



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

Network for Fitness Professionals
Limited

Date of report: 7 May 2025

About Network for Fitness Professionals Limited

Network for Fitness Professionals (Netfit) has been delivering training for more than 20 years to provide exercise professionals to the New Zealand fitness industry.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	66 Murray Place, St Albans, Christchurch
Eligible to enrol international students:	No
Number of students:	<p>Domestic: 338 students (169 equivalent full-time students) for 2023, and to September 2024</p> <p>43 Pasifika and 88 Māori students</p> <p>Disabled students not recorded</p> <p>International: nil</p>
Number of staff:	Nine full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	<p>Network for Fitness Professionals Limited</p> <p>Netfit has recently changed ownership and appointed a new chief executive.</p> <p>There was limited delivery of training during 2020-22 following Covid restrictions and ongoing challenges. During this period, Netfit primarily provided a recognition of prior learning service to an affiliated sports fitness training provider.</p> <p>As a result of this gap in delivery, the evaluators' findings largely focus on evidence relating to delivery in 2023 and 2024.</p> <p>Netfit works closely with New Zealand Institute of Health and Fitness (https://nzihf.ac.nz/), a non-NZQA registered or accredited training provider offering industry courses in personal training, weight</p>

management and yoga training. Access to teaching and learning resources is through a managed online learning platform. Resources are managed, updated and licensed for Netfit use.

Last EER outcome:	At the last external evaluation and review in 2021, Netfit was found to be Confident in both educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 4) ID: 121790-3 leading to qualification 3563-2 (known as Netfit Fitness Leader Programme)
MoE number:	9804
NZQA reference:	C58372
Dates of EER visit:	26 and 27 November 2024

Summary of results

Netfit delivers training that has high value for students, employers and the exercise sector. Strong achievement and long-standing relationships within the exercise industry ensure programmes are relevant and meet stakeholder needs. Continued re-establishment of systems will ensure Netfit's processes can contribute to sound performance.

Confident in educational performance

Netfit has a successful history of delivering training to exercise professionals, although the PTE was operating at a significantly reduced capacity between 2020 and 2023. Since increasing delivery during 2023, achievement has been strong. Disabled student progress and achievement is not currently tracked.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

The PTE has positive relationships with industry and standard-setting bodies, and with exercise facilities. These connections support Netfit to design and deliver programmes that continue to meet industry and student needs well.

Graduates and employers recognise the value of the training and qualifications. Many employers seek employees from Netfit programmes while the students are still engaged in study. Systematic capture and analysis of this information would provide compelling evidence of how well graduates meet employer needs. Graduates achieve personal, fitness and employment goals and progress to more specialised programmes at other training providers.

Academic management is sound, with robust processes for quality assurance and compliance, including assessment and moderation to validate achievement results. Systems have been re-established and strengthened across delivery sites in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch.

Netfit has reintroduced annual programme review, and these processes will develop and mature as student numbers grow and more complete data is available to support effective review leading to improvement.

Netfit uses information and data well to understand the PTE's strengths and challenges. Continuous improvement is based on sound evidence. The implementation of new systems and processes underpinned effective self-assessment during 2023 and 2024.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Achievement is generally strong, with an average of 80 per cent of students in the 2023-24 cohorts gaining a qualification. Māori and Pasifika students comprise most of the students who either withdraw or do not complete their qualification. Netfit staff attribute this mainly to financial pressures.</p> <p>In addition to gaining a qualification, students develop confidence, communication skills, meet their personal goals, and apply their learning and fitness expertise in personal, family, whānau and community contexts.</p> <p>Data is gathered and used to understand achievement across all delivery sites. At this stage, disabled students are not visible in the data, and this is an area for improvement.</p> <p>Although Netfit understands the reasons for withdrawals, a more comprehensive investigation of these reasons could be of benefit. This would enable Netfit to review the effectiveness of recent interventions, such as the at-risk process² and the disengagement review, to understand how best to improve student retention.</p> <p>Student academic, employment and fitness goals are identified at enrolment. Monitoring achievement of these goals throughout the programme would provide additional evidence of student achievement such as business readiness.</p>
Conclusion:	Students are achieving well, although high withdrawal rates have an impact on this and influence a parity gap

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 The at-risk process tracks student attendance, online engagement and assessment completions. Tutors contact students to discuss.

	for Māori and Pasifika students. Actions to improve retention need further data analysis and review to understand their effectiveness.
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1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students are using the skills and knowledge gained as they progress through the course. Seventy-nine per cent of 2024 graduates indicated³ that they are using their qualification in paid or unpaid work. Some students (16 per cent in 2024) progress to study at diploma level to gain specialised knowledge, for example to enhance their practice for pregnancy and post-pregnancy fitness training.</p> <p>Feedback from students, graduates and stakeholders noted the immediate use of the skills and knowledge gained. There was also significant personal, whānau and community benefit. Examples included: fitting work as a personal trainer around the needs of a young family, working within a hauora context in Māori community, and improving personal and family health, strength and fitness.</p> <p>Industry stakeholders find Netfit students and graduates to be highly employable due to their business readiness and communication skills. Employers regularly contact programme leaders and tutors to recruit people to work in their gyms. Some of the larger club chains prioritise Netfit graduates because of the business and interpersonal skills they develop during their study.</p> <p>Netfit noted the need to strengthen the systematic collection and analysis of evidence from graduates and employers/industry. This would provide stronger evidence and understanding of the value of the programme and the diverse aspects of value that were raised during the EER.</p>
Conclusion:	Value is high for the industry, community and graduates. Stronger evidence of this – formally and regularly collected

³ Netfit Fitness Leader Programme course completion survey

	from graduates and industry – will enhance Netfit's understanding of the extent of the valued outcomes from this programme.
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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:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students gain the knowledge and skills they need through a suitable mix of taught theory, facilitated discussion and practical labs. Students are supported to successfully complete assessments, with multiple opportunities to practise their skills, followed by one-to-one coaching opportunities if needed. Some student feedback indicated that more practice sessions would be helpful.</p> <p>The Netfit leadership team and tutors meet regularly with gym owners, standard-setting bodies and industry bodies such as the Register of Exercise Professionals and Exercise New Zealand. These professional relationships ensure the programme is current and relevant and meets industry expectations. Netfit is planning to develop study electives collaboratively with Māori and Pasifika communities to meet their needs.⁴</p> <p>Internal and external moderation of assessment materials and decisions assures the validity of achievement. Moderation findings are used to support improvement, such as updating marking guides, and to identify professional development for tutors.</p> <p>Examples of improvements made in response to moderation findings include updates to marking guides and planned tutor development for tutors from all delivery sites, to improve consistency of assessment feedback. Careful attention is paid to the authenticity of student work, with all written submissions checked for plagiarism, and practical assessment verifying some of the online learning.</p>

⁴ This work is planned and identified as part of the 2025 strategic plan.

	<p>Annual programme review restarted in 2023, although limited data due to delivery start dates reduced the scope and value of the review. This will enable Netfit to effectively review programme performance to inform improvement actions for future cohorts, particularly now that the PTE has added a fully online mode of delivery.</p> <p>Annual programme review uses input from tutors and analysis of stakeholder feedback and data. Some key issues raised include the need to update and correct some learning materials, and the need to ensure assessments are perceived as fair and consistent, with more personalised feedback on progress. When changes to learning materials are necessary, Netfit's contracted partner completes changes to the programme material and resources in the learning repository.</p> <p>At the time of the EER, Netfit provided evidence of ongoing review and improvement in several areas: through teaching observations, a teaching visit summary report highlighting strengths, and through identifying professional development needs to enhance tutor effectiveness. Programme and resource review at the annual all-staff hui will be added to supplement this current activity.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Programme design and delivery generally meets the needs of the students. Ongoing review using tutor and student feedback supports improvement to learning resources. Netfit's clear focus on quality, relevant education is underpinned by effective teaching practice.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students are well supported and engaged in their learning. Small cohorts develop strong, enduring relationships with tutors and peers within the face-to-face and practical components of the programme.</p> <p>The recent introduction of a self-directed, flexible learning option has extended access to students who were excluded from the face-to-face delivery. The growing number of flexible learning students and their tutors identified the need to increase peer-to-peer connection to develop a community of students and provide a support network similar to the level of support available to face-to-face students. This is currently being developed.</p> <p>The online learning management system provides students with access to resources and interactive learning opportunities. Netfit has created an at-risk process to manage and monitor students who are progressing more slowly than expected. Tutors use the learning management system to gain insights into student engagement, assessment progress, and to monitor any students who are identified as at risk and may need support interventions.</p> <p>Students value the positive, open relationships with their tutors and provide honest feedback on the courses using a range of opportunities facilitated by Netfit. Feedback from the end-of-course survey⁵ summarises students' ratings on delivery resources, assessment, their preparedness for industry, tutors and facilities. Overall ratings out of 5 ranged from 3.21 (preparedness for industry) to a high of 3.77 for tutors. Netfit uses the survey data well and summarises what is working well and areas for improvement. The end-of-course surveys also test progress against student goals as defined at enrolment.</p>

