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MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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External Evaluation and Review Report

Te Kura Toi Whakaari O Aotearoa:
New Zealand Drama School
Incorporated

Date of report: 3 February 2022

About Te Kura Toi Whakaari O Aotearoa: New Zealand Drama School Incorporated

Te Kura Toi Whakaari O Aotearoa: New Zealand Drama School Incorporated (hereafter Toi Whakaari) is a performing arts tertiary provider offering qualifications reflecting the repertoire of work involved in stage production.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Te Whaea: National Dance and Drama Centre, 11 Hutchison Road, Newtown, Wellington
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 130 International: four
Number of staff:	Full-time: 20 Part-time: eight
TEO profile:	See NZQA: Te Kura Toi Whakaari O Aotearoa: New Zealand Drama School Incorporated
Last EER outcome:	Highly confident in educational performance and capability in self-assessment (2017)
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bachelor of Performing Arts (Management) (Level 7)• New Zealand Diploma in Scenic Construction and Properties (Level 6)• International student support and wellbeing
MoE number:	8502
NZQA reference:	C45346
Dates of EER visit:	13-15 October 2021

Summary of Results

Toi Whakaari is a future-focussed organisation which has gone through significant changes since the last evaluation. Students and graduates of the drama school highly regard the value of outcomes and the student experience. Toi Whakaari has many commendable areas of performance. However, capability in self-assessment in the areas of moderation and compliance needs to be improved.

Confident in educational performance	<p>Toi Whakaari has excellent achievement rates. Staff are aware of the reasons for changes to individual student journeys, and this is appropriate for the context of the school. However, consideration should be given to formally capturing trends in withdrawals or unsuccessful completions for the PTE's use, and for other quality assurance activities such as consistency reviews.</p>
Confident in capability in self-assessment	<p>Students gain relevant skills and value their experience in the programmes beyond attainment of the qualification. Internship processes and documentation need attention and development to protect the interests of students and stakeholders, and to maintain the reputation of Toi Whakaari.</p> <p>Programmes are relevant, and learning environments are appropriately planned to ensure students' needs are met and students are exposed to real-world contexts. Moderation procedures are known by all staff. However, the findings of these activities need to be formally documented alongside future activity generated from moderation practice.</p> <p>A comprehensive application and orientation process ensures learners' goals are fully understood from the outset, and therefore learners evolve through their training. This ensures prospective students are a good fit for the student journey and the school.</p> <p>Student voice is a prominent aspect of the Toi Whakaari student experience. Student feedback is sought through a variety of mechanisms and used to inform change and improvements. Toi Whakaari is currently developing a more holistic approach to</p>

student support to better respond to their pastoral needs.

The introduction and integration of a new learning management system has already been proven and has improved the opportunity for data analysis. However, the full use of data analysis in the new system for the purpose of programme review and tracking student achievement is yet to be fully developed.

Toi Whakaari is actively recruiting staff to fulfil the PTE's future direction and provide current and relevant training. Further training for teaching staff, as deemed necessary in teaching-related areas, will enable a more developed framework for staff skillsets.

The longstanding senior management team has shown resilience and has carried the organisation through change. With its new appointments, it will lead the organisation into the future, after addressing some areas for improvement.

At the time of this evaluation, Toi Whakaari was in breach of PTE Registration Rules 6.1.5b and of the The Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019 (hereafter the interim domestic Code)¹ Process 13 relating to Outcome 4 and Clause 15a. This has affected the rating for key evaluation question 6.

