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External Evaluation and Review Report

Network for Fitness Professionals
Limited trading as Netfit

Date of report: 2 March 2021

About Network for Fitness Professionals Limited trading as Netfit

Netfit offers programmes that produce graduates who work in the health and fitness industry, or have an interest in health and fitness to enhance their personal wellbeing.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	23 Cashel Street, Christchurch
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	2018: 1200 (17.6 per cent Māori, 5 per cent Pasifika) 2019: 1027 (15.7 per cent Māori, 5.4 per cent Pasifika) 2020: 198 (13.6 per cent Māori, 8.5 per cent Pasifika)
Number of staff:	One full-time, three part-time, four contractors
TEO profile:	See: NZQA – Netfit
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Confident in the educational performance and Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Network for Fitness Professionals Limited at the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2017.
Scope of this evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 4)• New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 5)
MoE number:	9804
NZQA reference:	C40936
Dates of EER visit:	20 and 21 October 2020

Summary of results

Netfit has served the health and fitness industry well by producing work-ready graduates for the industry. However, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, current programmes are being taught out so Netfit can reposition to continue to meet industry needs.

Confident in educational performance	<p>Completion rates have been strong. Māori participation and achievement rates have also been generally strong, although slightly lower than the overall average. Pasifika participation and achievement has generally been low.</p> <p>As a result of Covid-19 and a changing industry, the two NZQA programmes are being taught out. This has occurred because Netfit is unsure whether it can teach face to face in 2020, and the general uncertainty within the health and fitness industry and what their needs will be going forward. The teach-out and consultation with the industry will allow the organisation to reposition itself in the industry to better respond to future needs.</p>
Confident in capability in self-assessment	<p>Graduates who complete the programmes and enter employment usually become personal trainers. However, some learners complete the programmes for personal gain and wellbeing.</p> <p>Learning plans are used to understand learner needs and goals, and they are supported to achieve them. Personal commitments are included in the learning plan.</p> <p>The organisation has a clear purpose of supporting the health and fitness industry with quality graduates. Proactive stakeholder engagement is used to inform future programme offerings.</p> <p>There has been an increased number of complaints this year, mostly around refunds for withdrawals due to Covid-19. The organisation reflects on the complaints and makes changes if required.</p>

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Netfit's completion rates between 2017 and 2020 have been high (see Appendix 1). Average completions rates are 82 per cent for the New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 4), and 89 per cent for the New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 5). Learners gain qualifications that help them achieve employment as a personal trainer or gain employment in other areas of the fitness industry. Positive moderation processes and results underpin achievement.</p> <p>Overall average completion rates are higher than the average Māori and Pasifika completion rates. However, Pasifika enrolments tend to be low, so a small number of non-completions can have a significant impact on the completion rate for Pasifika learners. Netfit has identified this as an area for improvement.</p> <p>Netfit has implemented systems to increase Māori and Pasifika completion rates, such as a payment plan. This has been done to reduce the financial barrier to participation and to make continuing the programme more attainable. The academic manager can also extend due dates for assessment when they clash with students' other commitments. However, the impact of these improvements has been low commitments outside of the programme (such as family).</p> <p>As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2020 all programmes are being taught out. This is to allow Netfit to consider its position in the industry and how it can best provide training. As a result of the teach-out, total enrolments have been significantly lower in 2020 (because new enrolments are not being accepted).</p>
Conclusion:	Completion rates have been high since the last EER, although

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

	Māori and Pasifika completion rates tend to be lower than the overall completion rate. Enrolment numbers have significantly dropped as a result of Covid-19 and the teach-out; however, overall average completion rates have not varied significantly.
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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:	<p>Netfit produces work-ready graduates who add value to the fitness industry as they are trained and capable. Around 69 per cent of graduates work in the fitness industry after completing the programme. Of the graduates who enter employment in the fitness industry, around 75 per cent are personal trainers.</p> <p>However, many prospective learners also enrol in the programme to enhance their personal and wellbeing goals. That said, some of the learners who enrol for personal gain also go on to work in the fitness industry, helped by the transferable skills gained such as self-confidence and management skills.</p> <p>Graduate surveys are completed six months after the completion of the programme. Survey results show mostly positive outcomes. Most graduates said they intend to keep working in the fitness industry. Some graduates also plan on continuing study in a relevant area.</p> <p>The graduate survey questions could be refined to better capture the graduate’s destination since graduating. The questions focus on what the graduate has done in the last six months rather than how successful, or how long, they have been in those roles since graduation.</p> <p>Some graduates seek REPs² accreditation. Graduates who gain REPs accreditation provide value to the industry which gains reputable and creditable personal trainers. NZQA interviews with stakeholders confirmed the value of Netfit graduates.</p> <p>The organisation and management team work as part of the industry, and regularly seek their feedback. This enables them to be forward thinking in regard to the best programmes to provide to the industry – and are considering expanding their</p>

² REPs is the New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals

	ProSeries/short courses.
Conclusion:	Netfit provides highly valued outcomes for graduates who gain useful skills and knowledge to operate in the fitness industry, and for employers who gain appropriately trained graduates. The management team is reflective and is considering the PTE's position in the industry to support industry needs. Data collection and analysis of graduate data could be strengthened.

