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External Evaluation and Review Report

Palmerston North School of Design Limited

Date of report: 4 October 2022

About Palmerston North School of Design Limited

Palmerston North School of Design (trading as The Design School) provides foundation level 2-4 training in graphic design and fashion design for students seeking an alternative vocational pathway into design and digital media or fashion design.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 1 The Commercial Building, 12-16 The Square, Palmerston North
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 2021 – 130 (48.94 EFTS[1]) Māori: 2021 – 34 (31 per cent) Pasifika – 36 (33 per cent) Disabled: 2021 – nine International: nil
Number of staff:	Seven full-time and two part-time
TEO profile:	Palmerston North School of Design Ltd (provider page on NZQA website)
Last EER outcome:	Highly Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	• Design Suite Programmes include: - New Zealand Certificate in Arts and Design (Level 2) [ID:124224] (Ref: NZ2625) - Certificate in Graphic Design (Level 3) [ID:123508] (Ref: NZ2626) - Certificate in Fashion Design (Level 3) [ID:124631] (Ref: NZ2626) - Certificate in Graphic Design (Level 4) [ID:125916] (Ref: NZ2627 and NZ2629)

[1] Equivalent full-time students

- Certificate in Fashion Design (Level 4) [ID:125917] (Ref: NZ2627 and NZ2630)

- Vocational Pathway NCEA (Level 2) Creative Industries (ID:125937)

MoE number:	9429
NZQA reference:	C45071
Dates of EER visit:	27-29 July 2022

Summary of results

The Design School provides graphic and fashion design learning opportunities in a supportive and inclusive environment for students with varied educational and social backgrounds. The Design School programmes are highly valued by key stakeholders for meeting learner and stakeholder needs. Self-assessment is generally strong and comprehensive.

Confident in educational performance

- Success-focused and comprehensive, individualised guidance and support underpins generally strong student achievement. Students gain skills and knowledge that prepare them well to pathway to further study or employment.
- The Design School works closely with key government, industry and community agencies and other education stakeholders to be well informed of pathway needs and requirements for the design industry, and is effective in meeting stakeholder needs. The value of the training is recognised and highly regarded by stakeholders.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- The tutorial staff are knowledgeable, with industry experience and connections. They provide a supportive and encouraging learning environment for individual students to express their creativity with real-world project design briefs for the graphic design and fashion design programmes. Individual student's progress is comprehensively tracked to enable wraparound support and guidance to each student as and when needed.
- The Design School's governance and management work alongside staff to provide appropriate guidance and support to ensure that the organisation maintains industry relevance.
- The academic leadership has clear plans in place to address gaps in external moderation. However, due to the significant changes in programmes and assessment design, The Design School needs to demonstrate that the current robust process and practices will be sustained, and will guide and inform educational performance and self-

assessment for the new programmes. Further professional development of tutorial staff in assessment and moderation is needed to strengthen capability.

- Compliance accountabilities are mostly managed well, with gaps in compliance being resolved and greater focus on quality processes and oversight in place.

Key evaluation question findings[2]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The Design School's overall data indicates strong course completions for all delivered programmes, which are above the sector median and the Tertiary Education Commission target of 60-70 per cent, although there was a minor decline in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic (see Appendix 1). Māori student achievement has mostly been on par with overall results. Although Pasifika student enrolment has been low, completions are similar to overall completion results. The Design School tracks the achievement of disabled students; however, the outcomes are currently not analysed and reported on. The Design School uses a comprehensive monitoring system to manage and track rolling intakes and understand where individual students should be at any point in the programme. This approach provides flexible academic and pastoral guidance to improve individual student achievement rates. Gains for numeracy and literacy are tracked year on year and used to inform academic support and provide the foundation to pathway to the graphic or fashion design programmes. Data analysis is comprehensive, with new systems in place to collect relevant achievement data, for instance by ethnicity, programme and campus, and benchmarked against the sector. There is an opportunity to aggregate and analyse data for internal reporting to provide meaningful evaluative commentary over time.
Conclusion:	Student achievement is generally strong across all programmes. Students gain important knowledge and transferable skills. Data is comprehensively analysed to understand individual student achievement.