¹ The Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019 <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/domestic-code-of-practice/>

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The tertiary qualification completion national average rate sits at 60 per cent, with Toi Whakaari consistently sitting above 80 per cent. Similarly, the course completion national average is 80 per cent, and the Toi Whakaari average is over 90 per cent.</p> <p>The small number of Māori and Pasifika students achieve well. Māori have completed qualifications at either the same rate as the overall student population (86 per cent) or at a higher rate (2020: 100 per cent). Equally, the small proportion of Pasifika students achieve well across the board, with qualification achievement on average over 80 per cent and course completions at a rate of 98 per cent on average.</p> <p>International students achieve at the same rate as domestic students.</p> <p>However, there is a lack of disaggregated data for Māori and Pasifika students. While parity of achievement is excellent, some further analysis of individual programmes may be beneficial in further understanding achievement and trends.</p> <p>The achievement rates of the focus areas are excellent, with few to no withdrawals from any of the programmes. NZQA recognises that the PTE reflects on these withdrawals in various ways and recommends that these datasets be used to help support self-assessment and action planning in this area.</p>
Conclusion:	Toi Whakaari students achieve with excellence, and course and qualification completion rates are above the industry average. Students gain relevant skills and useful qualifications. Self-assessment of achievement data could be improved.

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students and stakeholders value highly the outcomes of their study. Beyond attainment of qualifications, evidence suggests that soft skills development is of equal use and benefit to graduates. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal growth and maturity • self-reflection skills • understanding of te reo and te ao Māori • teamwork skills • networking skills • health and safety knowledge relevant to the sector. <p>The internship experience provides students with an understanding of real work contexts and creates a useful transition to employment through development of networks and skills practice. However, internship processes need attention and development to protect the interests of students and stakeholders, specifically in the area of oversight and progress checks during the internship (see 1.3).</p> <p>Toi Whakaari seeks graduate feedback three years after graduation and then another two years later. The chosen timeframes recognise the nature of gaining employment in the arts industry, and this time period also allows graduates to reflect on the alignment of skills gained and used in industry.</p> <p>Graduates gain relevant employment. Ninety-six per cent of respondents to the 2019 graduate survey were in employment, with 83 per cent in a relevant or related field. Appointment of Toi Whakaari graduates benefits the small arts sector by providing current, trained, skills-based artisans and managers. Toi Whakaari could further extend its self-assessment using this survey by analysing trends of responses.</p> <p>The recent development of Te Rōpū Whakahaere (Māori advisory group) contributes to the increasing bicultural intentions of the school and engagement with the community and sector. NZQA recommends that Toi Whakaari continue to strengthen</p>

	engagement with communities and use stakeholder feedback to develop alignment between graduate profile outcomes and industry in preparation for upcoming consistency reviews.
Conclusion:	Students and stakeholders value highly the outcomes of their study, which contribute to the currency of graduates seeking employment. Engagement with communities and industry is undergoing strengthening.

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:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZQA completed an internal moderation monitoring report on the PTE's recently developed New Zealand Diploma in Scenic Construction and Properties (Level 6) (Set and Props) programme of study during 2021. Requirements and recommendations highlighted non-alignment between assessments and learning outcomes, the need for judgement statements for marking consistency.</p> <p>Staff have also begun to undertake training in assessment design and moderation practices (as recommended by NZQA), and have updated quality management system policies regarding moderation requirements, and is improving the tracking and recording of moderation actions. However, the actions above submitted to NZQA reflect that most of the response will be completed by 2022, therefore it is too early to determine the impact of the actions taken. NZQA also recommends staff complete units 11552 and 11551 and other unit standards related to upskilling in assessment and moderation in addition to the planned Ako Aotearoa workshops.</p> <p>Programmes are relevant and current, based on feedback from industry. Efforts are made to provide the best resources to the students so they are exposed to current techniques and tools found in industry. Implementation of student feedback in both focus areas is effective, with evidence of specific student feedback being used to inform change.</p> <p>Programmes are reviewed regularly, through end-of-unit evaluations, production debriefs (mid-year check-ins), internship</p>

