



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

Ignite Colleges Limited

Date of report: 16 November 2021

# About Ignite Colleges Limited

---

*Ignite Colleges Limited (Ignite) delivers vocational programmes from levels 2-6 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework across several disciplines, to domestic and international students.*

---

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	98 Kerrs Road, Wiri, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	708 students in 2020: 608 domestic and 105 international; 319 equivalent full-time students (and 16,484 intensive numeracy and literacy hours); 95 Māori (13 per cent), 311 Pasifika (44 per cent)
Number of staff:	34 full-time and five part-time (March 2021)
TEO profile:	<a href="#">Ignite Colleges Limited</a>  Since the last EER, Ignite has grown in student and staff numbers, including increased international enrolments in 2020. It has increased its programme offerings and established online learning options in some programmes (particularly in health and wellbeing).
Last EER outcome:	Highly Confident in both educational performance and capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	The following focus areas informed the evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International Students: Support and Wellbeing</li><li>• International Diploma in Advanced Culinary Arts (Level 5) (ID 123764)</li><li>• New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Advanced Support) (Level 4) (ID 121201)</li><li>• New Zealand Certificate in International Freight Logistics (Level 3) (ID 120324)</li></ul>

MoE number: 7502  
NZQA reference: C45608  
Dates of EER enquiry: 20, 21 and 23 July 2021

# Summary of Results

---

*Ignite provides a quality learning environment. Students gain excellent vocational skills, knowledge and opportunities that are highly valued by students, industry and the community.*

---

## **Highly Confident in educational performance**

Valued outcomes for students and stakeholders are extensive and supported by quality processes applied uniformly across the organisation. High achievement has been constant since the last EER. Of note is the parity of achievement for Pasifika students who make up around 45 per cent of the domestic student body.

A high level of holistic care and support is provided to support students' wellbeing and sense of belonging.

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

Programmes have strong industry relevance and involvement. Tutors have extensive and relevant industry experience, knowledge and connections. Stakeholders highly regard Ignite and its students. The needs of students and stakeholder are well met.

Improving Māori retention is an ongoing focus for the PTE which recently made a conscious shift from using external to internal expertise. It would be beneficial for the PTE to target self-review to specifically assess the impact of initiatives it has implemented aimed at improving Māori retention, and to systematically review Māori perspectives on the learning environment and support provided.

Moderation processes are robust. The outcomes of moderation have been consistently positive since the last EER. NZQA's most recent programme monitoring (reported October 2021) found Ignite to have effective internal pre- and post-assessment moderation processes.

Ignite has an in-depth understanding of student achievement, and is well connected with and responsive to its stakeholders. It actively seeks and uses student feedback to make improvements, identify support opportunities, and ensure students have an excellent learning experience.

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

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Ignite’s course completions are consistently above its 85 per cent internal target (and the sector median) each year. The highest completions were achieved in 2020 despite Covid-19 lockdowns, and alongside increased enrolments. International student completions were 96 per cent. Qualification completions exceed 70 per cent each year.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Online students achieve well. Completions are lower than for face-to-face students in the level 4 health and wellbeing programme (which has the highest online numbers), but are still high at around or above the 85 per cent internal target.</p> <p>Ignite identifies high completions as linked to the holistic and extensive support provided to the students. Relevant programmes with strong industry links also contribute to high completions.</p> <p>Course completions each year for Pasifika students are mostly above those for other students. This is an excellent result, with Pasifika approximately 45 per cent of all domestic enrolments.</p> <p>While Māori retention surpasses the sector median year to year, attrition rates were over 20 per cent in 2019 and 2020, and well above other ethnicities at Ignite.<sup>3</sup> Ignite revised its strategic response resulting in the employment of a dedicated Māori support staff member based on site at the end of 2020.</p> <p>Ignite has observed active engagement by Māori in activities facilitated by the Māori support staff member, and some increase in Māori participation on a programme taught by her. Ignite continues to embed initiatives focused on achieving a</p>

<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.

