



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

**QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD**  
**KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!**

# External Evaluation and Review Report

WSP New Zealand Limited

Date of report: 11 January 2023

# About WSP New Zealand Limited

---

*WSP New Zealand Limited (WSP) provides training to learners and organisations in the water and environmental management industry that responds to changes to and needs within the industry.*

---

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	33 The Esplanade, Petone, Wellington
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 516 (2022 YTD numbers) Māori: 79 (15 per cent) and Pasifika: 44 (9 per cent). Learners with disability: not currently collected.
Number of staff:	Nine full-time, 8.4 part-time
TEO profile:	<a href="#">WSP New Zealand Ltd</a> profile on NZQA website
Last EER outcome:	The outcome of the EER undertaken on 19 December 2018 was Confident for educational performance and for capability for self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wastewater Treatment (Training Scheme) [ID: 102326]</li><li>• Making Good Decisions (Resource Management Act) suite of programmes</li></ul>
MoE number:	9441
NZQA reference:	C50287
Dates of EER visit:	On site 20 September, online 21 and 22 September 2022

# Summary of results

---

*High-value training provision ensures strong achievement of sought-after skills and knowledge. A strong understanding of learner and industry needs ensures WSP provides relevant courses of study where skills, learning and support needs are met. Stronger understanding of NZQA requirements would support stronger programme review.*

---

## **Confident in educational performance**

- Overall achievement rates are strong, with Māori and Pasifika learners achieving at similar or higher rates. Collecting and analysing the achievement rates for those learners who are identified as having a disability will support the current level of understanding of learner needs.
- Training delivered by WSP is of high value to all stakeholders. Graduates and industry attest to the training meeting their needs. Understanding the application of learnt skills and knowledge in current roles would strengthen self-assessment in this area.

## **Confident in capability in self-assessment**

- Courses are relevant and kept current through regular interaction with industry. A variety of appropriate delivery and learning activities ensures students are engaged, and learning (including cultural) needs are identified and supported. Programme review, of the NZQA-approved programme (Wastewater Treatment), that responds to differing reasons for undertaking training has not occurred.
- Comprehensive moderation confirms that assessment is valid and consistent.
- The learning and pastoral support provided is comprehensive, with both on-site and online support mechanisms provided.
- Staff are recruited for their experience and expertise and are supported with ongoing professional development in both teaching and industry areas. Staff wellbeing is monitored regularly and supported.

- 
- The purpose and direction of WSP is clear, being aligned to support and contribute to the parent company's direction and strategic planning.<sup>1</sup>
  - Data is analysed and used effectively to inform self-assessment.
  - Regular compliance accountabilities and requirements are monitored and met in a timely manner. Governance and management's lack of knowledge around requirements to maintain training scheme approval and accreditation has led to oversights that are being addressed currently. There has not been any impact on teaching achievement and learning.

---

<sup>1</sup> The parent company is part of a global organisation offering solutions to a range of environmental, transport and health projects and processes.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>2</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Across all courses delivered, achievement rates are strong<sup>3</sup>, with an average completion rate of 83 per cent in 2019, increasing to 86 per cent in 2021. The bespoke and the Making Good Decisions courses have consistently high completion rates – greater than 95 per cent – while others such as the Wastewater Treatment training scheme have completions lower than 50 per cent. The reasons for these low completions are understood by the PTE, with data provided to support this understanding. Use of this data to support further review was not apparent.</p> <p>Māori and Pasifika learners have achieved at a similar or higher achievement rate across all courses. This is commendable when the small annual intake for Māori (14 per cent) and Pasifika (9 per cent) is considered. Disaggregation and analysis of the collected data to reflect achievement rates for the other priority group of learners (learners with a disability) would strengthen and support the understandings currently gained.</p> <p>Achievement of transferable skills such as increased confidence, understanding legislation, and being able to use reference material effectively is actively fostered throughout delivery. Graduates and other stakeholders attest to the importance of these additional skills in the workplace.</p>
Conclusion:	Overall achievement rates are strong, with Māori and Pasifika learners achieving parity. Useful transferable skills are actively fostered throughout the training. Understandings gained from the enrolment and achievement trends for the training scheme could have promoted earlier programme review.