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

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The Design School's graphic and fashion design programmes provide a pathway for students who have exited school with insufficient qualifications to achieve the prerequisites to pathway into higher-level programmes. The Design School tracks the number of graduates that enrol in higher-level programmes and gain employment. Many graduates gain employment after completing the level 3 and level 4 programmes, and some have attained degrees. For instance, one graduate gained a PhD in Māori Visual Arts and has won awards for his work. The Design School programmes are relevant and valuable to stakeholders and provide students with confidence and opportunities for growth into a range of different career paths or employment. The Design School students gain authentic, hands-on learning experience, and demonstrate the standards required when they pathway to further study. Graduates attest to the programmes changing their lives, helping them overcome barriers to learning and gaining personal management skills, goal-setting, working with others and growth in confidence. The programmes enable students of diverse backgrounds, including those within Corrections facilities, to gain skills to transition to the working world. This understanding is supported by evidence of outcomes and personal excellence stories of graduates who are achieving. Māori and Te Whare Tapa Whā indigenous principles and other cultural and community perspectives enable students to extend their learning into cultural spaces and embrace the tikanga which gives greater connections between people in workplaces and the wider community. Staff and management have strong connections with the community and involvement with students in industry through stalls at art festivals and other community and industry projects. This has helped to embed the school into the community. Engagement with community groups and businesses ensures there is strong support for the PTE and for students to gain employment opportunities.
Conclusion:	There is strong evidence of the value The Design School provides to relevant stakeholders, graduates and students in incarceration. The Design School is well connected and comprehensively tracks graduate outcomes to understand the

	long-term value and outcomes for graduates and stakeholders. Self-assessment practices inform programme design and delivery.

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:	Since the last EER, programme development has been undertaken post-TRoQ[3], and programme approval and accreditation completed to reflect industry requirements. The Design School participated in two Consistency Reviews in 2019 and 2020 and achieved sufficient ratings. Flexibility in programme design enables rolling intakes with one-to-one style delivery. This model supports students to complete at their own pace and receive individual attention. Keystone projects are used in programme delivery, and freedom of expression is encouraged in project work. Students receive regular feedback and are encouraged to seek guidance when needed. Students work on projects independently and have an opportunity to share ideas with their peers. The learning environment in each campus is well resourced, with an open plan studio including computers, sewing machines, design software, project material and learning tools. Assessment opportunities occur during the programme, allowing for constructive feedback (mostly verbal) to students on tasks, with the opportunity to re-present a task. Tracking gaps in learning and retesting provides reassurance that improvement is taking place and identifies where more work is required. This process is well managed; learners and staff are well aware of the rate of individual progress and have 'benchmarks' noted on the student management system. This helps them to guide and inform learners of their rate of progress. Programme review and assessment are ongoing, with staff reporting to management monthly. National external moderation results (NEMR) have been

[3] The Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ) at levels 1-6 on New Zealand's 10-level qualifications framework aimed to ensure that New Zealand qualifications are useful and relevant to current and future learners, employers and other stakeholders.

	inconsistent over the last four years and have identified gaps in assessment practice. External moderation by Competenz (transitional industry training organisation) has also identified inconsistencies and misalignment with the TITO's documentation requirements; however, the assessed work was moderated as consistent with the national standards. The Design School has recently completed action plans to improve rigour in the evidence of student learning in assessment design. Further quality assurance in assessment practice with internal moderation conducted by the managing director and an internal moderation plan to track and action moderation results. As the initiatives are recently introduced, it is too early to see the results of these improvements. There is an opportunity to strengthen assessment and moderation practices with additional professional development to support tutorial staff.
Conclusion:	Programmes are well aligned with industry needs, and programme review is effective. The Design School is responsive and recently took actions to remedy issues related to assessment and moderation. However, it is too soon to confirm the long-term effectiveness of these changes and therefore the extent to which academic standards are embedded

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Needs assessments and individual learning plans are used to set goals and are revisited throughout the year, with flags in the student management system to alert tutors when students fall behind. This supports targeted efforts to bring students back on track. Student attendance is closely monitored to ensure no student is left behind. Students from diverse backgrounds, including disabled learners, are catered for in resources and benefit from the teaching approach. Students are well engaged in the learning experience due to the practical nature of the programme and the experiential, contextualised support provided by the tutors. The learning environment is inclusive and enhances students' abilities to engage with each other and staff. It exposes them to

