External Evaluation and Review Report

Alphacrucis International College Limited trading as Alphacrucis International College

Date of report: 1 June 2021

About Alphacrucis International College Limited (trading as Alphacrucis International College)

Alphacrucis International College operates under the same governance, management and faculty as its parent company, Alphacrucis Limited. Alphacrucis International College has a wide range of delivery in terms of Christian and non-Christian based programmes at levels 2-8, with online, blended and on-campus delivery and learners with different teaching and learning needs and experience.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	60 Rockfield Road, Penrose, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 2020, 217 – 110 EFTS (equivalent full-time students) 21 EFTS Māori, 24 EFTS Pasifika
	International: 10
Number of staff:	Five full-time and 30 part-time (joint with Alphacrucis Limited)
TEO profile:	See: Alphacrucis International College
Last EER outcome:	June 2019:
	Not Yet Confident in educational performance
	Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of this evaluation:	• Youth Guarantee programmes –Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2); Certificate in Retail (Level 2)
	• Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4)
	• Diploma in Chaplaincy (Level 5)
	• International Student Support and Wellbeing
MoE number:	8573
NZQA reference:	C45353
Dates of EER field work:	1-5 March 2021

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Summary of results

Alphacrucis International College (AIC) is meeting the most important needs of learners and stakeholders. Improved processes are in place or are still embedding, but evidence that self-assessment will be consistently effective in guiding and informing performance going forward is less convincing.

Confident in educational performance	• Significant and useful changes have occurred at AIC, such as improved clarity around the strategic direction, organisational restructure and supportive leadership of staff. These are informed by targeted and meaningful engagement with key stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the Assemblies of God churches and the parent company, Alphacrucis College Australia, are well met.
Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment	• AIC has good course completions and increased stakeholder capability. Credentialing of church members enables the church to fulfil its mission and ministry.
	• AIC has a better understanding and identification of the areas for improvement since the last EER. AIC's commitment and ongoing planning to improve and embed processes and practices systematically is a work in progress across priority areas. Worthwhile improvements such as a recent focus on improving quality data collection and analysis is supporting educational achievement, but it is not yet evident that this contributes to improved outcomes. The quality and coverage of data analysis and findings, while improving, is inconsistently applied across the programmes.
	• At the time of the EER, COVID-19 had impacted the PTE's pace of change across programmes.

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Key evaluation question findings[1]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Overall, most learners at AIC are studying level 4 certificate and level 5 diploma programmes and have course completion rates over 80 per cent. Qualification completion rates are significantly lower, impacted by part-time learners studying over a period of one to three years, and Chaplaincy programme learners only completing the Chaplaincy component required for credentialing.
	Achievement results for the focus areas meet or exceed Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) targets. In 2018, 2019 and 2020, Youth Guarantee learners who attended mostly achieved. Foundation and Retail course and qualification completions meet or exceed the TEC's requirement of 55 per cent. Christian ministry level 4 course completions range from 88-66 percent over 2018, 2019 and 2020. In two of three years, AIC met the TEC target of 80 per cent. Chaplaincy programme course completions are consistently very high – in 2018, 2019 and 2020 exceeding the TEC's target and remaining consistent during the move to online delivery during the COVID-19 lockdowns.These results are undermined by the lack of internal moderation which has not occurred consistently across programmes or years. The AIC level 5 programme did not meet NZQA external moderation criteria for 2021.
	Māori and Pasifika learners are not achieving at the same rate as all learners. Māori and Pasifika performance data across the focus areas shows that these priority groups achieve consistently below that of all learners. An exception is the Retail component of the Youth Guarantee programmes, where Māori and Pasifika exceeded all-learner course completions. AIC would benefit from disaggregating data to explore variances in achievement by cohort, programme delivery and ethnicity to better understand how well learners achieve.

