



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

Trinity Methodist Theological College

Date of report: 23 May 2019

# About Trinity Methodist Theological College

---

*Trinity Methodist Theological College (the College) provides theological teaching supported by research. Its role is to educate leaders who minister to and seek to transform the Methodist church and the wider society.*

---

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	202 St John's Road, St Johns, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 65 (17 equivalent full-time students in 2018); Pasifika 48 (77 per cent), New Zealand Māori six (10 per cent)
Number of staff:	Seven full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	See: <a href="#">NZQA – Trinity Methodist Theological College</a>  The College offers its students (all part-time) a blend of online and face-to-face delivery.
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Confident in the educational performance and Confident in the capability in self-assessment of the College at the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2015.
Scope of evaluation:	New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Level 6)
MoE number:	9644
NZQA reference:	C33583
Dates of EER visit:	4 and 5 March 2019

# Summary of Results

---

*The College is fulfilling its purpose well, meeting the important needs of its students and church stakeholders. There is a values-based reflective culture of using data to make improvements across the organisation.*

---

## **Highly Confident in educational performance**

- Educational achievement is strong, with completion rates of around 80 per cent; a considerable improvement since the last EER. Pasifika students complete at a similar rate to others. The self-assessment of achievement is of high quality.
- The leadership has thoroughly reviewed the strategic purpose of the College, developing new, coherent and robust training options and engaging capable lecturers. Student and key church stakeholder needs are being well met. All five diploma graduates were accepted as ministry candidates or were participating in further study.

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

- There is a robust academic culture, research is being produced, and assessment and moderation is high quality. The blended delivery matches well the needs of its part-time students.
- The strong pastoral ethos of manaakitanga and close monitoring of individual academic progress effectively support most students, all part-time, to complete their studies.
- The PTE effectively manages its key compliance requirements.
- There is a pattern of ongoing improvements arising from reflective thinking, informed by sound data analysis. Generally high-quality feedback from students, lecturers and stakeholders is used to make changes; the impacts of key changes are assessed.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Part-time students enrol in theological education papers, delivered online as well as through face-to-face block courses. The New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies students from 2016 to 2018 consistently passed 80 per cent of their enrolled papers. Over this period, five students graduated (four were Pasifika students); there was a qualification completion rate of 80 per cent. The completion rates are considerably above the rates of the last EER report but were not benchmarked against similar qualifications. Students typically gain B or C grades. Eighty per cent of the students are Pasifika and 10 per cent Māori; their achievement rates map closely the overall rates. These are very strong results and the rates are similar for the other College courses.</p> <p>There is a rich and comprehensive understanding of achievement. Academic oversight is rigorous; robust assessment and moderation practices give confidence in the validity of the results. The achievement of individuals, cohorts and papers is closely monitored and well analysed. Grades and progress towards qualification completion are tracked, and students with weaker performance are effectively supported. Papers that prove more challenging are modified and the impact on achievement is assessed. The recently established '90 per cent pass rate' target is less clear, and this matter warrants further reflection.</p>
Conclusion:	Student achievement is very strong. Self-assessment information is high quality and being well used to support ongoing improvement in educational achievement.

<sup>1</sup> 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:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>In 2015 the College conducted a searching review of its core vision and mission, consulting internal church stakeholders, considering international trends in theological education, and discerning the key challenges facing Aotearoa New Zealand society. Its revised purpose is to offer ‘Radical theological thinking for justice’ and develop ‘...transformative leaders for society and church’.</p> <p>The College is fulfilling this purpose well and producing high-value outcomes for its students and key stakeholders. A range of leaders from the key church stakeholders affirmed the new direction, and the College is meeting these revised objectives well. There is increased engagement, enrolments and new funding from new College stakeholders. Overall delivery has increased including enrolments in higher-level and more radically aligned education. Staff are producing research that aligns well with its radical purpose. The College is providing theological challenges to the wider church, as mandated.</p> <p>The specific high-value diploma outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All five graduates have been accepted as ministry candidates or are participating in further study.</li> <li>• Detailed feedback from the churches confirms the graduates are meeting their key needs well.</li> </ul> <p>Recently, more attention has been given to ensuring the graduates have the required pragmatic ministry capabilities. There was one self-assessment gap. While the surveys conducted are sound, these did not explicitly ask for areas for improvement, or rate how strongly the graduates demonstrate the key profile outcomes. This gap had no significant impact.</p>
Conclusion:	The College has systematically responded to changing needs. This has been a high-quality reflective process resulting in a wide range of improvements. Outcomes of high value are being created for the students and key stakeholders.