	creative and technical processes, empowering students to take responsibility for their own learning and work at their own pace. Students attest to being motivated to achieve their goals. Student wellbeing is seen as paramount to successful outcomes, and the open and relaxed environment creates a safe, non-threatening space for students to talk about their wellbeing and seek support. Progress reports and feedback are given at the end of projects, and secondary schools receive progress reports for NCEA students on work completed. The Design School has an established pastoral care plan to guide teaching staff in their role in supporting student wellbeing. This is in line with the Code of Practice 2021.[4] Tutors work closely with students to overcome learning and wellbeing challenges. The Design School has established connections with community and social agencies to provide wraparound support for the students. As part of its review, The Design School identified a need to strengthen and capture student feedback. This is an opportunity to formalise responses to students, to better track trends, and reflect on ways to mitigate risks and improve outcomes.
Conclusion:	The Design School has effective policies and procedures to minimise barriers to learning, with systems in place to support students and involve them in their learning. There is strong evidence of working closely with stakeholders such as schools and support agencies to transition and retain learners from wide backgrounds.

[4] The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The organisation's strategic purpose is to get students started on a learning journey and enable them to reach their full potential. The strategic purpose is clearly maintained, and strategies are in place to grow and expand programme delivery considering industry needs. The Design School management and staff are reflective. The managing director is experienced in the graphic and design sector and relies on wide and active networks to stay connected with educational and industry developments. Communication is effective across the organisation, with all tutorial staff across both campuses reporting back to management through weekly meetings and monthly reports. Staff are well informed and recent changes to the organisational structure have led to better empowerment of staffing. Teaching staff are well supported in their professional development and are engaging with projects to enrich their own professional development; some staff achieving adult teaching qualifications. The evaluation team suggests that stronger policy and practice would be beneficial in the area of professional development as tertiary educators. For instance, key staff could be sent on courses to strengthen adult teaching and assessment. Māori and Pasifika cultural mentors have been engaged to provide guidance for staff and management in cultural understanding and to strengthen educational practice to better support students in exploring their own cultural traditions and heritage. A new student management system provides clear and useful disaggregated data, and some reflective thought has gone into the design – for instance, categorised attendance data and student capability in accessing technology. Some high-level aggregated data and narrative around performance would strengthen self-assessment.
Conclusion:	A strategic and innovative management team supports the highly knowledgeable and experienced tutors to ensure educational goals are being met. Self-assessment of academic standards

	and practices is an area that has recently required strengthening.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The Design School is managing its key compliance accountabilities well, with compliance tasks and obligations tracked through the organisation's compliance calendar and managed by the managing director, with the organisation submitting annual attestations to NZQA in a timely manner. Non-compliance with credit reporting was identified as a glitch in the student management system, as well as some subcontracting secondary schools choosing to report their own results. The Design School has taken actions to rectify the problem and has changed the student management system. Further actions are being taken to better support the credit reporting process with checks after reporting. Participation in NEMR and external moderation with Competenz has reported variable results. The Design School has been responsive and has appropriately addressed the moderation concerns, making significant changes to better demonstrate student achievement and learning outcomes. All teaching staff have unit standards to meet the requirements for Consent to Assess, and two staff have completed an adult teaching qualification. Self-Review against the Code of Practice 2021 led to further development of the established pastoral care plan which has sound processes to address various pastoral care aspects. Further work is being done to ensure student views are given more prominence, and improvements are being made to address any self-identified gaps.
Conclusion:	The Design School is meeting most of its key compliance requirements but needs to take a more systematic approach to ensure all compliance obligations are met.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Design Suite Programmes

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**

2.2 Focus area: Vocational Pathway NCEA Level 2 Creative Industries

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Conclusion:	A drop in achievement in 2020 was noted due to Covid-19, but performance improved in 2021. Overall educational performance has resulted in highly valued outcomes with ongoing benefits to those in schools and Corrections facilities. The gaps in moderation were for standards in this programme. See 1.3 for details.

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 Palmerston North School of Design Limited:

- Continue to strengthen capability in teaching and assessment practice, monitoring internal and external moderation processes to ensure outcomes are valid and good practices are being embedded.
- Involve staff in ongoing professional development such as relevant Ako Aotearoa workshops on assessment and educational practices.
- Further analyse student management system data to identify trends and patterns between delivery sites and across programmes, so that the data is easily accessible for an overall understanding of educational performance.
- Continue to develop the collection of stakeholder feedback data for self-assessment and build organisation-wide capability in analysing and using this data.

