



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
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Report of External Evaluation and Review

New Horizon College Ltd trading as
New Horizon College

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 17 July 2018

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Final report.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	New Horizon College Ltd trading as New Horizon College
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	14 January 1991
Location:	1 st Floor, Dundas House, 43 Station Street, Napier
Delivery sites:	As above
Course currently delivered:	Experiencing English
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: nil International: 29 (21 per cent Japanese, 21 per cent Korean, 21 per cent Swiss, 11 per cent Chinese, 26 per cent other. Most are on student, working holiday or visitor visas.)
Number of staff:	Seven full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/details.do?providerId=854642001&site=1
Distinctive characteristics:	New Horizon College (NHC) is a small provider,

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primarily meeting the needs of learners seeking to improve their English language capability through a New Zealand cultural and learning experience. Examination courses (IELTS¹ and Cambridge) are also offered.

NHC is governed by the International College of Linguistics (ICL) Education Group Board. It is one of four schools in the ICL Education Group, and is overseen by the ICL Education Group principal. NHC has access to the collective expertise of the ICL Education Group and shares some functions and processes such as marketing, finance, moderation processes and professional development for managers. Formal relationships with other schools through the ICL Education Group provide opportunities for learners to transfer and experience life in other cities or towns.

Recent significant changes:

In 2015, the PTE name was changed to New Horizon College and the logo and branding were refreshed. In 2016, NHC opened a branch in Auckland enrolling 100 students. However, as it shared the site with another ICL school, causing brand confusion, NHC closed this site in 2017.

In March 2018, NHC was approved by NZQA to deliver an English language proficiency test.

Previous quality assurance history:

The last external evaluation and review (EER) was conducted in May 2014, at which time NZQA was Highly Confident in NHC's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment. The 2014 EER report recommended that NHC:

- Complete the strategic and business planning progress that is currently underway, to determine objectives and targets for sustaining high standards of educational performance and service

¹ International English Language Testing System

delivery.

- Continue to build staff capability through a targeted professional development programme.
- Consider extending the range of evaluative activities to include periodic reviews of priority programmes or key activities to build a more in-depth understanding of learner needs and outcomes.

Other:

NHC is a member of Learning Hawkes Bay² and a founder member of English New Zealand. The principal is the current English New Zealand chair, and NHC staff are on the Learning Hawkes Bay governance group.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope included the following focus areas:

- Experiencing English
- International students: support and wellbeing

The focus area, Experiencing English, encapsulates the main area of study. All students enrol for English language tuition and are international learners. As such, the programme was also used to review how effectively NHC is discharging its pastoral care responsibilities towards its international students.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. 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.

Two NZQA evaluators spent two days at NHC's Napier site. The evaluators engaged with the following people during the EER visit:

² Learning Hawkes Bay represents schools and tertiary providers in the region.

- NHC owner/chair of the ICL Board
- NHC principal/ICL director
- Director of studies
- Office manager
- Teaching staff
- Student support staff
- Key local stakeholders including students, graduates, international director of a local secondary school, an agent and homestay hosts.

Documents reviewed by the evaluators included: NHC's self-assessment summary, reports to the group principal, staff meeting minutes, administration meeting minutes, student evaluation results, moderation information, staff performance appraisal information, professional development records, programme information, sample individual learning plans, English New Zealand audit report 2018, i-graduate survey results, six monthly self-assessment reports, a selection of student files.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>. 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.

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Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance and **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **New Horizon College**.

The key reasons for this level of confidence include:

- There is clear direction and support from governance and management (ICL Group chair and principal) to maintain and improve quality while being flexible enough for NHC staff to meet the most important needs of students to improve their English language skills.
- NHC is providing varied and well-constructed learning opportunities to enable students to achieve their goals and acquire language skills that are immediately applicable in their daily lives. The curriculum is aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).
- Students are very satisfied with their study and support at NHC. This was affirmed by the very positive results of the i-graduate survey (English Language Barometer 2016) report.
- Classroom learning opportunities are supplemented by after-school activities. Well-organised community activities such as tree planting, sports groups, community gardens and a local marathon provide further opportunities for students to practise and apply their language skills in real-life situations.
- The teaching staff are well qualified and highly experienced, ably led by a director of studies who has strengthened self-reflection and assessment and moderation. Through teaching observations and moderation of assessments, she provides ongoing feedback and coaching on teachers' practice, designed to identify areas for improvement to strengthen good practice.
- NHC has achieved very good results with external examinations by Cambridge and IELTS for the last three years. The Experiencing English students receive programme reports at the end of study. These provide clear statements of their current abilities, which are very useful to the students and stakeholders. Positive moderation of assessment reports affirm the academic results achieved.
- The school has clear leadership and direction. As a member of the ICL Group, NHC has access to the group's collective resources. Additionally, as a member of English New Zealand, the organisation keeps abreast of the changes and challenges that may affect student achievement and support.
- NHC comprehensively addressed the recommendations of the last NZQA evaluation. Its strengthened professional development programme has had a

positive impact on all aspects of programme design, delivery, assessment and moderation.