### 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>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Following on from its strategic review and the NZQA targeted review of qualifications, the College has designed four new training courses aligning strongly with its revised direction. The PTE has gained NZQA approval for the New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies programme. This has contributed to increased enrolments and some progress in attracting a more diverse student makeup.</p> <p>The blended online and block delivery continues to suit well part-time students, who are typically in work, both in and outside of the Auckland region. The online platform effectively provides students with detailed information and a supportive interactive learning environment. Assessment is robust, with students receiving detailed feedback on their mahi. Each year all papers are thoroughly post-moderated (internally and externally) and changes are made; some changes also arise from student feedback. The impact of these changes is tracked. Enabling students to enrol on a single interest paper has been an effective enrolment strategy for ensuring students are able to complete full courses.</p> <p>Formal written student feedback is periodically collected; there is a consistent pattern of the students saying the delivery is meeting their needs well. It is not clear that the current feedback mechanisms are the most effective for gaining the views of the predominantly Pasifika and Māori students and key stakeholders.</p>
Conclusion:	Programme design and delivery match well the needs of students and key stakeholders. The periodic review of the training was robust and produced significant improvements. Ongoing self-assessment is business as usual for the College.

## 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>The College has a rich understanding of the students' world and the challenges they face as part-time students<sup>2</sup> in completing their studies. It has engaged well-qualified and experienced lecturers and support staff; most are familiar with the ethnic background of the students and have strong pastoral skills, and one has a social work qualification.</p> <p>The students interviewed, and the feedback collected, spoke highly of the lecturers' knowledge and the strong 'manaakitanga' and 'family' environment they experienced. They valued the free meals and on-site accommodation while attending the block courses.</p> <p>Academic progress towards completion is well tracked. Extensions, re-sits and re-enrolments are effective pastoral options that enable most students (all part-time and managing multiple life commitments) to complete their learning. Student and lecturer feedback have led to an increased focus in the orientation programme on referencing, time-management and practice using the library.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>The College has an effective mix of educational and pastoral strategies that have ensured that most students over the past three years have stayed involved and completed their studies. The College is highly responsive and has managed very effectively any gaps or issues that arise.</p>

<sup>2</sup> Student loans and allowances are not available to support full-time studies. However, some limited financial scholarships are offered.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The leadership has enabled the College to fulfil its key purpose and meet well the important identified needs of its students, church and other stakeholders. A representative council has provided sound overall governance. The leadership initiated a values-based, evidence-informed review that has led to a revised purpose, revamped training, new roles and capable lecturers to fill these roles. There is a clear and active academic culture operating.</p> <p>Performance reviews are undertaken, and staff are supported in staying current with the field, often through participating in international conferences. Critical thinking and self-assessment practice are evident across the organisation and its activities. There is a pattern of typically high-quality information being used to inform decision-making; numerous improvements have occurred, already noted in other sections of this report. The impacts of changes are monitored.</p>
Conclusion:	Governance and management have effectively supported a high and improving level of educational performance. There is a self-reflective culture which has supported a range of improvements.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The College has one NZQA-approved programme. It actively monitors activity to ensure students complete the required learning hours. There is strong evidence of the College managing its compliance with key NZQA rules and regulations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff are appropriately qualified and experienced.</li> <li>• A robust assessment and moderation system is being implemented.</li> <li>• A range of quality management procedures are operating.</li> <li>• The programme application fully met NZQA quality requirements.</li> </ul> <p>There is an ongoing review of operating procedures. The College reported that there have been no significant ethical or legal issues since the last EER was undertaken. No compliance gaps emerged during this enquiry, further indicating that effective management processes are being used.</p>
Conclusion:	The College effectively manages its key compliance accountabilities well. It reviews and stays current with changing regulatory requirements.

## Focus Areas

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

### 2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Christian Studies (Level 6)

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>

## 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 Trinity Methodist Theological College:

- Reflect on the recently established '90 per cent pass rate' target and how well it is monitored to support improvements.
- Explore 'good practice' processes for gaining high-quality feedback from the students and key stakeholders.

## 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

## 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>3</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>3</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)