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External Evaluation and Review Report

Skill New Zealand Limited

Date of report: 18 February 2021

About Skill New Zealand Limited

Skill New Zealand (Skill NZ) delivers healthcare and English language education in South Auckland to primarily Pasifika, Māori and migrant communities.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	7 Springs Road, East Tamaki, Auckland ¹
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Level 4) – 32 (26 equivalent full-time students); 13 per cent New Zealand Māori, 53 per cent Pasifika Domestic: ILN-ESOL ² – 69; 100 per cent Asian International: three equivalent full-time students – all enrolled in the New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Level 4)
Number of staff:	Eight full-time equivalents – seven full-time, two part-time
TEO profile:	See Skill New Zealand page on the NZQA website.
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Confident in the educational performance and Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Polyethnic Institute of Studies ³ at the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2016.
Scope of this evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Community facilitations strand) (Level 4) (HWB Level 4)• ILN-ESOL course
MoE number:	9471

¹ The EER was conducted online.

² Intensive Literacy and Numeracy for English Speakers of Other Languages.

³ Polyethnic Institute of Studies was the previous name of this PTE before its change of ownership and name change in April 2019.

NZQA reference: C39374

Dates of EER visit: 11 and 12 November 2020

Summary of results

Student achievement is strong. The value of the outcomes for all stakeholders is understood and regularly reviewed to ensure relevancy and currency in the programmes delivered. Student support is highly effective, with all students and staff using various mechanisms to engage and support each other. A clear strategic business plan builds on the strengths and experience of Skill NZ staff.

Highly Confident in educational performance

Student achievement is strong, both academically and in terms of transferable skills. Self-assessment continues to occur around the small percentage of non-completions in order to improve on the measures that have been introduced successfully to support the learners.

Skill NZ regularly and actively seeks feedback and uses it in regular programme reviews. This informs the organisation's provision of programmes to meet the current and developing needs of its stakeholders, including students.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Monitoring of academic standards and integrity is achieved through regular and effective data analysis. Improvements and decisions made are based on effective understanding of the analysis. Assessment procedures are well understood by the students and staff, and are supported by positive moderation results.

With student success at the centre of the organisation's vision, Skill NZ has a clear and systematic focus on its students, with pastoral care and safety at the core. The regular collection and use of feedback informs constant review and improvements and allows for rapid adoption of new technologies that allow staff and students to engage with and support each other.

Although the governance and management team is new⁴, it is experienced and well networked. The team has quickly embedded a values-based, evidence-

⁴ The managing director purchased the education organisation early 2019 and the chief executive was employed at the beginning of 2020. The quality assurance manager remains unchanged.

informed culture that contributes to a consistently strong performance, improvements and a clear growth plan and outlook for the next five years.

Staff are highly qualified and experienced, with regular, ongoing professional development occurring externally and in-house.

The organisation has a robust compliance management system. All staff are aware of the organisation's responsibilities and regularly review their own compliance with them.

Key evaluation question findings⁵

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Skill NZ provides health and wellbeing and English language training in the South Auckland region. The health and wellbeing and NZCEL⁶ (Levels 2 and 3) programmes from 2017 through to 2019 have had consistently high course and qualification completion rates (see Appendix 1). Skill NZ's completion rates place them in the top 3 per cent of 219 similar PTEs.</p> <p>Māori and Pasifika students enrol mainly in the health programmes, in particular the HWB Level 4 certificate. Achievement during 2018 and 2019 was lower for non-Māori/Pasifika students, although this substantially improved in 2019. It is recognised that the small number of Māori and Pasifika students disproportionately affect the percentage of non-completions for this demographic group. Nevertheless, Skill NZ investigated the reasons for these non-completions and put in place measures to address them⁷, with positive effect. Skill NZ continues to review and improve on these measures.</p> <p>Student achievement in the ILN-ESOL course is measured through literacy and numeracy step progression and completion of the hours allocated to each student. Although literacy step progression has remained at an average of 90 per cent, daily monitoring of attendance and weekly analysis of attendance data has increased course completion from 76 per cent (2016) to 96.4 per cent (2019).</p>

⁵ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

⁶ New Zealand Certificate in English Language

⁷ Measures taken include the employment of an additional support person, evolution of the interview process, added aligned evening classes, and all students get individual learning plans.