	<p>feedback and external moderation. Annual programme reviews are occurring as expected and are comprehensive, responsive to needs, and informing improvements.</p> <p>Different teaching and learning techniques are used, with a strong connection between the practical and theoretical components. Creative activities and learning methodologies are appropriate for preparing graduates for real-world work contexts, and to give students the ability to develop and display their craft skills. Toi Whakaari emphasises collaborative creation and work between departments, but this could be further strengthened as identified by the student body.</p> <p>In the last two years of the degree programmes (and final year of all others), students gain experience in areas of interest and/or where greater experience is required through an internship in industry. The current processes of internship placement require some areas of improvement. NZQA recommends where this does not already occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training the internship hosts (organisations) on how to align the graduate profile outcomes with the student’s internship experience, to ensure that the internship on offer is fit for purpose and the host is able to tailor the experience and know where the learning is taking the student in the programme • regular and ongoing communication between Toi Whakaari (an appointed staff member) and industry, to ensure oversight of the internship experience • continue to re-establish and strengthen connections with industry contacts who are willing to work with Toi Whakaari interns and progress interest in the internship component of programmes.
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Toi Whakaari programmes retain their currency and relevancy through regular interaction and feedback from all stakeholders. While all assessments are valid, NZQA monitoring highlighted non-alignment, inconsistency in marking judgements, changes needed in moderation reporting, and the need for staff training in this area. Additionally, the internship process needs attention to protect the interests of students and stakeholders.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Toi Whakaari offers comprehensive wrap-around support which is appropriate for the current size of school. Toi Whakaari has recognised the main responsibility for support has fallen on one staff member and plans to appoint another full-time equivalent staff member in the near future to help manage student support and compliance in this area.</p> <p>Toi Whakaari also intentionally caps student enrolment numbers to fit resourcing capability and to ensure staff are able to support students holistically in a prompt and timely manner.</p> <p>The recently appointed Māori and Pasifika support liaison has been an effective decision. Māori and Pasifika students are given the opportunity to meet collectively.</p> <p>The leadership team cultivates strong connections with both local universities so the drama school students can access health and advocacy services. Staff have also used these networks to upskill in sexual harassment and intimacy training in the context of the arts sector. Mental health is understood and emphasised by staff as part of an individual student learning experience.</p> <p>Student voice is strong at Toi Whakaari because of the fluid learning environment. Student representation occurs at most decision-making levels of the organisation to allow both the student representatives and individual students various opportunities to gather and bring forward information and perspectives from the wider student body to the attention of other students, staff and board subcommittee members.</p> <p>Management recently conducted a thorough review of policies and procedures pertaining to student safety and wellbeing. The interim domestic Code review process is collaborative across staff and suggests future reviews will be effective in identifying improvements relating to relevant outcomes. This will be determined at a future evaluation.</p> <p>Staff have developed new ways to respond to student needs and wellbeing. For example, every Friday is a self-directed learning and working day for both staff and students. This allows staff</p>

	<p>and students to have the time and space for 'life administration' and for staff to focus on administrative or research-related mahi.</p> <p>Domestic and international students are well inducted in their first week on campus. Whakatau tauira (orientation week) for successful applicants is intended to establish initial interdepartmental relationships to foster the collaborative working expectation. Prior to being accepted, applicants come to Te Whaea to experience the school to see whether it is the right fit for applicant and institution.</p>
Conclusion:	Students are well supported. Pastoral care practices are currently being developed and improved. The inclusive learning environment is aided by emphasis on interdisciplinary interaction and biculturalism.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Toi Whakaari is in a transitional period, with a new chief executive (Tumuaki) beginning in 2019, Te Rōpū Whakahaere established in 2020, and a new strategy in development. Information is fed directly to the board to enhance strategic direction. In 2017 a new leadership structure was introduced that included the splitting of the education organisation into discipline areas, introducing heads of department, subcommittees, student representatives, and the establishment of a research and ethics committee.</p> <p>The robust organisational structure with appropriate decision-making levels in place also considers student voice, with student representatives on the academic board and subcommittees. The design of this new structure, to include subcommittees, feeds information directly to the board to enhance strategic direction.</p> <p>Recruitment of Māori staff has increased, and recruitment of research-capable mentors has enhanced the organisation's capability. The developmental opportunities which have arisen from these appointments have also made a positive impact.</p> <p>Staff are highly valued and very well supported by the new chief executive and management in general. Staff say the new</p>