<sup>2</sup> See Table 1, Appendix 1.

<sup>3</sup> See Tables 2 and 3, Appendix 1.

	<p>safe, inclusive and welcoming learning environment for Māori. This view of the impact of these initiatives is mostly anecdotal and yet to be supported through targeted self-assessment.</p> <p>Achievement data is well understood across all levels of the PTE. Governance and management closely track retention. Ignite understands why students withdraw. Students are actively followed up and visited at home if non-attending.</p> <p>In all focus area programmes, students develop knowledge and skills directly relevant to the roles for which they train. The positive, professional attitudes and attributes nurtured at Ignite serve students well in internships and employment. Student evaluations capture data on the knowledge and skills gained.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Overall completion results are excellent, including for the high number of Pasifika students who enrol at Ignite. Students gain highly relevant skills, knowledge and attributes. Māori withdrawals have been over 20 per cent in 2019 and 2020. Strategic responses have been put in place with evidence of impact mostly anecdotal at this time.</p>

## 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>Ignite understands graduate destinations for each programme and by variables such as ethnicity and delivery mode. Through contact with 89 per cent of graduates who completed from 2018 to 2020, Ignite identifies that 70 per cent (1027/1153) are studying or employed in a relevant industry. In the health and wellbeing programme, around 90 per cent of graduates are in relevant employment or study each year, and for the culinary programme, over 80 per cent.</p> <p>Multiple examples from across programmes highlight that Ignite graduates progress to higher roles in their employment and receive valued job offers from internships facilitated by Ignite (such as in the culinary programme). Graduate and employer surveys are aligned to graduate profile outcomes. Vignettes capture and celebrate graduates' successes.</p>

	<p>Community stakeholders highly value the difference Ignite makes in the lives of the students and the caring and supportive environment provided. Industry stakeholders at the EER indicated a preference for employing Ignite graduates due to their positive attitudes, relevant work-ready knowledge and skills. Also valued are the extra industry-relevant training opportunities Ignite offers to students on top of their standard programme, which gives an advantage in the job market. For example, in freight logistics, students have access to fork-lift training and an industry platform that includes online learning and certification. The number of industry and community stakeholders and graduates who attended the EER to share positive feedback was notable.</p> <p>Ignite’s programmes support students into roles where there are skills demands and employee shortages, and to gain pay equity. Students highly value the knowledge they gain and which they identify as supporting their better performance in vocational roles. The programmes provide excellent career opportunities.</p> <p>Ignite purposefully and frequently celebrates different cultures in the learning environment. Students benefit from the cultural diversity they experience. They identified that this supports their interactions with diverse cultures in the workplace.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Significant reciprocal value is provided to the students, industry and community stakeholders as a result of Ignite’s relevant and diverse programmes, supportive learning culture, and opportunities facilitated through strong industry connections. Ignite graduates are sought after by industry, and graduates have access to valued employment opportunities.</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:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learning environments are structured for the benefit and needs of the students. Students are provided with flexibility and tailored responses to assist their management of external commitments while meeting study and programme requirements. Additional learning opportunities enhance the students' employability.</p> <p>Learning activities and resources are effective in engaging the students. Online learning resources and interactivity have continued to be enhanced and are valued by the students.</p> <p>Staff have extensive industry experience and connections of benefit to the students. On-site facilities such as the healthcare practical room and commercial kitchen support students to develop confidence and practical experience prior to experiencing industry environments. All programmes have industry and guest visits every five weeks. Industry placements provide students excellent learning and career opportunities.</p> <p>Ignite has well-established moderation processes across its programmes. In the last four years it has consistently met external moderation expectations<sup>4</sup> confirming the validity of assessment.</p> <p>NZQA recently monitored the culinary programme, finding that Ignite has effective internal pre- and post-assessment moderation processes. NZQA found the majority of assessment materials and assessor guidance to be fully aligned with the stated learning outcomes and assessor decisions to be robust. There is a need to formally document the evaluation of moderation results and actions – a finding that also applies to the other focus area programmes reviewed for this EER.</p> <p>Ignite uses moderation to identify staff professional development, support and training needs, with subsequent moderation activity – as well as staff observation – undertaken to ensure improvement.</p>

<sup>4</sup> This includes the approval of 138/141 assessor decisions moderated by NZQA and relevant Transitional Industry Training organisations across 47 unit standards moderated.