	<p>Transferable skills such as communication skills, leadership, cultural understanding and daily life skills are recognised and incorporated into the delivery for all programmes. These skills are defined through the qualification graduate profile outcomes; industry, community and family feedback; and understanding the needs and goals of the students. Student and graduate feedback shows consistent satisfaction with the gaining of attributes and goals.</p> <p>Internal and external moderation validates student achievement for all programmes.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Student achievement is strong. Parity of achievement for Māori and Pasifika is increasing, with the reasons for non-completion informing current measures and further review. Increased attendance and transferable skills are also reported and reviewed as measures of achievement.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Skill NZ actively engages with all stakeholders to understand their valued outcomes. This allows Skill NZ to deliver the programmes that best meet the changing needs of the students, community and industry.</p> <p>ILN-ESOL students are often mature migrants who wish to gain confidence to communicate and engage with New Zealand communities and their families, and have the opportunity to undertake higher-level study. Student and graduate feedback shows that these outcomes are being met, including having the confidence to go to the supermarket alone, place an order at a café, and speak to their New Zealand-born, English-speaking grandchildren. Referrals from existing students to new students from South Auckland communities also attests to the value of those outcomes.</p> <p>Over three-quarters of the graduates of the HWB Level 4 programme gain employment, most of it in the healthcare industry. Most of the remaining graduates continue with further study. Feedback from these graduates attests that the skills and knowledge gained, both industry-related and transferable, have</p>

	<p>helped them with their chosen destination.</p> <p>Skill NZ has a long history within Pasifika communities and regularly engages with community leaders. New relationships with Auckland and Waikato iwi and higher-level learning organisations and wānanga aim to provide greater options for Māori and Pasifika.</p>
Conclusion:	An accurate and current understanding of value for students, graduates, employers and industry is actively sought and used in programme review. New engagement with iwi and higher learning organisations meets community needs and provides alternative learning pathways.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Skill NZ is currently delivering only the HWB Level 4 and the ILN-ESOL course. Stakeholders have given Skill NZ feedback indicating that these two programmes would meet industry, community and student needs. This includes the recently approved Type 2 change reducing required practicum hours– a reflection of a Careerforce⁸ Covid 19 decision.</p> <p>Programme timetables, including classroom learning and work placement, meet approved guidelines and/or qualification conditions. Close daily and weekly monitoring of students' hours ensures Skill NZ can accurately report on meeting approved hours.</p> <p>Feedback received from all stakeholders allows review of these programmes to meet emerging needs. Changes made in response to changing student and industry environments include two daily classes for the HWB Level 4, life skill-related field trips (ILN), and new unit standards in dementia.</p> <p>Robust policies for assessment ensure the integrity and</p>

⁸ Industry training organisation

	<p>authenticity of assessments. An example is that all health-related assignments have to be submitted through Turnitin.⁹ Marking and feedback processes ensure that students are informed of gaps in understanding to show further areas for learning required before resits, as well as ensuring student workloads are manageable.</p> <p>HWB Level 4 assessments are either purchased from Careerforce or developed by an external consultant for Skill NZ. ILN progress assessments are developed as needed in-house by the English language academic staff. All assessments are pre-moderated by Skill NZ, a subject matter expert and the standard-setting body before use. Post-moderation occurs internally and externally and generally meets consent and moderation requirements. Any issues have been explained or rectified promptly.</p>
Conclusion:	Programmes are kept current and relevant through regular review and stakeholder feedback. Monitoring of academic standards and integrity is achieved through regular and effective data analysis. Assessment activity is supported by mostly positive moderation results.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
	<p>The student-centric vision and direction is most clearly seen in the support provided to Skill NZ students. As well as having dedicated support staff, students also feel able to approach tutorial and management staff as required. This ensures support is accessed at both campuses when needed. Skill NZ was receptive to NZQA’s suggestion to consider positioning a support staff member at the Manukau campus to increase their support network further.</p> <p>All potential students are interviewed to ensure the training will help them to meet their goals and needs. This helps the students to feel confident that they are enrolling in training that is right for them. The orientation reiterates this information and ensures all</p>

⁹ Turnitin software is used for detecting plagiarism.