- The positive synergy between administration and teaching staff forged by the office manager has enabled a whole-of-school approach to self-assessment. This is endorsed by the very positive 2018 English New Zealand audit report that commends NHC on its strengths in self-review, responsiveness to student and stakeholder feedback, and the school's inclusive environment.

Findings⁴

1.1 How well do students achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The achievement of goals in a creative learning environment and student satisfaction are the key indicators NHC uses to gauge its success. NHC is meeting most of the important needs of the students. Students enrol in NHC programmes primarily to improve their English language skills and to meet individual goals which include study in a different country, improving job prospects, pursuing personal interests, accessing further study, and raising confidence to use learned language skills. Student survey satisfaction results, the i-graduate survey and end-of-course students' evaluations attest that these goals are mostly being met. Further, NHC reports that after returning to their home countries, 12 per cent of students subsequently return to NHC for further study. This further affirms graduate confidence in the next level of study at this organisation.

A small number of students enrol to complete IELTS and Cambridge exams. While there are no students currently enrolled, results from 2015-2017 have been in line with teacher mock tests and aligned with student goals. General IELTS scores averaged 6.0 for these three years, and Academic IELTS averaged 7.0. These are very good results for these students as the results enable progress to their longer-term goal of advancing to higher study at other institutes. Similarly, Cambridge First Certificate in English results for the same period also achieved very good results.

NHC attributes these consistently positive results to correct student placement, goal-setting and review, and effective teaching and support monitored by formative and summative testing. The evaluators agreed that these activities collectively contribute to the positive results. Fortnightly formative tests lead to six-weekly formal tests which are matched against the CEFR outcome statements. These outcome statements provide students and stakeholders with clear and useful information concerning the learning progression and current level of students. Strengthened moderation processes implemented since the last evaluation affirm the consistency and validity of these assessments.

⁴ 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?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

NHC has identified its range of stakeholders and how its programme outcomes provide value. Valued outcomes for students include gaining language skills, developing their cognitive abilities, and raising their confidence to apply their skills. These needs are being met by the range of programmes offered, where learner capability is measured and monitored. Students consistently say they value NHC programmes and accordingly would recommend the college to friends and family. The results of the i-graduate survey for 2016 show that 88 per cent would recommend NHC – exceeding the average 78 per cent for other New Zealand schools, and 81 per cent globally.

Stakeholders interviewed endorsed the positive survey findings. NHC has contributed positively to community initiatives over time and so has built a network of reciprocal engagement. These initiatives include students involved in activities such as tree planting, community gardens, sports groups and volunteering at the local marathon. These activities enable students to apply their language skills in different settings while contributing to community activities. The tree planting activities have led to students and the school being involved in a partnership to raise awareness of sustainability and recycling. NHC is planning to deliver a programme called English and the Environment, and these activities are seen as integral to such a programme.

Other stakeholders include parents of international students who value NHC and its outcomes as it confirms that their children are learning in a safe environment and making progress, improving their language skills. Homestay families have been long-term hosts who – as well as enjoying the extra income – enjoy cross-cultural interaction with the different nationalities. Repeat business with agents is an indicator of ongoing student satisfaction. The agent interviewed by the evaluators also services other educational institutes in the region, and endorsed NHC's care and support of students and the provision of well-resourced programmes.

NHC acknowledges the challenge of keeping in touch with graduates when they return to their home countries, and since the last evaluation has tried to follow up graduates using an alumni survey two years post-study. In addition, they use social media to follow graduate destinations informally. Collated data and analysis is used to inform marketing and programme planning.

The evaluators saw evidence of NHC teachers liaising with other institutes to share information on the learning styles and achievements of students who transfer and

to check the preparedness of students for more advanced learning. Graduates return to NHC to share their experiences and to role-model to current students.

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

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

NHC programmes are well designed and delivered to match the needs of the students and stakeholders. Stakeholder and student groups interviewed said they valued NHC's commitment to providing opportunities for students to fulfil their study goals by developing and delivering programmes tailored to individual needs. Numerous students enrol individually at NHC as part of their travelling experience, while others enrol in groups such as the 40+group (mainly Swiss women in the summer months) who want to study with like-minded peers supplemented by specific activities. Other, smaller groups include secondary school students who enrol to improve their language skills before enrolling in local secondary schools. Special interest students enrol to improve their language skills while furthering their individual interests such as viticulture. These students then link to the local institute of technology which offers more advanced viticulture qualifications. The many different examples attest to the flexibility of NHC to match student needs. The evaluators heard examples of where NHC worked collaboratively with other schools and tertiary institutes to enable students to transition smoothly as their needs changed.

A placement test on day one places student in the appropriate level for students with diverse needs (elementary to upper intermediate). Formative and summative testing and reflection at three-weekly individual learning plan discussions support students to progress at their own rate. Small classes of fewer than 12 ensure that well-qualified staff provide a flexible programme responsive to individual needs. In addition, one-to-one private lessons and exam preparation classes are offered as requested.