	<p>Students receive prompt assessment feedback. Opportunities for resits are consistently applied across programmes. Learning requirements, including in placement, are actively monitored.</p> <p>Programmes are regularly reviewed and informed by student and industry feedback. Programmes are aligned to need and enable progression to higher-level qualifications. Online delivery improves access to educational and vocational opportunities.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Programmes strongly match the needs of students and industry. Students develop industry-relevant skills and knowledge. Processes to ensure quality are consistently applied. In the last four years Ignite has consistently met external moderation and monitoring requirements.</p>

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>To support retention, Ignite spends much time with potential students pre-enrolment to ensure they understand and will be able to cope with study requirements, to identify their support needs, and to channel them into suitable programmes. International students have a specific induction and support.</p> <p>Students complete a VARK<sup>5</sup> questionnaire (to identify their learning style), an individual learning plan, and a literacy and numeracy assessment, so tutors can appropriately respond to their learning preferences, needs and goals. Unit standard and module completions are actively tracked. Students receive formal 10-weekly progress reports.</p> <p>The learning environment is inclusive. Ignite actively supports peer social and academic networks. These are sustained beyond graduation. The high level of care and support provided to students is strongly attested to by community stakeholders, who appreciate that this continues throughout the students' learning journeys and post-graduation.</p> <p>The wellbeing needs of students are taken care of holistically. Wi-Fi, laptops and hardship grants are provided to those in</p>

<sup>5</sup> Visual, aural, read/write, kinaesthetic

	<p>need. Regular campus events promote wellbeing and pride in diversity (e.g. health events, international and language days). External support services are frequently brought on site (determined by observation of need). Ignite monitors the number of students using each service to assess relevance. Five-weekly talanoa, and kōrero mai (recently introduced by the Māori cultural adviser) provide Pasifika and Māori students respectively with information about relevant support and guest speakers. These forums provide opportunities for the student voice, as do student council meetings.</p> <p>Ignite has recently appointed a Māori student support adviser to ensure a dedicated staff member is on site daily, engaging with Māori students as Māori and facilitating and celebrating knowledge of Te Ao and tikanga Māori. Positive impacts are anecdotally noted. There is an opportunity for Ignite to consider ways to systematically gather Māori students' feedback. Student evaluation data (and data on service use) is not disaggregated by ethnicity, and the PTE does not specifically seek student perspectives on Ignite's support provision. Ignite does engage students individually to ensure needs are being responded to, with this recorded in the student management system.</p> <p>International students are surveyed six-monthly to ensure Code of Practice expectations. The PTE reviews the international Code in depth. Ignite's self-review of the interim domestic Code confirmed that it is implementing the Code outcomes.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Students receive extensive holistic care and support. Provision is to identified need. Self-assessment could be better targeted to systematically understand different students' perspectives on support provision.</p>