	<p>contact points are well publicised and known.</p> <p>Every student has an individual learning plan which is defined through conversations with academic and support staff on arrival in order to understand any potential support needs. Regular face-to-face meetings and daily monitoring of attendance ensures any changes in needs are quickly identified and adjustments made to enable students to continue studying. The recent addition of a new support staff member¹⁰ and social media-based contact groups has made support easier to source and more encompassing.</p> <p>The students have regular shared meals and take part in cultural and holiday events. These enable the students to develop support networks in their classes and across the organisation. Students and staff attest to feeling that they are part of a family, with graduates still in touch with the friends they made while studying. These networks were of value when Skill NZ locked down for the Covid-19 pandemic, with support quickly broadening to encompass technology and assistance with financial hardship.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Student support is comprehensive and effective and has resulted in a family-like atmosphere. Self-review has resulted in new positions and the use of social media groups, increasing the efficacy of the support offered during and after the Covid-19 lockdown.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The organisation's purpose and direction are clear and embedded throughout daily operations. Despite the change of ownership during 2019 and the employment of a new chief executive at the beginning of 2020, there has been no negative impact on academic quality or operations. The governance and management team is very experienced and has broad networks. A close association with another PTE, Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design, enables the sharing of systems, resources and</p>

¹⁰ This replaced and redefined an existing role on the retirement of the incumbent.

	<p>guidance as Skill NZ positions itself with a clear growth plan and outlook for the next five years. Feedback from industry indicates an organisation regularly engaging in an effort to continually improve.</p> <p>Regular self-review ensures that the comprehensive information and data collected from all stakeholders is used to make successful improvements to practice. Fortnightly staff and monthly management meetings ensure this effective cycle of self-assessment is occurring.</p> <p>All staff are highly qualified and experienced prior to recruitment. Staff induction is rigorous at ensuring staff are aware of the compliances and conditions that need to be met. Adult teaching qualifications are gained within the first year of employment if a staff member does not already hold one, and there is regular external and internal professional development. Peer and external observations of teaching provide areas for practice review and development, supported by annual appraisals.</p>
Conclusion:	Governance and management are experienced and well networked, using multiple connections to engage in active improvement, development and growth planned for the next five years. Staff are highly qualified and experienced, with regular, ongoing professional development opportunities occurring externally and in-house.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Due to the conditions and requirements embedded within the Tertiary Education Commission's funding mechanisms, the rules and regulations for registered PTEs, and the standard and qualification requirements set by the relevant standard-setting bodies, Skill NZ operates a robust compliance management system aided by a comprehensive quality assurance calendar. This ensures the appropriate checks and balances are met and reported. The whole organisation understands the PTE's compliance responsibilities and reviews processes regularly in accordance with these. This ensures the chief executive has appropriate oversight to manage compliance accountabilities.</p>

	<p>Responsibilities under the Code of Practice¹¹ are satisfactorily met, in particular the monitoring of agents¹², accurate information provided to prospective and current students, entry requirements, visa and insurance requirements, a 24/7 contact person, and the general pastoral care of students.</p> <p>Formal reviews of all practices, policies and procedures and related documentation occur annually. If changes or errors in text are recognised out of this cycle, updates occur as needed. Currently the level 3 NZCEL and HWB qualifications are not being taught and have not been since 2018. Skill NZ recognises that new programmes will need approval and accreditation, and will gain these before delivering these programmes again.</p> <p>Moderation processes are robust and occur for all programmes. External moderation occurs with consultants and the standard-setting bodies. In all cases, Skill NZ consistently attains satisfactory results and has positive relationships with these stakeholders.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Skill NZ has a robust compliance management system based on having a number of quality assurance accountabilities. The whole organisation is aware of the organisation's compliance responsibilities and reviews processes in accordance with them.</p>

¹¹ The Education (Pastoral Care of international Students) Code of Practice 2016

¹² A typographical error in the agent's agreement was identified (during the EER) which incorrectly named the Code of Practice and the source of the complaints procedure. This was brought to the organisation's attention and rectified promptly.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Community facilitations strand) (Level 4)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

2.2 Focus area: The ILN-ESOL programme

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

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 Skill New Zealand Limited:

- Consider appointing a full-time support staff member at the Manukau campus.

Requirements

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

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

Appendix 1

Table 1. Educational Performance Indicator (TEC) data 2016-2019

Year	EPI: course completion	EPI: qualification completion
2016	93%	89%
2017	95%	95%
2018	96%	90%
2019	87% (HWB L4 only)	76% (HWB L4 only)

Table 2. ILN-ESOL completion 2016-2019

Year	Course completion
2016	79%
2017	89%
2018	92.5%
2019	96.4%

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 fraud¹³*
- *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.*

¹³ 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/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz