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External Evaluation and Review Report

Duke Institute of Studies Limited

Date of report: 21 February 2020

About Duke Institute of Studies Limited

Duke Institute of Studies Limited (DIOS) is an English language school that offers programmes in General English (Levels 1-4), college preparation for New Zealand high schools, and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	12 Huron Street, Takapuna, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes, since 2002
Number of students:	Domestic: six, no Māori or Pasifika International: 33 – General English (22), IELTS (six), holiday programme (five)
Number of staff:	Seven full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	See Duke Institute of Studies English for Beginners and English for Living and Working students are enrolled under the Pre-purchased English Language Tuition (PELT) scheme, administered by the Tertiary Education Commission on behalf of Immigration New Zealand (INZ). Migrants make payments to INZ at the time of their visa application to enable them to enrol in migrant-focused English language courses at PELT-approved tertiary education organisations.
Last EER outcome:	At the last EER in 2015, DIOS was found to be Confident in both educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	Training Schemes: English for Beginners, English for Living and Working (Level 2), Academic English for IELTS Preparation (Level 4)
MoE number:	7449
NZQA reference:	C36288
Dates of EER visit:	3 and 4 December 2019

Final

Summary of Results

DIOS offers a range of English language programmes that meet individual learner needs well. Learner progress is well-documented, and teaching is effective. Data is not yet used systematically to analyse trends across all programmes or over time.

Confident in educational performance

- Students and tutors set goals at entry. Progress against these goals is regularly measured. Students receive useful and timely feedback on their progress which is used to review and refine ongoing academic goals.
- Valued outcomes include improved English and readiness for living and working in New Zealand, and targeted preparation for high school study. Younger learners on holiday programmes are immersed in an English-speaking culture and experience New Zealand leisure and adventure activities.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Pastoral care at DIOS is proactive, timely and shared across staff. The family atmosphere promoted enables students to discuss issues before they become problems.
- Incremental changes to programmes are regularly made. However, a more formal system of annual programme review, including review of stakeholder contracts, would be beneficial.
- Systems and processes have been reviewed, updated and recently documented. It is too early to measure their effectiveness or for them to be embedded across the organisation.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>For 2017-2019, 98 per cent of students across all programmes successfully completed. Students attend programmes from two weeks to three months in duration. Placement tests prior to arrival determine the starting class level for each General English student. The system of rolling enrolments necessitates individual goal-setting with each student.</p> <p>Students whose marks are consistently over 70 per cent transition to the next level class. Students are regularly assessed both weekly and more formally every five weeks. They may progress from General English level 1 up to level 4 and/or IELTS, depending on their learning goals. Five-weekly test results are summarised and graphed.</p> <p>Evidence of student progress is closely tracked and aligned with CEFR² standards. Each student has a copy of the schedule of CEFR standards and can identify the steps they have achieved and are yet to cover. Internal pre- and post-assessment moderation supports the validity of the five-weekly tests. Post-assessment moderation has been undertaken with an external organisation but requires further development.</p> <p>Holiday programme students are tested at entry and exit points. This mode of testing may have application across other programmes to show students' English language improvement from course start to course end.</p>
Conclusion:	Most students achieve well. More systematic analysis of student data is required to demonstrate student progress across programmes and over time. While external moderation is useful to DIOS for improving its assessment processes, it requires further development to assure consistency of assessment.

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 Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Student feedback shows that General English students enjoy their classes, value the tutors' expertise and believe that they are progressing well in their English language study. Improvement in English language capability enables students to participate more fully in everyday activities, enhances their quality of life, and extends their world view.</p> <p>DIOS is highly responsive to requests from local colleges to take their international students. Students can come to DIOS for a short period before beginning their high school study. They gain insight into the New Zealand way of teaching and learning and then transfer back to college. Anecdotal evidence indicates that these students are better prepared than other students who go directly to high school.</p> <p>Holiday programmes for young school students from the Pacific and Asian regions are long-standing. Numbers have increased significantly over 2017-2019, from eight to 28 to 70, indicating that this programme is well-regarded. Some students are as young as 11 years of age. Students are accompanied by a teacher from the country of origin and combine English language tuition in the morning with recreational activities in the afternoon. These students sometimes return to DIOS later to undertake General English study, indicating that they valued the DIOS experience.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Students' increased English language skills enable greater engagement in everyday life in New Zealand. Holiday programme students gain access to an English-language speaking country, while also enjoying New Zealand's adventure and outdoor activities. Local colleges benefit from DIOS's willingness to take students immediately and orient them to the New Zealand education system. Anecdotal stakeholder feedback of valued outcomes would be more useful if it was analysed and systematically reviewed to identify any trends.</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
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>A range of student academic needs can be accommodated by DIOS. Students can progress from General English level 1 to the IELTS preparation class, if appropriate. Tutors know their students well. Goals are developed on entry and individual progress is reviewed by tutors and students on an ongoing basis. Students appreciate the feedback that the weekly and five-weekly tests provide. Student files sampled showed that students make reasonable progress, commensurate with English language progression in the wider English language tertiary sector.</p> <p>Students enjoy the mix of nationalities on campus. This mix is part of the DIOS strategy to ensure students are introduced to cultures other than their own, where English is the shared language. Regular field trips and class bonding experiences orient students to Takapuna and Auckland.</p> <p>Flexible delivery options are promoted. For example, holiday programme students may have three days at school and two days at DIOS. Regular visits by DIOS to contributing holiday programme countries, such as Tahiti and New Caledonia, ensure programmes are modified to continue to meet student needs. Recently, DIOS has begun to gather written feedback about English language acquisition and the value of the holiday programme for short-term student groups.</p> <p>Students are engaged, relaxed and would recommend DIOS to others. The recent introduction of Te Reo vocabulary and discussion of Māori culture has been welcomed by students.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Learning activities and resources are effective in engaging students. Assessment provides individual students and tutors with feedback on progress. However, greater analysis of programme design and delivery, in General English programmes in particular, would contribute to a more comprehensive process of regular ongoing review and improvement.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>DIOS understands that students progress academically when they are well-informed, supported and encouraged. The family atmosphere at DIOS is demonstrated by the time and care all staff take to listen to and understand the students' academic, social and personal needs. Proactive identification of student issues occurs through knowing the students well and noticing any changes in behaviour.</p> <p>Students are relaxed and have no hesitation discussing problems with staff, who they say are friendly, approachable and highly responsive. Chinese, Korean and Japanese counsellors are available 24/7. The student handbook is comprehensive and reviewed regularly, and the DIOS website has been recently updated.</p> <p>Homestay arrangements are closely monitored and are changed quickly if a problem arises for either the student or homestay parent. Homestay parents feel well-supported by DIOS and many are of long-standing.</p> <p>The current director of studies supports the tutors to encourage students to critically review their academic progress. This is in the early stages but is an important aspect of developing greater student-directed learning approaches.</p> <p>Exit interviews are undertaken, but it is not clear how these are used to inform change and improvement for students.</p>
Conclusion:	DIOS has created an inclusive learning environment where the wellbeing needs of students are uppermost. This has led to students and tutors working together to maximise teaching and learning opportunities. Data is gathered but it is not clear whether it is systematically analysed to identify trends or patterns.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Staff are collegial and informal review is ongoing. However, there is no formal annual review of programmes. The head teacher role is currently vacant. Filling this role would increase capacity and capability and support the director of studies who is currently undertaking both roles. It would also provide a conduit for tutorial staff to express their needs to management and vice versa.</p> <p>Facilities and resourcing are appropriate, and requests for new resources are actioned promptly. The classrooms have been recently repainted and laptops purchased. Tutors are appropriately qualified. New Zealand tutors have been employed in response to agent preferences for 'kiwi tutors' who understand New Zealand culture. Both owners have experience in Korea – one has 25 years educational experience and the other 20 years marketing experience.</p> <p>Staff are valued. One example was when one staff member needed significant time off for family reasons. The owners were very generous, and the person never felt their job was in jeopardy. External staff development had been programmed for 2019 but not actioned due to competing demands. However, in-house teacher development did occur.</p> <p>Data analysis is not shared or used effectively across the organisation. For example, the director of studies learnt about the review of the holiday programmes undertaken by the owners shortly before the external evaluation and review.</p>
Conclusion:	Governance and management do not currently support educational achievement as effectively as they could. Possible solutions include establishing a system of annual programme review that includes all programmes and all staff, employing a head teacher, reinstating regular professional development for all teachers, and more effective data sharing and analysis between governance, management and staff.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The director of studies has committed processes and procedures to paper, enabling easier checking and reviewing of these. Memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with high schools, agents and homestay parents were all sighted and appeared fit for purpose. These MOUs roll over year to year. Best practice is to renew these contracts annually as it provides the opportunity for a more formal review, and any issues and changes can be made in consultation between the MOU partners. However, strong, ongoing, regular and effective relationships with these stakeholders ensures issues are identified and rectified quickly.</p> <p>Compliance responsibilities are held by several people. However, some procedural issues caused concern during the EER on-site visit. These included the absence of a sign-in and sign-off process for the evaluators and no discussion of emergency procedures. Responsibility for these issues needs addressing immediately. Informality around day-to-day business could also be improved. For example, the main relief tutor qualifications were not held on file and needed to be sought from the relief tutor for the evaluators to sight.</p> <p>DIOS carried out a comprehensive review of its compliance with the Code of Practice. The nine international student files reviewed showed some omissions, but these were addressed quickly by providing extra documentation and explanation of individual student circumstances.</p>
Conclusion:	Systematic documentation of policies and procedures has occurred very recently. These are not yet tested for usability and ongoing reliability. The range of compliance obligations of a tertiary education organisation needs further review, including expectations and responsibilities around health and safety.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: General English

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: Holiday programmes

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.3 Focus area: IELTS

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	The IELTS preparation class teacher is experienced and had chosen to return to DIOS after a period teaching at a much larger language school. She has a good grasp of the various materials available and is well-resourced by DIOS management. Students are not obliged to provide IELTS test results to DIOS, although some do. Analysis of these results would provide evidence of improvement in language proficiency over time.

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 Duke Institute of Studies Limited:

- Consider ways to systematically analyse student data to demonstrate student progress across programmes and over time.
- Consider reviewing methods of gathering stakeholder feedback to improve analysis and identify trends around valued outcomes.
- Consider annual programme review to formally capture changes to programmes, share and analyse data, and develop self-assessment awareness across staff.
- Consider formal annual review of all contracts held with external stakeholders and partners.
- Consider the value of a head teacher role to support academic and management staff and build greater capacity and capability across the organisation.
- Consider the range of compliance obligations of a tertiary education organisation and the most effective way/s to monitor them.

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 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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