External Evaluation and Review Report

Cornell Institute of Business and Technology Limited trading as Cornell Institute of Business and Technology

Date of report: 4 May 2020

About Cornell Institute of Business and Technology Limited trading as Cornell Institute of Business and Technology

Cornell Institute of Business and Technology (CIBT) delivers information technology and health management programmes to international students. CIBT is in transition after a major review of its purpose and direction and ending its business programmes. All students are internationals, with a current focus on students from the Philippines and, to a lesser extent, India.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	150 Hobson St, Auckland CBD
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: nil
	International: 52 full-time students
Number of staff:	25 full-time equivalents[1]
TEO profile:	See: NZQA - Cornell Institute of Business and Technology
Last EER outcome:	CIBT's previous EER outcome in 2018 was Confident in educational performance and Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The current EER looked at the following focus areas:

- Diploma in Information Technology (Networking Technology Management) (Level 7)
- Diploma in Health (Advanced) (Applied Management) (Level 7)[2]

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[1] Some staff are shared with CIBT's sister organisation, Professional Bar and Restaurant School, which is co-owned and co-located in the same building.

- International students: support and wellbeing

MoE number: 7554

NZQA reference: C36323

Dates of EER visit: 16 and 17 July 2019

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[2] CIBT is accredited to deliver this New Zealand Curriculum Design Institute (NZCDI) NZQA-approved programme. During the EER, CIBT announced that they intended to withdraw the programme – see 2.1 for further details.

Summary of Results

This is CIBT's third consecutive unsatisfactory EER. Despite several remedial initiatives, achievement has been inconsistent, and in some areas is weaker than before. CIBT is to be commended for its good pastoral support, but organisational quality is handicapped by poor assessment practice, limited evidence of graduate outcomes, and variable self-assessment.

Not Yet Confident in educational performance

- CIBT has reported high course and qualification completions; however, NZQA has significant doubts about the validity of the results as presented.

- CIBT's connections and relationships with the relevant industry sectors are weak. This limits its ability to develop and deliver programmes that match stakeholder needs. This has had a significant impact on the health management programme.

- Students are engaged in their learning and experience a supportive learning environment.

Not Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Courses are taught by experienced, qualified staff who use their experience to ensure the education delivery is relevant and engaging. The turnover of staff (especially in the health management programme) has been high.

- The organisation has responded to substantial changes in the past year. Activities are now well resourced. However, CIBT is not effectively managing all its important compliance accountabilities.

- In the past two years, some academic self-assessment activity has been strengthened, but is not fully embedded in the organisation.

Key evaluation question findings[3]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Poor**
Findings and supporting evidence:	CIBT data shows that most students stay on their programmes and pass their qualifications. Completion rates have consistently been above 90 per cent over the past two years for both programmes examined in this EER.[4] However, the validity of these results is open to question, as evidenced by weak external moderation results.[5] In the focus area programmes, students have often completed a tertiary qualification (including a relevant degree in their home country). This goes some way towards making the high pass rates more plausible. Students also indicate that they improve their English while they are studying. Although this is an important aim for most students, it is not formally part of the CIBT programmes. Staff across the organisation demonstrate an understanding of the factors that lead to student success. But many of the contributing processes that underpin achievement are evolving, and many of the teaching staff are new to their roles. At this stage, CIBT is not managing gaps and weaknesses effectively.
Conclusion:	CIBT students stay in study and acquire some useful knowledge and skills. But many of the learner results are open to question, and CIBT's ability to understand and use achievement data to bring about improvements remains weak.

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

[4] Refer completions data Appendix 1.

[5] At the time of the draft EER report, NZQA moderation of CIBT Diploma in Information Technology assessments had just been completed. The draft moderation report indicated that the programme does not meet the approval and accreditation criteria relating to assessment and moderation.

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

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	CIBT aims to develop the skills necessary for gaining employment in New Zealand. Most students study at CIBT with the intention to 'study, work and settle' in New Zealand. For these students, the outcomes have been variable, depending on their programme. For instance, health management students come with previous experience and qualifications in health. Over half of the current cohort are registered nurses in their home country and most of the remainder hold other health-related qualifications such as dental technician, laboratory technician, research scientist, etc. Despite completing a level 7 health management qualification, the destination data CIBT was able to offer indicated that almost all graduates are working in entry-level health-related positions. All the current cohort were working part-time in similar entry-level positions while studying, so it is questionable whether the qualification has added any value to their job prospects apart from access to a work visa. Information technology graduates appear to be gaining better outcomes from their study and qualifications. Graduates were working in industry-related roles, although the collection and analysis of outcomes data is variable. While CIBT gathers some exit data from students when they complete their programmes, there is little meaningful engagement with employers and graduates to help determine the long-term value of the programmes.
Conclusion:	There are inconsistencies in how CIBT tracks graduate destinations and determines the fit between the graduate's knowledge, skills and attributes and the requirements of their destination.