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

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 1 for disaggregated completion figures across all courses and those which are focus areas.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>WSP provides specialised training opportunities to industries where there is a current skills shortage. As part of a water and environmental management organisation, WSP ensures the training provided is current, reflects new legislation, and is informed by research and developing practice.</p> <p>Most of WSP's academic staff are engaged in the water management industry through memberships in industry advisory and special interest groups. Alongside this, WSP staff are recognised as subject matter experts and provide training on behalf of the Ministry for the Environment, the transitional industry training organisation Connexis, and Te Pūkenga. Alongside the informal and formal stakeholder feedback, these connections ensure the bespoke training delivered responds to emerging industry needs and standards.</p> <p>Most learners undertaking training with WSP are employed in water or environmental management-related roles, are wishing to retrain, or are in need of an awareness of practices in these fields. WSP provides bespoke courses that enable learners to apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace after completing the course. The generic nature of the Wastewater Treatment training scheme does not always cater for the variety of learners' backgrounds and their reasons for enrolling. WSP has not taken this understanding into programme review.</p> <p>Graduates verbally attest to feeling empowered through the validation and extension of current knowledge alongside new or increased employment opportunities. Formally capturing graduate and employer feedback aligned with the course learning outcomes will strengthen and inform programme review.</p>
Conclusion:	WSP provides valued outcomes from training for all stakeholders. To strengthen self-assessment and review opportunities, formal capture of the use of the skills and knowledge outlined in learning outcomes is recommended.

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

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Close working and advisory relationships with industries and organisations within the water and environmental management sectors ensures WSP provides relevant and current training to its stakeholders. Tutorial staff also have strong individual connections with industry. After each delivery of a course of study, academic staff provide feedback on their own experience of delivery and update their practice to meet student needs at the next iteration. Patterns seen in achievement also attest to the differing needs of learners. However, these understandings have not prompted a change or further development in the Wastewater Treatment training scheme to better meet the different reasons for study.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Covid-19 and the resultant lockdowns resulted in WSP pivoting some training to an online platform. WSP has learnt from this experience and now uses modes of delivery that better meet the needs of students and other stakeholders. WSP has also adapted the learning activities to engage the students effectively, irrespective of the learning platform. Requiring learners to engage with work-based projects and naturally occurring evidence gives learners the ability to apply their understanding immediately in their work environment.</p> <p>WSP undertakes internal and external moderation in line with the PTE's policies and schedule. Feedback provided is mainly positive and any feedback recommending improvement is actioned promptly. Assessment marking and feedback is provided as per the policies outlined in the student handbook, and learners attest to it being helpful in identifying areas for improvement. Design and delivery of assessments that enables equal opportunities for learners with disability or learners with cultural needs has not yet been undertaken.</p>

<sup>4</sup> The Wastewater Treatment Training Scheme has not been updated since approval was granted in 1996. However, learnings from the delivery informed an ITO's development of a New Zealand qualification and micro-credential in 2021. WSP delivers training on behalf of other organisations – WSP regularly provides review-related information to these organisations for their use.

Conclusion:	Delivery is relevant and current, informed by regular engagement with industry and academic staff expertise and experience. Assessments are valid and appropriate, with opportunities for improvements to assessments actioned promptly. Formal programme review of the training scheme does not appear to have occurred despite learners' further needs being identified.
-------------	--

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Courses provided by WSP are short in duration, with learners mainly enrolling for work-related purposes. Further learning goals are canvassed at pre-enrolment through completion of a questionnaire (now online) to enable learners to undertake the right training for their needs as well as allowing for self-identification of learning disabilities. This information is provided to the tutor prior to the course commencing and is monitored throughout. Learners feel supported to contact their tutors at any time throughout their study if they need learning-related support.</p> <p>For all students, course-related information is provided on request and through Totara (the learning management system). All students are made aware of their rights and appropriate policies and procedures through the student handbook, which they are directed to and have access to via the online portal or hard copy, whichever better meets the learner's needs.</p> <p>Programme managers and, at times, a second tutor are assigned to support the learning and pastoral needs of the learners. The programme managers ensure the tutors and any additional support staff are aware of learner progress and contact students regularly to support or reset goals as necessary. External support services are identified for use by learners when they are completing their block courses.</p> <p>As learners often come from different regions in New Zealand, have differing roles in their employment and have different experiences, learning activities involve discussion and group work to ensure learners gain multiple insights and a holistic understanding of their industry. This creates a learning environment that is inclusive of differing learning styles and</p>



	needs. Graduates also attest to these connections continuing after class and being useful in the workplace.
Conclusion:	WSP provides comprehensive information and support for learners. A variety of group-related learning activities promotes networking and an inclusive learning environment.

