

External Evaluation and Review Report

Auckland City Training School
trading as Equippers College

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 1 May 2018

Equippers College at a Glance

Type of TEO¹:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Code of Practice² signatory:	Yes
Location:	15 Gladding Place, Manukau, Auckland
Courses	Certificate in Christian Ministry (Internship) (Level 4)
Number of students:	44 domestic students, 11 international students
Number of staff:	Three full-time, four part-time
Scope of evaluation:	<p>The external evaluation and review (EER) looked at the following three focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in Christian Ministry (Internship) (Level 4) (a new programme, with delivery starting 2018)• Programmes offered prior to 2018 (to review data since the previous EER)• International Students: Support and Wellbeing (because the PTE is a signatory to the Code of Practice)
MoE Number:	9513
NZQA Reference:	C27897
Dates of EER visit:	6 and 7 March 2018

¹ Tertiary education organisation

² Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice

Summary of Results

Equippers College is a Christian faith-based education provider

Equippers demonstrated that it:

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Has clear and purposeful goals focused on positive graduate outcomes
- Collated and used valid student achievement data and information confirming the value of outcomes
- Enables priority students to achieve at a rate close to other students

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Works closely with like-minded organisations to develop, monitor and improve education provision
- Provides holistic student support in a caring learning environment
- Meets the spirit and intent of the Code of Practice to ensure international students' wellbeing
- Provides strong governance and management
- Uses external specialists to strengthen systems, to support the small academic team
- Uses its national and international networks well, including for internships
- Has strengthened teaching and learning through supporting professional development
- Is proactively working on monitoring and improving the effectiveness of assessment of learning through internal and external moderation processes.

Key evaluation question findings

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance: **Excellent**

Self-assessment: **Excellent**

<p>These findings relate to programmes delivered prior to this evaluation. From 2018 Equippers is delivering a new programme leading to the achievement of a New Zealand certificate. The content of the earlier programmes was largely similar to the new programme, and therefore the prior achievement data is relevant to this evaluation.</p>	
<p>Findings and supporting evidence</p>	<p>Equippers' data, confirmed by Tertiary Education Commission published results, shows that achievement has been consistently strong since the previous evaluation. Between 90 and 95 per cent of all students complete courses and qualifications, and Māori and Pasifika students' achievement is on par.³ International students' achievement is close to 100 per cent. This achievement can be partially attributed to a careful selection process.</p> <p>Equippers' surveys of students and other stakeholders showed that students gain a wide range of useful life skills appropriate to their next steps. These include: critical thinking skills, social and timekeeping skills, and academic study skills, supporting the many who go on to university.</p> <p>The internships are providing students with the practical experience to embed their skills and knowledge, and to build relationships and self-awareness, further preparing them well for their next steps.</p> <p>Some aspects of self-assessment are still in development, but the organisation is aware of where improvement is needed and has been working on embedding reflection and data analysis.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Achievement is strong, with the vast majority achieving success. Priority students and international students achieving at similar levels, and this is well monitored and understood by staff and management.</p> <p>There was sufficient evidence provided through the organisation's self-assessment documents and processes, and validated through staff and management interviews, to establish the above ratings.</p>

³ See Table 1, Appendix 1 for details.

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

Performance: **Excellent**

Self-assessment: **Excellent**

<p>Findings and supporting evidence</p>	<p>Equippers' analysis of student destinations at graduation shows the majority (60 to 70 per cent) are moving into higher study, work or service within their communities.</p> <p>Between 43 and 49 per cent have enrolled in higher study in recent years. A significant number of graduates progress to study Christian Ministry at level 5 with an associated provider. This programme is valued by the graduates as an extension to the level 4, and can be counted as the first year of a degree programme if they choose to continue.</p> <p>Equippers' stakeholder surveys, and interviews with students and graduates at this evaluation, confirmed that graduates add significant value through the application of their new knowledge and skills in their church communities.</p> <p>The new programme being delivered in 2018 prepares students to achieve the New Zealand Certificate in Christian Ministry. Equippers is preparing to collect evidence showing that the programme achieves the graduate profile outcomes. The evaluators acknowledge that the timing of this evaluation was during the third week of this new programme, so the level of preparation noted above is appropriate.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>In past years, students have gained outcomes of significant value, as noted above. With the close alignment of the new programme content to student and stakeholder needs, and ongoing improvements, this is likely to continue.</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**

<p>Findings and supporting evidence</p>	<p>The newly introduced New Zealand Certificate in Christian Ministry is strongly aligned to students' and other stakeholders' needs, as was the previous Certificate in Christian Ministry. This is shown by the new qualification being developed (by Laidlaw College) in consultation with the Christian Theological Ministries Education Sector (CTMES). The current programme was designed to prepare students to achieve the New Zealand certificate, and is approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority as meeting that requirement.</p> <p>Equippers' surveys of students and other stakeholders identified that they strongly support the programme design and content. Exit interviews with past graduates show strongly positive comments that interviewees feel well prepared for further study, engagement with their church community, and related employment.</p> <p>Equippers has made improvements to teaching and learning since the previous evaluation, by supporting staff to enrol in qualifications in adult teaching, establishing teacher peer observations, and appointing an academic coordinator to support academic integrity. These have improved, for example, teacher-student engagement and academic planning, and assessment.</p> <p>Assessments are appropriately checked for validity through internal and external moderation processes. However, this is still a work in progress for providing sufficiently detailed guidance for markers to ensure consistency. Currently there is insufficient detail in marking schedules and feedback to students.</p> <p>Teachers meet regularly and discuss their teaching practice, including listening to feedback from students who requested a more interactive and engaging learning environment.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Equippers is providing an educational environment that strongly meets the needs of students and other stakeholders. There is some work in progress to lift the rigour of assessment and feedback to students.</p>