⁵ The first survey was completed in August 2024. Overall ratings are included in Table 2, Appendix 1.

	<p>This needs to be collated to further inform Netfit's understanding of value.</p> <p>Feedback during the enquiry indicated that some students would value a stronger focus on cultural aspects relevant to the industry within the course. This is an opportunity for programme and tutor development.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Students are effectively supported and engaged in their learning. Student feedback is used well to identify strengths in the programme delivery and areas for improvement. Netfit responds to areas identified by the students and makes improvements where needed. Monitoring the effectiveness of the changes made will be important as the depth of information increases with feedback from future cohorts.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>In 2023, Netfit's ownership structure changed and a new chief executive was appointed after a period of challenges that began in 2020 with Covid-19 restrictions. From 2020 to 2023, Netfit operated at significantly reduced capacity. Experienced staff were retained or reappointed. They included the previous chief executive in the role of compliance manager, a programme leader and some tutors. This continuity ensured the rapid re-establishment of effective systems and processes, with other new processes introduced to ensure the quality of delivery and support for teaching teams and students.</p> <p>Continuity of access to licensed teaching and learning resources was maintained through the existing relationship with the resource developer and learning platform provider.</p> <p>The key focus of Netfit between 2020 and 2023 was to maintain their systems and organisational knowledge. They reviewed industry needs to improve a fit-for-purpose programme portfolio. The 2023-24 year was one of change and repositioning that has been managed well.</p>

	<p>Next steps are to consolidate changes and expand delivery in partnership with others involved in education for the fitness industry.</p> <p>Integrated data systems and a broad range of data sources ensure quality information is well used to understand achievement and to support decision-making and improvements.</p> <p>Staff are recruited to fit with Netfit values and to meet the aim of producing 'workplace ready, industry savvy, customer worthy and business primed graduates'.⁶ Tutors are well supported during onboarding to integrate into the teaching team. Teaching quality is a key focus of Netfit, and robust processes are in place to provide feedback and develop tutor capability to ensure the quality of teaching.</p> <p>Expanding the professional development for tutors to include cultural learning needs, socialisation of the Code of Practice⁷ and strategies for teaching students with learning differences will ensure tutors remain able to respond to Netfit's potential strategic directions/improvements.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Netfit is well placed to build on its long-standing reputation as a key provider of exercise and fitness training. The past few years have been challenging, and the new team is in a phase of re-establishment with the introduction of new systems, processes and products. Data is well used to understand Netfit's strengths and challenges, and to support key decision-making. However, limited data was available during the EER due to the 2020-23 pause in delivery.</p>

⁶ From Netfit self-assessment summary p 10.

⁷ Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The Netfit chief executive, compliance manager and programme leader have established processes that ensure they are effectively managing their compliance accountabilities. The new quality management system outlines a set of policies and procedures that guide operations within compliance expectations. A shared compliance calendar maps activities with monthly meetings, monitoring requirements and actions.</p> <p>After teaching out 420 students during the Covid lockdowns, Netfit maintained accreditation through delivering qualifications to very limited numbers of students. However, Netfit also used the RPL (recognition of prior learning) process to award qualifications to a significant number of students who had undertaken study with a Netfit training partner. A close alignment of programme learning outcomes and comprehensive moderation of assessment used for RPL validated the robustness of the process, providing confidence in the authenticity of qualifications awarded during this period.</p> <p>NZQA was aware of the large number of students gaining their New Zealand level 4 fitness qualification via RPL. Netfit has developed a policy that limits the scope of RPL to 50 per cent of a whole New Zealand qualification, following advice from NZQA.</p> <p>A comprehensive self-review of the Code of Practice identifies improvements needed and monitors these year-on-year.</p> <p>Reinstated annual programme evaluation reports include programme approval details to reinforce these expectations with tutors. The learning management system design supports compliance with approvals through the ability to track student engagement and hours. Standardised timetabling ensures tutors are delivering the hours as approved.</p>