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

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Both programmes examined in this EER have limited links with outside organisations. External engagement tends to be based on staff personal networks and includes a lot of former staff and academics from other, similar education providers, not people who are actively working in their respective industries. The high turnover of academic staff at CIBT compromises the continuity and sustainability of external engagement.
	Assessment practice is not robust. Recent external moderation highlighted significant flaws in assessment in both programmes.
	Learning environments and activities are engaging and accommodate students from different educational backgrounds and experiences.
	Workplace visits, guest speakers and project-based learning provide students with some opportunities to apply their theoretical skills and knowledge to a New Zealand context.
	However, students are not always guided towards courses that are appropriate to their aspirations and capabilities – the current health management programme is not ideal for the long-term needs and aspirations of many of its students.
	Students have opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through written work, project work and oral presentations.
	Plagiarism controls are in use, although these mostly rely on software, with limited use of common qualitative processes.
Conclusion:	Feedback from CIBT students indicates that it is meeting their day-to-day needs well. However, limited interaction with industry stakeholders and weak assessment practice means the needs of students, external stakeholders and graduates are not being met.

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Students at CIBT receive active, integrated and ongoing support from staff at all levels of the organisation. Teachers are well attuned to the needs of students and try to meet those needs on a day-to-day basis. Teaching staff described how they share ideas, experiences and knowledge through their daily interactions and staff meetings, and participate in regular performance reviews.
	Teachers described activities and initiatives to motivate, engage and encourage students to get the full benefit from their time at CIBT. Currently small class sizes ensure that teachers can give students individual attention when needed.
	Teachers provide timely, ongoing feedback to each student on their progress. The organisation also makes good use of social media to communicate with students.
	CIBT effectively communicates its expectations on attendance to the students and closely monitors attendance, with timely and appropriate follow-up as needed. Consistently high student retention and qualification completions confirm that these pastoral processes are effective.
	The organisation has effective processes to review how well it meets the spirit and intent of the Code of Practice.[6] This, and other evidence sighted, provides assurance that CIBT supports international students well.
Conclusion:	Regular and ongoing communication between staff, teachers, management and students ensures that students are well supported, both academically and personally. This helps them stay engaged and complete their studies.

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[6] Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016

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

Performance:	**Poor**
Self-assessment:	**Poor**
Findings and supporting evidence:	There is significant change and disruption to CIBT's governance and management as they seek to implement a sustainable business model while trying to lift and maintain the quality of delivery. The assessment issues cited in this report indicate that CIBT's management and governance is not effective in supporting educational performance. The EER team did not see evidence of a sustainable business model.
	CIBT has complied with the recommendations and requirements from the last EER. However, the PTE has not addressed some of the themes in that report, and this is still having a negative impact on educational performance.[7]
	Building staff capability has been a priority to strengthen the quality of delivery, assessment and review. However, high staff turnover, particularly in the health management diploma, has hindered parts of this strategy.
	CIBT has an annual performance appraisal of staff and is supporting staff in professional development and research.
	CIBT has implemented improved policies and well-documented administration and management systems and procedures. Many of these are new and have not been tested over time.
Conclusion:	CIBT has not been effective in managing and monitoring performance, leading to significantly inconsistent educational performance.

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[7] For instance: high staff turnover; poor quality graduate destination data and analysis; and fitness for purpose of the health management programme.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	NZQA intervened in response to breaches of NZQA rules. CIBT rectified these issues by stopping delivery of all business programmes. However, the weak assessment practice identified in external moderation of the Diploma in Information Technology shows that CIBT has failed to understand and address core systemic problems in how it manages educational performance and compliance with NZQA rules.
	The PTE has submitted NZQA attestations and returns to NZQA within required timeframes. The delivery of CIBT programmes is consistent with NZQA approvals.
	CIBT leadership is now effective in managing areas for compliance associated with international students. The PTE has developed detailed and effective systems to ensure it meets compliance obligations, including Code of Practice obligations, programme approvals and immigration requirements. The PTE monitors visa approval rates and comfortably exceeds the minimum requirements previously set by Immigration New Zealand. Overseas agents are well monitored, and their performance is regularly reviewed.
	CIBT has undertaken the yearly self-review of the Code of Practice using the NZQA template and made the required attestation to NZQA within the required timeframe. There was evidence of actions taken to improve procedures. Staff have attended Code of Practice training workshops.
	The EER team selected and checked a random sample of student files during this EER. All necessary documents were in the files in a well-organised and easily accessible format.
Conclusion:	While this evaluation found that core compliance processes around international students have improved, CIBT must take a more coherent approach to understanding and managing its compliance accountabilities with NZQA rules.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Diploma in Health (Advanced) (Applied Management) (Level 7)