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

Performance: **Excellent**

Self-assessment: **Excellent**

<p>Findings and supporting evidence</p>	<p>Students are provided with a holistic, supportive environment in which to learn, including appropriate and full information prior to enrolling, a detailed orientation, two-weekly mentoring, and supervisors for internships. This was well evidenced through the organisation’s own self-assessment of student and stakeholder surveys. Equipper’s self-assessment findings were confirmed through student and stakeholder interviews at this evaluation.</p> <p>As a values-based organisation, Equippers has effectively cultivated a learning environment, supporting student engagement based on respectful relationships.</p> <p>Students value the support provided to develop and review individual development plans with their mentors.</p> <p>The organisation has effective processes to review how well it meets the spirit and intent of the Code of Practice. This and evidence sighted provides assurance that international students are well supported and close attention is paid to their wellbeing.</p> <p>Students appreciate the opportunities for embedding their theory into practice through internships. For Māori and Pasifika students, processes for involving whānau have been developed which helps support engagement in the learning.</p> <p>There is room for further clarification to students of what is expected in their assessments. This is connected to the comments above regarding providing more detail for assessors.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>All students experience a strongly supportive and caring learning environment, and this is well reviewed within a reflective organisational culture, ensuring its ongoing effectiveness.</p>

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

Performance: **Excellent**

Self-assessment: **Good**

<p>Findings and supporting evidence</p>	<p>Equippers' board and management team operate effectively together, maintaining regular monitoring and oversight of educational achievement. The board members are also directors on other boards, bringing a breadth of experience to this organisation. The management team has considerable experience in educational management. Organisational documents and records show regular monitoring and review of the quality of teaching, learning and student progress. The board could find value in developing self-review processes to better understand the PTE's performance. Following management's analysis of achievement data, one course was identified as having a high number of students just passing. A tutorial programme has recently been introduced to provide the additional support required.</p> <p>Teaching staff are well experienced and committed to the culture and values of the organisation. External specialists are contracted as needed for educational review and to conduct external moderation of assessment practices, bringing an objective, external view to the programme and organisation.</p> <p>Management and teaching staff meet regularly, and meeting minutes indicate appropriate educational matters are discussed and improvements made. For example, an academic coordinator was appointed in early 2017 to provide additional academic oversight. The wording in some assessments has also been reviewed and improved, to better match the programme level. The organisation has recently moved to a new, well-appointed site in Manukau, with easy access to the new train station.</p> <p>The organisation seeks feedback from its students and stakeholders, and reflects on this to make improvements. Assessments are effectively analysed, by course and priority students. However, the new student management system could be further used to draw detailed reports, for example on educational progress.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Governance and management are clearly focused on education, student progress and providing a quality, well-resourced learning environment that supports educational achievement.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance: **Good**

Self-assessment: **Good**

Findings and supporting evidence	<p>There are good compliance monitoring systems and processes, and staff awareness of compliance matters. There was evidence of a recent external review of the organisation's quality management system, and compliance with the Code of Practice, resulting in an action plan and follow-up showing all points had been addressed. For example, the PTE developed a critical incident response plan as a result of the review. Management regularly reports to the board on compliance matters, ensuring the board is well informed.</p> <p>A review of student files by the evaluators showed that relevant documentation is checked and is available as needed. The organisation is proactive in ensuring identified potential risk is mitigated. For example, where students have been placed on internships involving children, all have been police vetted.</p> <p>Equippers' staff are contracted to deliver Laidlaw College⁴ programmes at the Equippers site, and this arrangement is compliant with NZQA rules. Equippers has recently updated its quality management system to strengthen the monitoring of compliance accountabilities.</p>
Conclusion	The board and management are cognisant of their compliance responsibilities and actively monitor how well these are met, including using external specialists to improve objectivity.

⁴ <https://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/>

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Certificate in Christian Ministry (Internship) (Level 4)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

2.2 Focus area: programmes offered prior to the new certificate starting in 2018

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

2.3 Focus area: International students: Support and wellbeing

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation will 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 the Equippers College strengthen:

- Assessment schedules, to provide clearer guidance for markers to support consistent marking.
- Feedback to students on their assessments, to provide details of strengths and areas requiring further detail.
- Information to students on the expectations for each assessment.

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

**Table 1. Achievement results for the Certificate in Christian Ministry (Level 4) 2015-2017
(Data is supplied by Equippers as taken from their SDR report to TEC)**

	2015	2016	2017
Domestic #	44	38	44
International #	4	11	8
Qualification completion % All	93	88	92
Course completion % All	95	93	Not yet available
Qualification completion Māori %	90	88	100
Course completion Māori %	95	88	100
Qualification completion Pasifika %	95	89	96
Course completion Pasifika %	95	93	Not yet available

Appendix 2

About Equippers College

Distinctive characteristics:	This education provider is part of a New Zealand and international network of Christian Equippers churches. The PTE provides one approved programme to students seeking to move to either further education and a range of sectors, enter employment, or work within the church network.
Recent significant changes:	The PTE recently moved to a new site in Manukau.
Previous quality assurance history:	The previous EER was held in 2014, when the statements of confidence were Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Other	The organisation is not externally moderated by any standard-setting body or other regulator.

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document [Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction) available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. 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: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>. 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 fraud⁵*
- *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 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.

Appendix 3

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are 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.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which 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.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 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 and/or 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 External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

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).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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