## 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>Governance and management are guided by a clear strategic framework, goals and operational strategies. The PTE has effectively managed growth, which has included an increased international student body, additional programmes, and expansion into online delivery. Growth has been well supported by investment in facilities, systems and resources, increased staffing, and the establishment of leadership positions.</p> <p>Extensive community and industry networks, established alongside growth, add significant value and opportunities for students in their vocational pathways, and support their wellbeing and learning experience. Stakeholders highly value their relationship with Ignite and the opportunities established.</p> <p>Organisational academic leadership is effective and supported by established academic procedures and processes consistently applied across programmes.</p> <p>Staff recruitment and development is effective, centred on quality student engagement and educational delivery. Tutors have excellent industry experience and subject matter knowledge. Tutor performance is reviewed and supported by regular observation, tutor-manager feedback, and a formal appraisal process. A collegial environment supports regular sharing of practice.</p> <p>Ignite's decision to employ a dedicated Māori support adviser (as opposed to external expertise) has been a revised strategic response to lower Māori retention. It is now timely for Ignite to establish a process to systematically monitor the impact of activities targeted to Māori (beyond retention monitoring).</p> <p>Governance and management closely and regularly scrutinise performance data and have an in-depth understanding of educational achievement.</p>
Conclusion:	Ignite has well-established systems and processes supporting educational achievement. Growth has been well managed and resourced. Ignite understands the reasons affecting lower Māori retention and is actively focused on this. This could be further supported by targeted self-review of activities.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Ignite has established processes in place to ensure effective management of key compliance accountabilities. A compliance calendar supports the PTE to keep track of its accountabilities.</p> <p>Positive outcomes of compliance-related processes include positive external moderation and monitoring results, Ignite sufficiently meeting NZQA consistency reviews across many programmes, and the Tertiary Education Commission's latest audit.</p> <p>Ignite self-identifies that it has implemented the requirements and outcomes of the Code of Practice for international students and the outcomes of the interim domestic Code of Practice. The support provision to all students is extensive.</p> <p>Ignite regularly audits international student files to ensure Code requirements. A review of a small sample of international student files during the EER identified that for students on work visas there was an absence of insurance in place, with Ignite identifying that this was because of their entitlement to New Zealand healthcare. That assessment of entitlement was not clear for all files reviewed. Further, it was not apparent that there had been an assessment of insurance needs against all the coverage expectations outlined in Clause 16D of the Code of Practice (e.g. repatriation and funeral expenses). Thus, Ignite could strengthen its assessment of the scope of insurance coverage for students on work visas to appropriately determine and advise whether coverage fully meets Code expectations.</p>
Conclusion:	Generally, key compliance accountabilities are managed well, supported by established processes and procedures. There is a need to review processes to assess the scope and advice to students in relation to insurance coverage for students on work visas.

# Focus Areas

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

## 2.1 Focus area: International Students: Support and Wellbeing

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

## 2.2 Focus area: International Diploma in Advanced Culinary Arts (Level 5)

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

## 2.3 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in International Freight Logistics (Level 3)

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and support evidence:	The excellent processes found across other focus areas are also in place in the freight logistics programme. The 'Good' rating for performance reflects that the evidence of student outcomes in this programme, while strong, is not exemplary or as strong as in the other focus areas. For example, in 2019 and 2020, approximately one-quarter of graduates did not gain relevant industry employment (no doubt affected by Covid in 2020).

## 2.4 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Advanced Support) (Level 4)

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 Ignite Colleges Limited:

- Develop self-assessment processes to understand the impact of activities aimed at improving retention for Māori.
- Analyse student evaluation feedback by ethnicity, and to ensure Māori student perspectives are systematically captured and understood.
- Systematically capture student feedback on the guidance and support for students.
- Review processes to ensure there is an assessment of full insurance coverage for international students on work visas in line with Code of Practice expectations.
- Document evaluation and actions resulting from all moderation.

# 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. Course and qualification completions**

	Course completions (%)	Qualification completions (%)	Qualification completions by headcount (%)
2018	87	59	78
2019	85	77	77
2020	91	72	79

Source: Ignite Colleges Limited

**Table 2. Māori retention**

	Ignite Colleges (%)	Sector benchmark (%)
2018	84	50
2019	73	61
2020	78	64

Source: Ignite Colleges Limited

**Table 3. Student withdrawal data**

	2018		2019		2020	
	No. of enrolments	% of withdrawals	No. of enrolments	% of withdrawals	No. of enrolments	% of withdrawals
Māori	132	16%	135	27%	95	22%
Pasifika	231	6%	245	11%	311	9%
Asian	52	2%	97	6%	136	7%
European+ other	39	8%	59	17%	61	10%

Source: Ignite Colleges Limited

# 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<sup>6</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>6</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)