impact of this decision on learning and teaching was minimal, by maintaining a strong teacher-student ratio while changes took place. The lack of negative impact on the students is reflected by strong educational achievement throughout the relevant period.</p> <p>Dev Academy recently introduced an establishment advisory board to help increase discipline around decision-making in light of challenges to the organisation. This change has led to improvements, including the establishment advisory board taking on oversight regarding organisational risk, along with responsibility regarding the sustainability of the PTE's business model.</p> <p>Additionally, strategic planning now takes place quarterly rather than annually, as a result of setting up the</p>

	<p>establishment advisory board. The board is effective in terms of leadership, but the full extent of its prioritisation of academic matters cannot be ascertained. The board is also in transition to a formal board of directors, and a focus on specifically academic leadership will be important as that transition takes place.</p> <p>Dev Academy's mission is '[t]o transform lives through innovative, human and inclusive tech education'. Staff across the organisation contribute to this mission. As indicated in 1.4, programme review enables operational management and facilitators to reflect on Dev Academy's progress toward equity goals. The establishment advisory board also uses quantitative and qualitative measures to understand the PTE's overall progress against its mission.</p> <p>Dev Academy's recruitment of staff is effective, with the PTE displaying discernment in its selection of new staff in line with the PTE's mission. Dev Academy's development of staff is mostly effective. The PTE allocates ample resources to the professional development of staff, although they do not always take advantage of this opportunity. The PTE is also aiming to ensure that all its teaching staff complete unit standard 4098 for assessment purposes.</p>
Conclusion:	Dev Academy carefully manages its resources to support learning and teaching. Governance and management effectively support educational achievement. Staff across all levels contribute well to the PTE's mission. Recruitment of staff is effective, and development of staff is mostly effective.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	Dev Academy is proactive in the management of its compliance accountabilities. The PTE has displayed improvements in self-assessment in this area. This includes increased sharing of responsibility for compliance among the PTE's Ngā Hau e Whā leadership team who maintain and respond to a schedule of deadlines.

	<p>Dev Academy has effective processes for managing key areas of compliance as indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a complaints policy and process that is well communicated to students • an anti-harassment policy which includes processes for reducing harm to students resulting from discrimination • an incident register which identifies learners at risk, and follow-up actions that have been taken • maintaining a system for moderation of assessment decisions. <p>Dev Academy is continuing to develop its capability and awareness in regard to compliance management. This includes the PTE's aim of building a deeper understanding of the Code of Practice among teaching staff. It also includes the PTE's ongoing efforts to build and maintain relationships with external organisations to whom the PTE has compliance accountabilities, as well as using these relationships to understand emerging compliance accountabilities.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Dev Academy has displayed improvements in the management of its compliance accountabilities, including the increased sharing of responsibility for compliance among its leadership team. The PTE has effective processes for managing key areas of compliance and continues to develop capability and awareness in this area, including through building relationships with external organisations.</p>

Focus areas

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

2.1 New Zealand Certificate in Applied Software Development (Level 6) ID: 127830-2 (leading to Qualification 4663)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

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.

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

Requirements

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

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

Appendix 1

Dev Academy course completion data (provided by Dev Academy)

	Overall	Māori	Pasifika	Disability flag – disability Identified
2020	93.8%	88.2%	92.9%	–*
2021	92.2%	79.8%	89.3%	92.3%
2022	95.7%	94.4%	92.3%	97.6%
2023	96.5%	96%	100%	96.5%

*Data for this group was not provided for 2020

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 fraud²*
- 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.*

² 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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