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

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The organisational purpose and direction of WSP is clear and aligned with the overall company's strategies and directions. Effective analysis and use of data guides strategic thought, supported by regular meetings with parent company management and industry representatives. This gives WSP access to the latest resources and research to support and inform delivery.</p> <p>Academic leadership is a collaborative process. Leadership occurs at multiple levels to ensure it is provided where it will be most effective in guiding the delivery of training and experiences that meet current and emerging needs. This collaborative approach also enables all levels of staff to contribute and respond to academic and strategic self-assessment.</p> <p>Informed review of the Wastewater Treatment training scheme to better meet the needs of the learners is not apparent. Anecdotal mention of changes that did occur – to reflect changes to unit standards – were not formally captured and notified to NZQA. WSP governance and management can prevent future misunderstandings by familiarising themselves with NZQA rules and regulations, particularly around training scheme approval and maintenance of that approval. Up to now, there have been missed opportunities for formal review of WSP-owned training schemes and alignment with learners' needs.</p> <p>Academic staff are purposefully employed for their expertise and professional experience. Newer tutors focus on delivery until they have achieved the relevant adult education training, while more experienced tutors complete assessment and moderation. Tutorial staff are supported to complete unit standard 4098, undertake training in a New Zealand qualification in adult and</p>

	tertiary training soon after employment, and also undertake suitable industry-related professional development. WSP also has two online spaces that support professional development and the wellbeing of staff. <sup>5</sup> Regular professional discussions and peer observations of teaching ensure staff feel supported and valued.
Conclusion:	WSP's strategic and future planning is informed by and supports the parent company's international and national directions. Staff are supported to collaborate in the design, delivery and review of programmes provided by WSP. Greater knowledge of NZQA rules and regulations around training scheme approval and accreditation could strengthen this activity and support future planning.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Marginal</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Marginal</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Overlaying all management of compliance accountabilities is OurWay – the parent company's quality management system. From this, WSP draws the appropriate policies and procedures for both the governance and academic team to ensure that educational accountabilities are met in a timely manner. Regular reporting ensures governance can assure that legal and ethical policies and practices are maintained.</p> <p>WSP reports credits achieved and their annual delivery in a timely manner. Fit and Proper/Conflict of Interest declarations are completed for the appropriate persons. To meet other accountabilities, WSP management has required guidance from NZQA regarding the following requirements to maintain approval for their training schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver part or whole of a training scheme within 12 months of the last date of previous delivery to prevent lapsing of the course of study.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> THRIVE provide references, workshops and activities related to professional development while OurBalance provides understandings of and support for wellbeing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform NZQA of a change of course delivery mode from solely face-to-face to blended.</li> <li>• Hold on file a copy of the approved programme documents to enable monitoring of approved hours and other course maintenance actions.</li> <li>• Submit for approval or re-approval (to NZQA) any changes to the training scheme – this has not occurred for any changes that have been undertaken, in particular the most recent change.<sup>6</sup> This also applies to any changes to the method of delivery.</li> </ul> <p>WSP is now in conversation with NZQA to address these oversights and prepare to move to micro-credentials.</p> <p>WSP has completed the required attestations to the interim domestic and new combined Code of Practice 2021. The self-review has promoted validation of current activity and processes and any gaps identified are being addressed.</p> <p>The parent companies ISO9001 industry standard ensures WSP meets health and safety accountabilities.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Most compliance accountabilities are being effectively monitored and managed. Areas where oversights have occurred are now being addressed through conversations with NZQA.</p>

---

<sup>6</sup> The level of the training scheme has changed from level 6 to level 4, and new unit standards and assessments were re-written, pre-moderated and added to the training scheme.