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	CIBT has been working through several operational and quality concerns. During the EER, CIBT announced that it will not be enrolling any more students and will stop delivering this programme once the current cohort has completed their qualification.
	The programme is characterised by high staff turnover.[8] This hinders engagement with industry and is unsettling for the students.
	As previously discussed, most students enter the programme with qualifications and experience from their home country. They expect that when they complete the programme they will be able to secure a senior or managerial role in the New Zealand health industry. The programme title implies this. However, very few graduates attain positions above entry-level.
	Those graduates who convert their overseas nursing registration to New Zealand registration must complete an approved competency assessment programme at an accredited provider. Such a programme is arguably more suited to their needs.
Conclusion:	Although current students report satisfaction with the delivery of the programme and the standard of teaching, the health management programme delivers a different outcome from what the title implies.

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[8] There have been multiple rotations of staff since the programme started in 2015, including four different programme managers in the past 12 months.

2.2 Focus area: Diploma in Information Technology (Networking Technology Management) (Level 7)

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Students interviewed during the EER had a wide variety of backgrounds, from those who had little or no IT experience to mature students with degree-level qualifications and up to 20 years working in senior IT positions in their home countries and abroad.
	CIBT reported a 90 per cent pass rate for the IT diploma in 2018, and continued high achievement for 2019. However, these results are unreliable.
	At the time of this draft EER report, NZQA's moderation of the assessments for this diploma had just been completed. The draft moderation report indicated that the programme does not meet the approval and accreditation criteria in respect of assessment and moderation.
	There is some evidence that graduates progress to roles in the networking technology industry.
	A conversation with graduates who graduated two or three years ago may show that those graduates had progressed to higher-level positions. This would be useful feedback from graduates that could inform programme improvements. Unfortunately, CIBT had not engaged with graduates.
	The two 2016 graduates that EER evaluators spoke to said they keep in contact with almost all their graduate class (who all had similar IT roles). They have a social media group which they regularly use to communicate with each other.
	This diploma has also been affected by staff turnover, but one key teacher has been there for several years and is pivotal to the continuity of the programme.
Conclusion:	The IT diploma is achieving generally positive results for its graduates. However, weak links with industry and graduates make it difficult to assess the longer-term value to graduates.

2.3 Focus area: International students: support and wellbeing

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	International students are well supported by teachers and international student office staff to achieve their goals. Students interviewed during the EER described the range of pastoral care services and interventions, confirming how they have been supported. Most students are graduates in their own country and reasonably fluent in English, and they are relatively mature and self-reliant. As previously discussed, some health management students have been guided, by CIBT or its agents, to a programme which does not necessarily match their needs and aspirations. CIBT leadership is proactive in managing areas for compliance relating to international students, including Code of Practice obligations and immigration requirements. CIBT has completed a detailed self-review of their Code of Practice provision using the NZQA template. Key staff have attended NZQA Code workshops as part of their professional development. CIBT monitors visa approval rates and exceeds the minimum requirements previously set by Immigration New Zealand. The PTE has substantially reduced the number of overseas agents used based on performance, integrity and suitability to CIBT requirements. The PTE has also strengthened review and management of agents.
Conclusion:	CIBT has strong performance in effectively supporting international students. CIBT staff know their students well and are responding effectively to the needs of the typically mature students, both individually and collectively.

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 Cornell Institute of Business and Technology:

- Continue developing the collection of data, including but not limited to feedback from graduates and external stakeholders, for self-assessment.

- Urgently build capability in analysing this data.

- Urgently develop and maintain a comprehensive, whole-of-organisation self-assessment regime that leads to knowledge and actions around improving student achievement and outcomes.

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.

NZQA requires Cornell Institute of Business and Technology Limited to:

- Give urgent and substantive attention to the development of effective management systems to lift and maintain educational performance, including immediately preparing an improvement plan approved by NZQA and implementing that plan.

- Review the effectiveness of actions taken to improve assessment and moderation and the monitoring of student performance, and develop an organisation-wide approach to addressing the systemic gaps identified.

Appendix 1

Table 1. CIBT qualification completions 2017-2018

Department	Student enrolments[1]		Qualification completion rates[2]	
Year	2017	2018	2017	2018
Business	67	33	92%	91%
IT:				
L7 - Networking	32	29	97%	90%
L7 – Software Development	17	12	88%	92%
L5 NZ Diploma in IT (Technical Support & Administration)	---	12	--	92%
Cookery	278	342	76%	73%
Healthcare	40	18	90%	100%
Total	434	446		

1. Student enrolments are at cohort level and include withdrawals.
2. Cohort-based qualification completion and retention rates.

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[9]*

- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*

- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

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[9] 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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