The teachers are experienced and well qualified, with three of the four teachers being IELTS examiners. A robust professional development programme is in place to inform and strengthen teaching practice, and includes teachers leading workshops according to their strength areas. Other school-wide professional development activities have led to strengthened internal and external moderation, increased use of digital resources, and comprehensive curriculum reviews. Peer and director of studies observations have also increased opportunities to share good practice.

In addition to informal daily interactions and discussions, teachers have found that documenting weekly reflections is very useful as reminders, or to improve practice such as teaching at a different level or using a methodology that works well or needs improvement. Teachers have proactively made improvements to continue to meet student needs using these reflective notes. In summary, all curriculum, learning, assessment and reporting procedures reflect best practice and the principles of Constructive Alignment (Biggs, 2003).⁵

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

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

NHC encourages students to be actively involved and to monitor their own learning. This is enabled and encouraged through individual learning plans reviewed three-weekly. Students self-review their goals, progress, effort, skills and confidence. Teachers also review student progress at this time and share their findings with the students. Where students have rated themselves as lower than the teacher rating, teachers are able to provide evidence to show the students' progress. These plans have been through a number of iterations as teachers refine a process that is useful to both students and staff.

Using the individual learning plan results, NHC also monitors school-wide student satisfaction with their learning progress, study effort and progress towards achieving goals. Student satisfaction with their overall learning experience and progress is very positive, as reported during these three-weekly discussions and followed up in student surveys. The latest i-graduate survey reports that, at 90 per cent, NHC exceeded New Zealand and global ratings for overall satisfaction (New Zealand 86 per cent, global 87 per cent respectively). An analysis of student satisfaction reported over the last four years noted that matters requiring action tended to be with the facilities and not the teaching. Examples include improvements to the Wi-Fi, a new cover for the pool table, additional library space and a prayer room, all of which have been satisfactorily addressed.

NHC enjoys a strong synergy between teaching staff, support staff and homestay hosts, so students' needs or issues are quickly attended to. An example of this synergy involved a student who recently required hospital care. The director of studies and the office manager organised homestay accommodation to ensure the

⁵ Biggs, J (2003): *Aligning Teaching and Assessment to Curriculum Objectives*, (Imaginative Curriculum Project, LTSN Generic Centre)

student was well cared for in recovery. This expresses the holistic care provided by NHC. The organisation also provides one-to-one 15-minute sessions for students to discuss any matters that might affect their study. Some students prefer to use this time for additional speaking practice.

NHC's homestay service is appreciated by the students. Most homestays have been providing services long-term, and the service suits both parties. The necessary host family checks, including police vetting, are in place. Procedures for hosts of students aged under 18 are more extensive than standard student enrolments, and are addressed accordingly. NHC ensures that parents or guardians of students under 18 receive regular reports on the student's achievement and wellbeing.

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

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

NHC is a small school (29 students currently), but as one of four ICL schools it benefits from ICL Group managed processes such as marketing, finance, a new student management system and human resources, therefore accessing resources it might not have otherwise afforded. While there is autonomy on site, NHC is linked to the governance group through monthly on-site visits by the group principal, monthly reports to the group principal, and board and inter-school manager professional development workshops.

The ICL Group strategic plan supports educational achievement, and NHC staff have input into the school direction informed by representation on the governing group of Learning Hawkes Bay, and so ensure they are up to date with educational strategies for the region.

The site is well staffed and resourced. Staff say they feel valued as they are able to access professional development opportunities – including conference attendance – enjoy flexibility of leave to meet personal circumstances, and are acknowledged socially with birthday and Christmas functions.

NHC has further strengthened its self-assessment practices. There has been a comprehensive response to the last NZQA evaluation, including strengthening professional development and moderation; two-weekly review after enrolment of facilities, arrival and orientation; quarterly health and safety reviews; and six-monthly reviews to identify, document and track areas for improvement. In addition, the 2018 English New Zealand audit was very positive with no recommendations required. The report commended NHC on its strengths in self-

review, responsiveness to student and stakeholder feedback, and the school's inclusive environment.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

NHC has clear processes in place to proactively identify and manage its compliance responsibilities. It operates a yearly compliance planner and flags regular reviews including the Code of Practice review, the English New Zealand self-review, quality management system policy review, and financial attestations, a practice it continues to find effective. In addition, as a founding member of English New Zealand and with the NHC principal the current chair, NHC is well aware of and keeps current with compliance matters pertaining to English language schools and the relevant rules pertaining to the support and wellbeing of international students.

NHC has clear homestay policies and procedures, including annual updates and three-yearly visits, with more regular annual visits for homestay hosting under 18-year-olds. All homestay families are police vetted and those who host under 18-year-olds are vetted annually. These are all good-practice processes to assure student safety. The evaluators found sampled student files compliant. Attendance expectations as they relate to programme success and visa rules are actively managed.

The Experiencing English programme is delivered as approved.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Experiencing English

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

2.2 Focus area: International students: support and wellbeing

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

Recommendations

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

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are 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.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which 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.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 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 and/or 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 External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

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).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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