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>Programmes are reviewed annually to ensure they are delivered in accordance with NZQA rules, and to identify any areas for improvement. Improvements are made as required, such as the review and update of materials, which was completed in 2018 and 2019, to ensure they are fit for purpose.</p> <p>A dedicated development team creates the learning resources. The development team is involved in the industry and is contracted as required to complete the work. Internal pre-moderation procedures ensure the material meets the requirements of the unit standards before use. Where necessary, assessments are submitted for national external pre-assessment moderation.</p> <p>Effective pre- and post-assessment internal moderation procedures and national external moderation results provide evidence of an effective moderation system.</p> <p>Learning activities are well thought out and are appropriate for the learning outcomes. Assignments are mapped to the learning outcomes and graduate profile outcomes to ensure programme requirements are met.</p> <p>Student feedback is used to make changes and improvements. This feeds into the ongoing review and improvement process. An example of an improvement is online material being able to be viewed in an accessible way across multiple devices.</p> <p>Feedback is sought from stakeholders, and the organisation is</p>

	<p>responsive to change.</p> <p>The teach-out of programmes in 2020 will be followed up with a visit to local gyms, and extensive industry consultation, to find out what their needs are going forward. The types of programmes and offerings in 2021 and beyond are yet to be determined.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Netfit developed fit-for-purpose programmes to meet the needs of the industry before the Covid-19 pandemic. The PTE is currently teaching out the remaining programmes and evaluating its programme offering to fit the current environment.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Netfit has strong systems for collecting and tracking learner progress through programmes. The PTE's expectations for learners are set out clearly from enrolment. Learners' learning goals and their desired outcomes are collected at enrolment, which contributes to a learning plan that sets expectations to be tracked throughout the programme. The learning plan takes into account personal commitments as well as academic requirements. This helps build an inclusive environment as well as ensuring learners are able to meet their learning goals.</p> <p>Many learners go on to complete the ProSeries/short courses that Netfit offers. This helps the learners to build networks to keep them engaged in learning and in contact with the fitness industry.</p> <p>There has been an increased number of complaints during 2020, which may be partly attributed to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Most of the complaints relate to withdrawals. A number of these student complaints have been escalated to NZQA but have not been upheld. Two complaints have gone to the Disputes Tribunal; one was dismissed and the other is still to be heard.</p> <p>Netfit aims to ensure students have accurate information regarding enrolment periods and withdrawals.</p> <p>Netfit reflects on the reasons for non-completions and barriers to</p>

	learning, and has made improvements such as to the payment system. However, the impact of these improvements has not been substantial.
Conclusion:	Netfit has good systems and processes in place for supporting learners. Learner progress and interactions are tracked and responded to as necessary.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The Netfit management team has a strong and clear purpose. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, one of the main outcomes was producing work-ready graduates for the fitness industry through the New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Levels 4 and 5). However, the current programme offerings are being taught out due to the potential challenges of delivering face to face in the current environment, and the uncertainty around the needs of the health and fitness industry in this context. The organisation is reflecting on its position through rigorous consultancy to consider how it can best support education in the health and fitness industry going forward. The management team is forward looking as to how they can support educational achievement.</p> <p>Investment in a bespoke student management system has reduced the amount of administration and enhanced learner support by having an accurate record of learner interaction. This is valuable to the contract tutors who can see the interactions with learners with other parts in the organisation.</p> <p>Some tutors transitioned from permanent staff members to contract tutors during the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout this time, Netfit retained many of the tutors as permanent staff members until the decision to teach out. Some of the former trainers have taken over some of the premises that were used, to continue operating a like-business, although not a private training establishment. The decision to transition to contract tutors was to support the teach-out of existing programmes. The remaining tutors that NZQA spoke to felt valued, and they were actively able and encouraged to give feedback.</p>

Conclusion:	The Netfit management team has demonstrated resilience during a turbulent time caused by external factors. Staff have been supported, and the remaining contract staff feel valued. The organisation is in a strong position to reposition itself in the sector once more information and nuance about the state of the sector is gathered.
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1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Important compliance accountabilities are mostly managed well, evidenced by positive national external moderation outcomes. The academic manager ensures that any changes or improvements enable the programmes to continue meeting programme accreditation requirements.</p> <p>The student management system tracks student progress, and tutors follow up as required. Any interaction with the students is documented in the system and is able to be tracked. This is useful for ensuring that any information is accurately recorded in case it needs to be accessed later.</p> <p>Issues and complaints have been well managed and documented and Netfit ensures that outcomes are fair and equitable. There is a clear process for dealing with complaints. The management team reviews processes based on complaints, if required. However, there is limited evidence of improvements or changes made to reduce the frequency of complaints.</p>
Conclusion:	Compliance accountabilities are mostly managed well. However, there is limited evidence of improvements made in response to complaints, or to reduce the number of complaints in future.

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 Exercise (Level 4)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 5)

Performance:	Good
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 Netfit:

- Enhance graduate destination data collection to allow comprehensive analysis of the impacts and benefits of the programmes.
- Consider processes that could be enhanced to reduce the frequency of complaints.

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. Completion rates of the New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 4)

	2018	2019	2020	Average
Overall	81%	83%	81%	81.9%
Māori	74%	78%	72%	75.6%
Pasifika	49%	58%	53%	53.6%

Table 2. Completion rates of the New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 5)

	2018	2019	2020	Average
Overall	90%	86%	100%	88.7%
Māori	78%	77%	0%	77.1%
Pasifika	73%	69%	N/A	71.5%

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 fraud³*
- *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.*

³ 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/>.

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