# Focus areas

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

## 2.1 Focus area: Wastewater Treatment (Training Scheme) [ID: 102326]

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Completion rates for this training scheme have been mixed. The training scheme is made up of two modules, the first giving general information about on-site wastewater treatment and management, while the second module provides design of wastewater treatment solutions knowledge and skills. Some students choose to only complete Module 1 (67 per cent completion rate) for that general knowledge, others do not sit any assessments but do the learning as they simply need to understand the design process in their job, while others complete both modules (30 per cent). The differing reasons for undertaking this course of study affects the completion rates.</p> <p>Data disaggregating students into each group has been collated and WSP has analysed this to come to the above understanding. This understanding has not been used in reviews (of WSP courses) and the potential development of new WSP micro-credentials that meet the distinct needs of students undertaking this training.</p> <p>Conversations with Connexis have enabled this training scheme to contribute to the development of a New Zealand Certificate of Onsite Wastewater Treatment (Level 4) and a related micro-credential. WSP now delivers training in these new qualifications to Connexis Te Pūkenga learners at the same time as they deliver their own course of study.</p>

## 2.2 Focus area: Making Good Decisions (Resource Management Act) suite of programmes

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>WSP has held the licence to deliver and assess the Ministry for the Environment's Making Good Decisions suite of courses. The Foundation course is for persons wishing to gain accreditation so that they are able to be appointed as hearing commissioners</p>

	<p>under the Resource Management Act, while the Panel and Chair courses are recertification courses, allowing commissioners to continue to be eligible to practise.</p> <p>Regular meetings and reports between WSP and the Ministry for the Environment ensure WSP's self-assessment around delivery and assessment is provided to the Ministry for consideration. This has resulted in changes to the mode of delivery and WSP hosting an online community or learning space where resources and networking opportunities can be found.</p>
--	---

# 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 WSP New Zealand Limited:

- Commence collating achievement information for learners with disabilities to support current levels of self-assessment.
- Collect feedback from graduates and employers to better understand the use of acquired skills and knowledge in line with the learning outcomes gained. This knowledge will support programme review.
- Familiarise quality assurance and programme management staff with NZQA programme and micro-credential approval, accreditation and maintenance rules and regulations to ensure compliance.

# Requirements

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

NZQA requires WSP New Zealand Limited to:

- Provide to NZQA and keep on file a copy of the approved training scheme documentation that meets the approved criteria outlined in Part 1 section 4 of the Training Scheme Rules 2021.
- Provide to NZQA evidence of future internal review of the training scheme or micro-credential in accordance with Part 3 section 12.1 and 12.2 of the Training Scheme Rules 2021.
- Apply to NZQA for any future changes to the training scheme or micro-credential in accordance with the requirements of Part 2 section 5 of the Training Scheme Rules 2021.

# Appendix 1

**Table 1. Overall completion figures across all WSP course and programme delivery**

Learners	2019	2020	2021	2022 (YTD)
All	1185/1428 (83%)	948/1101 (86%)	731/772 (95%)	446/520 (86%)
Māori	174/214 (81%)	95/130 (73%)	77/85 (91%)	59/60 (98%)
Pasifika	69/76 (91%)	64/73 (88%)	77/77 (100%)	41/42 (98%)

**Table 2. Wastewater Treatment training scheme completion figures**

Learners	2019	2020	2021	2022 (YTD)
All	14/33 (42%)	8/43 (19%)	No courses run	56 enrolled
Māori	0/1 (0%)	1 /2 (50%)	No courses run	0 enrolled
Pasifika	0/1 (0%)	0/1 (0%)	No courses run	0 enrolled

Some students choose to only complete Module 1 (67% completion rate), others do not sit the assessments as they simply need to understand the design process in their job, while others complete both modules (30%).

**Table 3. Making Good Decisions completion figures**

Course	2019	2020	2021	2022 (YTD)
Foundation	103/117 (88%)	164/170 (96%)	96/98 (98%)	43/47 (91%)
Panel	103/109 (94%)	112/116 (97%)	102/103 (99%)	57/62 (92%)
Chair	51/51 (100%)	34/35 (97%)	45/45 (100%)	21/22 (95%)

Demographic disaggregation of data has not been required by the Ministry for the Environment until recently, so has not been collected.

# 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<sup>7</sup>*
- 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.*

---

<sup>7</sup> 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](http://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/>.*

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E [qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)