External Evaluation and Review Report

Nelson Technical Institute Limited

Date of report: 29 November 2021

About Nelson Technical Institute Limited

Nelson Technical Institute (NTI) is a small PTE delivering New Zealand certificates in foundation skills, automotive engineering and commercial road transport (CRT) up to level 4. NTI has been zero fees-based for almost 20 years and is funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Industry fully funds all other short courses.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	3 Elms Street, Wakatu Industrial Estate, Stoke, Nelson
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 98 students in 2020
	40 per cent are under 25 years
	Māori are approximately 17 per cent and Pasifika 1.6 per cent of all learners
Number of staff:	Six full-time staff and three specialist contracted trainers
TEO profile:	See NZQA: Nelson Technical Institute
	Training is delivered from a facility which includes a mechanical workshop equipped to deliver practical content for automotive training, as well as equipment and vehicles for driver training.
Last EER outcome:	At the previous EER in 2017, NZQA was Confident in the educational performance and capability in self-assessment of NTI.
Scope of evaluation:	**Commercial Road Transport (CRT) Pathway**
	• Commercial Road Transport Introduction
	• New Zealand Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Level 3) ID: 121109-4; New Zealand Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Heavy Vehicle Operator) (Level 3)

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Ref 3089-2

- New Zealand Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Specialist Driver) – General Cartage (Level 4) ID: 122732-2, Ref 3091-1

New Zealand Certificate Foundation Skills
(Level 1) ID: 120832, Ref: 2861-1

MoE number:	9656
NZQA reference:	C45382
Dates of EER visit:	21-23 September 2021

Summary of Results

Staff and management expertise and commitment to learners is an important feature at NTI, which underpins the quality of educational performance. NTI continues to implement and use effective systems, processes and self-assessment to understand and meet the needs of learners and stakeholders and ensure the sustainability of the PTE.

Confident in educational performance

- Learners are gaining qualifications, CRT licences and sustainable employment. NTI analyses data effectively to monitor and respond to factors impacting learner achievement.

- NTI knows the immediate destination of graduates, which is strongly benefiting learners and stakeholders. Processes for capturing feedback have improved but could be more consistently applied across all learners and graduates to understand the value of outcomes.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Programmes are well matched to the learners, the most important stakeholders. Systematic processes and practices demonstrate that teaching and assessment are effective.

- NTI is aware of, and responsive to, individual learner needs, and progress is closely monitored. Understanding the effectiveness of support has been strengthened by NTI's responses to COVID-19 and review of the interim domestic Code of Practice.

- NTI is well positioned to build on recent efforts that are effectively supporting educational achievement. Self-assessment activities are evolving, resulting in access to more meaningful information for review.

- Important compliance accountabilities are effectively monitored and managed.

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Key evaluation question findings[1]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Learner achievement[2] has been generally strong in terms of qualification completion and sustained employment outcomes for MSD learners since the last EER. The exception is an 18-month period impacted by ineffective academic leadership which occurred in the director's absence and COVID-19 restrictions. Since that time, remedial action has resulted in all achievement outcomes and commitments being met or exceeded. Approximately 17 per cent of NTI's learners are Māori, and NTI's data indicates that across the three main funding categories, Māori learner achievement is generally at the same level as non-Māori. NTI has a testing regime for the literacy and numeracy skills of foundation skills learners, using the TEC assessment tool. NTI is consistently testing at the beginning, mid-point and end of study. There are measurable gains for learners, with a small proportion making significant gains in literacy and numeracy, increasing the confidence of these learners. NTI has systems and capability for analysing achievement data and has a good understanding of learner achievement at the individual level, by ethnicity, by funding category and by programme. Trends over time are also monitored. Individual trainee progress is closely monitored on a weekly basis by tutors and the academic coordinator and discussed at monthly meetings with all staff. There is a shared understanding of what is required to enable NTI's trainees to succeed.
Conclusion:	Learners are gaining qualifications, CRT licences and sustainable employment. NTI analyses data effectively to monitor and respond to factors impacting learner achievement.