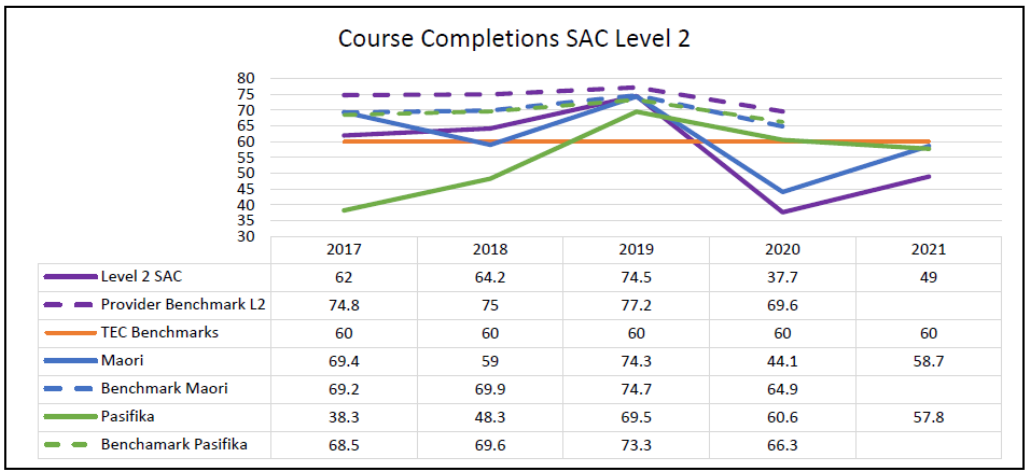
Requirements

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.

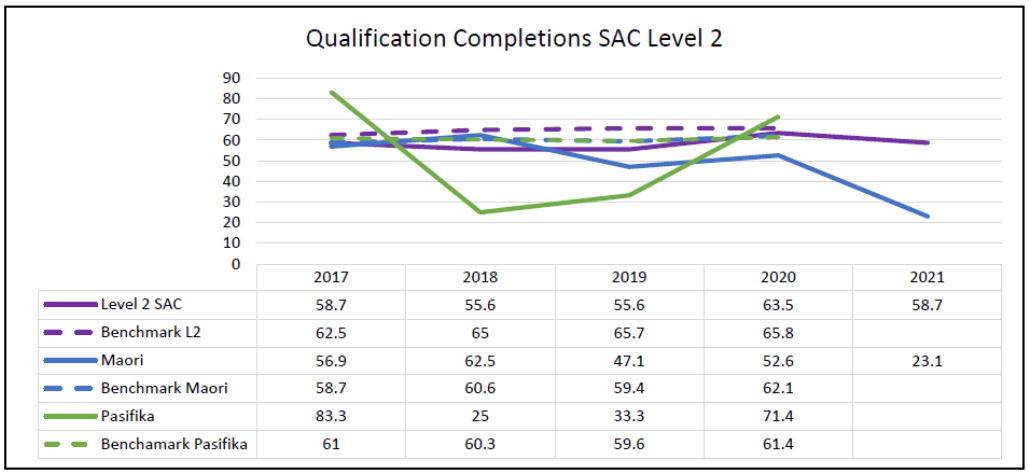
There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix 1

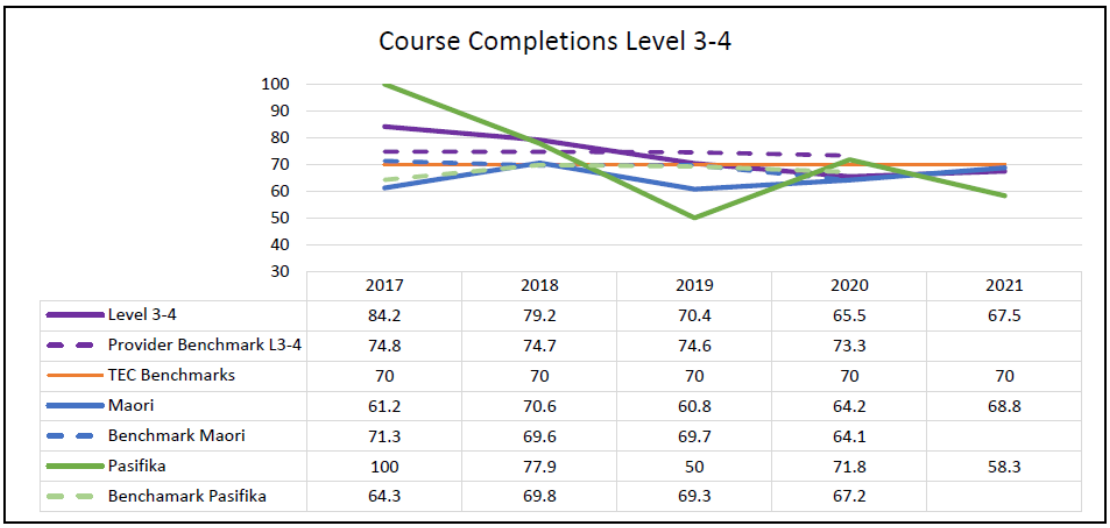
Tables and graphs supplied by The Design School