	<p>leadership has provided guidance and reassurance about the future direction of the organisation.</p> <p>The recommendations from the previous evaluation report have been addressed; Toi Whakaari's research plan and culture are developing well through appropriate appointment of staff with research experience and credentials.</p> <p>Data analysis is used effectively throughout the organisation. The introduction of new student and learning management systems has already been proven and has improved the opportunity for data analysis and broader and clearer oversight of teaching and learning performance and resourcing. Sufficient resources are allocated to support learning and teaching, with research resources being expanded on at the time of the evaluation. All of the above contribute to educational achievement.</p> <p>Toi Whakaari's response to Covid-19 and national lockdowns proved to be appropriate and effective in supporting educational achievement. The PTE has used this experience as a learning tool to provide students with the opportunity to emphasise health and safety as a promising and fulfilling role in the new generation coming into the industry. It was also seen as an opportunity for staff and students to explore the new environment of performance which they will be operating in.</p> <p>Toi Whakaari is a very reflective organisation at a strategic level, one which actively searches for opportunities to use self-assessment to improve and inform practice. Management effectively welcomes, uses and responds to external feedback and criticism. This allows the leadership team to effectively identify areas to develop at a governance and management level.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Supporting educational achievement is at the forefront of the strategic direction of Toi Whakaari. The longstanding senior management team, now including its new appointments, has proven to be resilient, which has carried the organisation through change and will lead it into its future.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Recent breaches of PTE Registration Rules 6.1.5b and of the interim domestic Code Process 13 relating to Outcome 4 and Clause 15a³ have affected the ratings for this key evaluation question. Rectification of these breaches has begun through review of relevant policies and strategic direction in the interest of protecting students.</p> <p>In other areas, Toi Whakaari has generally good oversight of its compliance responsibilities. Currently, the PTE is meeting the requirements of the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016⁴ and supporting international students as expected. The PTE is complaint with record-keeping rules; no discrepancies were found during the international student file audit.</p> <p>Use of two compliance calendars ensures compliance responsibilities are efficiently shared among staff, and a rigorous plan is in place should the main compliance officer be unavailable. Compliance accountabilities which sit with the Tertiary Education Commission and health and safety legislation are sound.</p> <p>Checks and balances are in place at governance and management level to ensure the programmes are being delivered as approved.</p>
Conclusion:	Toi Whakaari has oversight of its compliance responsibilities. However, recent breaches of NZQA rules has affected the ratings for this key evaluation question. Self-assessment needs to be improved in this area.

³ The Interim Domestic Code of Practice (current) [Interim domestic Code of Practice](#)

⁴ The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/education-code-of-practice/>

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Bachelor of Performing Arts (Management) (Level 7)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Scenic Construction and Properties (Level 6)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.3 Focus area: International student support and wellbeing

Performance:	Excellent
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 Te Kura Toi Whakaari O Aotearoa: New Zealand Drama School Incorporated:

- consider further analysis of parity by programme as well as overall and look to separate course and qualification completions in datasets, and separate analysis of Māori and Pasifika achievement data.
- analyse trends of responses to the graduate survey.
- use stakeholder feedback to develop alignment between graduate profile outcomes and industry in preparation for upcoming consistency reviews.
- formalise the student representation system and explore ways student representatives can gain insights into the wider student body perspective.
- staff complete units 11552 and 11551 and other unit standards related to upskilling in assessment and moderation.
- improve internship management processes to better protect students, stakeholders and the reputation of Toi Whakaari (see 1.3)
- continue to develop and strengthen responses to breaches of NZQA rules.

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.

As the identified breaches in this EER are currently being addressed by the PTE, there are no further 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 fraud⁵
- 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.

⁵ 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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