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

[2] See Appendix 1.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	NTI education and training provides learners with pathways to local sustainable employment opportunities. Commercial road transport companies benefit from a supply of skilled and qualified graduates as well as access to short courses for upskilling current staff.
	CRT learners are looking to financially support themselves and their families by broadening their current employment options, or through retraining for a career change into CRT. NTI's zero fees approach, which includes learners who have already used the government's fees-free allocation or are not eligible, is of significant value and worth, reducing potential financial burden and making retraining more accessible. MSD as a key stakeholder recognises the value of both the short and medium-term sustained employment that NTI delivers.
	NTI has well-established relationships with CRT stakeholders who confirm that the demand for CRT drivers with heavy transport class licences has become more urgent due to the impact of COVID-19. Employment rates of learners are consistently strong, and NTI actively matches stakeholders with graduates for employment to meet industry needs.
	Foundation skills learners value the alternative pathway to gain National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA), seen as a foundation on which to move to further study or entry-level employment. Equally, learners gain skills and knowledge that enhance their abilities and attributes to support progress beyond study at NTI.
	NTI has made progress since the previous EER on improving processes for capturing feedback to understand graduate outcomes. Stakeholder feedback is through contact with NTI staff, resulting in high-level feedback. Feedback collection is not systematic or consistently occurring to provide detailed information for review and use. It would be beneficial to implement and further develop more systematic feedback.
Conclusion:	NTI knows the immediate destinations of graduates, and these are clearly strong, benefiting learners and stakeholders. Processes for capturing feedback are effective but could be

	more consistently applied across all learners and graduates to demonstrate the full extent of outcomes.

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	NTI offers flexible, self-paced programmes, enabling learners to study part-time and work full-time where full-time study is not a financially viable option. Foundation skills learners can enrol at any time, and pre-selection interviews and emphasis on using the TEC assessment tool help determine the learner profile and needs.
	All tutors are new to NTI since 2020 and are well qualified in the programme area they deliver as well as having current industry knowledge and expertise. Qualified assessors undertake assessment. Oversight and support for tutors and teaching is comprehensive. This is important for monitoring and demonstrating the impact high-calibre tutors are having on current and future educational performance. Tutor meetings and peer review/observation and learner surveys provide an opportunity for tutor development as well as to respond to learner needs, such as the change to scheduling driving opportunities for learners.
	Robust and systematic weekly internal moderation occurs to a planned schedule, with coverage of all units every year. Participation of all teaching staff, cross-assessing and discussion develop trainers' capabilities and contribute to ongoing review of programmes.
	External moderation with four Transitional Industry Training Organisations since 2017 confirms all results deemed at the standard for both assessment and assessor judgements. NZQA national external moderation requirements for 2018, 2019 and 2020 verified all assessor judgements, except for numeracy system samples. The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) audit this year rated NTI highly in terms of tutor, programme and assessment, and validates achievement.
	NTI's self-assessment approach is fit for purpose and includes the systematic gathering of useful information about the quality

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	of programmes and teaching. Collation and comparison of feedback over time and sharing all feedback consistently with staff are areas for improvement.
Conclusion:	Programmes are well matched to the learners, the most important stakeholders. Systematic processes and practices demonstrate that teaching and assessment are effective.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	NTI recognises that the pastoral care and academic progress of learners are entwined and prioritises these to support achievement. Recruitment and orientation processes establish individual goals and learning needs, which are monitored and changed throughout study. Learners track their own progress.

Support most appreciated by learners includes the positive learning environment – described as non-judgmental and non-pressured – and features one-to-one teaching, guidance and feedback on assessment. All staff at NTI, including the director, actively support learners and follow them up on and off campus, and link with social services as needed.