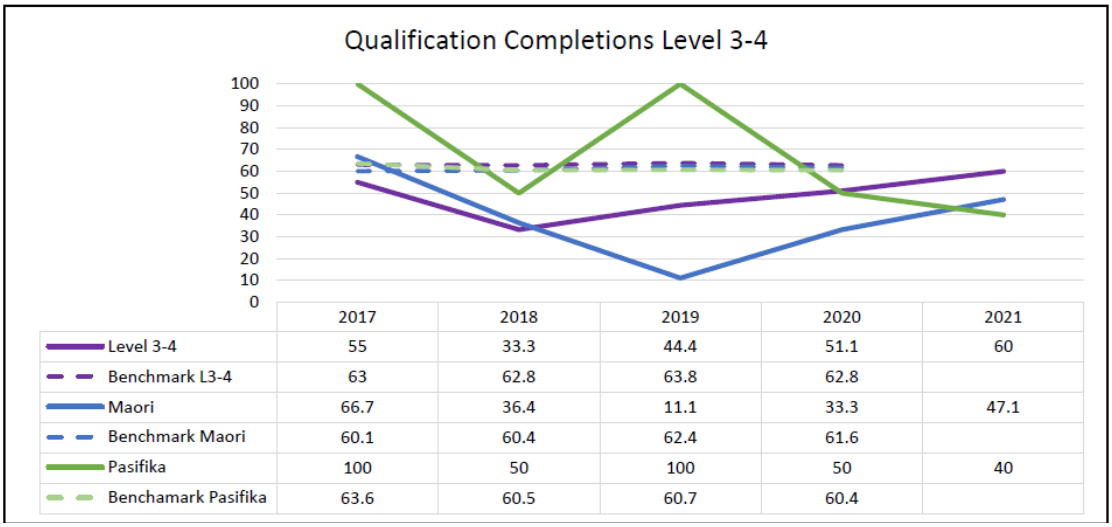
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Level 2 SAC	62	64.2	74.5	37.7	49
Provider Benchmark L2	74.8	75	77.2	69.6	
TEC Benchmarks	60	60	60	60	60
Maori	69.4	59	74.3	44.1	58.7
Benchmark Maori	69.2	69.9	74.7	64.9	
Pasifika	38.3	48.3	69.5	60.6	57.8
Benchamark Pasifika	68.5	69.6	73.3	66.3	



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Level 2 SAC	58.7	55.6	55.6	63.5	58.7
Benchmark L2	62.5	65	65.7	65.8	
Maori	56.9	62.5	47.1	52.6	23.1
Benchmark Maori	58.7	60.6	59.4	62.1	
Pasifika	83.3	25	33.3	71.4	
Benchamark Pasifika	61	60.3	59.6	61.4	



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Level 3-4	84.2	79.2	70.4	65.5	67.5
Provider Benchmark L3-4	74.8	74.7	74.6	73.3	
TEC Benchmarks	70	70	70	70	70
Maori	61.2	70.6	60.8	64.2	68.8
Benchmark Maori	71.3	69.6	69.7	64.1	
Pasifika	100	77.9	50	71.8	58.3
Benchamark Pasifika	64.3	69.8	69.3	67.2	



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Level 3-4	55	33.3	44.4	51.1	60
Benchmark L3-4	63	62.8	63.8	62.8	
Maori	66.7	36.4	11.1	33.3	47.1
Benchmark Maori	60.1	60.4	62.4	61.6	
Pasifika	100	50	100	50	40
Benchamark Pasifika	63.6	60.5	60.7	60.4	

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*[5]
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

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

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 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/.

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