	Health and safety is well monitored through regular reporting and review.
Conclusion:	Netfit manages its compliance accountabilities well, has open channels of communication with NZQA, and has successfully integrated compliance checking within most processes and systems.

Focus areas

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

2.1 New Zealand Certificate in Exercise (Level 4) ID: 121790-3 leading to qualification 3563-2 (known as Netfit Fitness Leader Programme)

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 Network for Fitness Professionals Limited:

- Continue to extend and improve the collection and analysis of feedback from graduates, employers and other stakeholders to ensure there is sound evidence of valued outcomes.
- Consider opportunities for professional development to:
 - Enhance tutors' understanding of the cultural aspects of teaching and the fitness industry.
 - Develop strategies within design and delivery to identify and meet the needs of students with learning differences.
 - Socialise the Code of Practice and highlight the obligations for tutors with regards to this.
- Collect, analyse and report data on disabled students and their achievement.

Requirements

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

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

Appendix 1

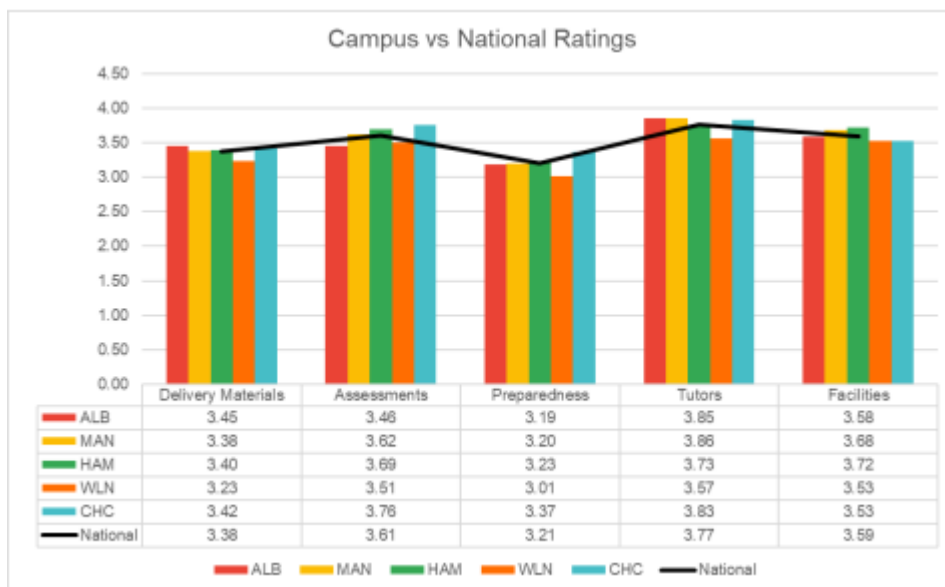
Table 1. Qualification completion rates

	2022		2023				2024 (August)			
	No. students	Qualification completion rate	No. students	Qualification completion rate	PTE sector average	ITP sector average	No. students	Qualification completion rate	PTE sector average	ITP sector average
Māori	N/A	N/A	11	55%	62%	44%	27	77%	N/A	N/A
Pasifika	N/A	N/A	7	71%	68%	42%	14	67%	N/A	N/A
All	N/A	N/A	48	81%	73%	56%	72	79%	N/A	N/A

Data provided by Netfit

Sector averages from: <https://www.tec.govt.nz/funding/funding-and-performance/performance/teo/epi-reports/interactive-charts>

Table 2. Course completion survey August 2024



73.3 % response rate overall – n=110.

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 fraud⁸*
- *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.*

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.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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 excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials 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 2022. 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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