Policies on class size reflect the intent to ensure all learner needs can be adequately addressed. There are clear guidelines and consistent application in areas such as attendance which learners understand.

NTI's review of the interim domestic Code[3] included targeted surveys of current learners, seeking feedback on how well their pastoral care needs are being met. The feedback provided a basis to compare and consider NTI's own perspective of strengths and areas for improvement. This is a good initiative and NTI would do well to continue and embed this process as an opportunity to understand the changing needs of learners and the quality of support. |
| Conclusion: | NTI is aware of, and responsive to, individual learner needs, and progress is closely monitored. Understanding of the |

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[3] The Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019

| | effectiveness of support has been strengthened with responses to COVID-19 and review of the interim domestic Code. |

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	NTI has had almost one year of stability following a period of challenges and staff changes which had some impact on achievement and meeting funding targets and commitments. Current stability and staff collaboration is attributed to staff selection and compatibility of values within the small PTE team. Tutor experience and attributes complement the director's vision and purpose, including the commitment to NTI learners and expertise in programmes. The academic coordinator has improved the quality and effectiveness of academic processes and the support of tutors. Performance reviews are identifying professional development opportunities which are planned and relevant to the role and function of the tutors. As a result, the PTE is being managed effectively and improvements in self-assessment processes are having an impact. Examples are the improvement in achievement in 2020 and to date in 2021, the introduction of comprehensive policies on assessment, and more purposeful gathering of feedback from graduates and learners for review and use. Systematic formal and informal meetings provide opportunities to monitor unit standard achievement, moderate assessments and share information on learner outcomes and support needs with all staff.
Conclusion:	NTI is well positioned to build on recent efforts which are effectively supporting educational achievement. Self-assessment activities are evolving, resulting in access to more meaningful information for review.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The NTI director and academic manager have clearly designated roles and work collaboratively to manage the compliance obligations of the PTE. Effective systems to monitor and comply with responsibilities associated with the PTE's operations, funding and programme delivery outcomes and assessment are in place.
	NTI has received a high degree of scrutiny from NZQA and the TEC since the last EER, including TEC audits in 2017 and 2021. Overall systems, policies and procedures were deemed effective and met legislative and investment plan requirements. NTI has responded promptly to correct areas requiring improvement.
	Subcontract applications are with NZQA for approval, and appropriate memorandums of understanding are in place to support arrangements for specialist assessing in first aid and NZTA licensing.
	The findings of the NZTA audit in 2021 resulted in the highest rating for performance, confirming the quality of commercial transport teaching and assessment.
	NTI ensures compliance with other relevant legislation such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, which reflects the nature of the industries they are training for. Staff are police vetted to meet the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.
	The evidential basis of compliance processes and regular checks could be strengthened through documenting these processes, which are well understood and effectively implemented by longstanding and experienced staff.
Conclusion:	Important compliance accountabilities are effectively monitored and managed.

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Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Commercial Road Transport Pathway

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**

2.2 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1)

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

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 Nelson Technical Institute Limited:

- Further develop activities to systematically collect and review information to validate the value of programmes and support for learners.

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. New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1) qualification completion

Year	TEC Youth Guarantee[4]	TEC Student Achievement Component funding
2019	78%	100%
2020	76%	100%

Table 2. New Zealand Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Level 3)[5]

Year	Qualification completion
2017	80%
2018	53%
2019	44%
2020	62%

Table 3. Training for Work programme – MSD funded

Year[6]	Sustained employment outcome[7]
2017/2018	68%
2017/2018	63%
2018/2019	29%
2019/2020	51%
2020/2021 (YTD)	60%

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[4] YG training prior to 2019 was an employment skills programme with 100 per cent completion in 2017 and 83 per cent completion in 2018.

[5] TEC Student Achievement Component funding

[6] MSD performance year 30 June-1 July

[7] MSD performance target 50 per cent

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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[8]*

- *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.*

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[8] 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.

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Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*

- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*

- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, training schemes and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/.

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