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

	The monitoring of achievement data is improving, and is better understood and analysed in some programmes than in others. Detailed analysis has only relatively recently occurred, so the identification and understanding of trends is somewhat limited. AIC has a broad understanding and reasoning for non-completions, which inform further improvements to programmes, some of which are not yet evident. AIC's own internal benchmark for programmes is yet to be confirmed, and the identification of other tertiary education organisations to provide meaningful comparison is a work in progress. It is not clear what monitoring and analysis is being done within AIC of TEC data.
Conclusion:	Course competitions against TEC targets are generally good. However, there are disparities in the performance of Māori and Pasifika across all focus areas. Worthwhile improvements were made in 2020 (semester 2); however, the impact of these are not yet evident. The quality and coverage of data analysis and findings, while improving, is inconsistently applied across the programmes. Along with the lack of moderation, this impacts the reliability of achievement rates.

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Assemblies of God New Zealand churches look to AIC to increase the capability of church members and meet credentialing requirements through the provision of training and education. AIC effectively supports the church in this capacity to fulfil its mission and ministry.

AIC engages with Assemblies of God New Zealand membership at all levels of the church, formally and informally. AIC council is made up of stakeholders who ensure the PTE is well aligned with the church's values and support the strategic direction and mission. The recent appointment of a national director whose primary focus is on stakeholder engagement is having a positive impact on changes made in the organisation. Stakeholders report an increase in contact with AIC and positive discussions focusing on future need and innovative training pathways. |

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	Outcomes for learners are equally important and mostly evident. Youth Guarantee learners gain qualifications, and although this is an important outcome, the higher valued credits for the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) are currently not available for all learners. Christian Ministry graduates moved onto volunteer work in their church, while the programme also prepared learners for success in their workplaces. Completion of the Chaplaincy diploma is currently sufficient to pathway to employment or roles in chaplaincy, meeting Assemblies of God New Zealand churches' need for credentialed chaplains. Overall, the quality of the data demonstrating these outcomes varied. AIC needs to ensure that systematic processes, relevant for the variety of programmes, are in place to evidence these important outcomes.
	In addition to gaining qualifications, learners' personal and spiritual growth and improved attributes such as confidence and communication are recognised as important outcomes, as they contribute to the graduate's capability to engage in Christian ministry, chaplaincy and life in general. While AIC values these outcomes, the PTE has still to develop ways to collect information to demonstrate the extent of these outcomes.
Conclusion:	AIC is clearly meeting the most important needs of key stakeholders. Learner outcomes are also apparent but less well evidenced.

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:	All AIC programmes are highly relevant and match the needs of learners and the primary stakeholders: Alphacrucis Australia, Assembly of God churches and their communities. All focus area programmes have an experiential component purposefully aligned to the learning outcomes, credibly integrating learning into practice in a way that is meaningful.

Programme design and delivery has been a focus for the programme managers and national director, who have been in these roles for less than one year; nevertheless, improvement is noted. Systems and processes are being established or are now |

| | in place, some more embedded than others. Academic oversight primarily falls to the new programme managers, and all recognise challenges and areas that have an impact on programme delivery or academic standards and need addressing. The academic committee is not making much impact on academic rigour and the quality of teaching and learning to support programme managers, who are not experienced or well-equipped with the level of resource within AIC, to effectively undertake these roles. For example, Youth Guarantee programme change applications (recommended in the last EER) are still a work in progress with NZQA.

The Christian ministry and Chaplaincy programmes need to ensure internal moderation occurs systematically, is robust and effective. Appropriate oversight of learning hours being maintained in line with course approval is an important improvement since the last EER. Progress has been impacted by the move to online delivery as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Academic staff are experienced in teaching and in their area of delivery, the exception being theYouth Guarantee tutors, who have no facilitation or teaching experience. This has some impact on their capability to deliver, assess and facilitate learning. For the Youth Guarantee programme, the credibility of results for 2018 and 2019 (and the semester 1, 2020 foundation programme) are in question due to a 'teach and then assess' approach that existed at the time. During 2020, academic processes have become more robust; however, due to the recent implementation, the impact of these is not yet apparent.

Annual programme reviews undertaken in 2020 are scheduled to continue, and they provide a sound overview of the programme and outcomes. Some data and information prior to 2020 has been lost or is not available for comparison, limiting the ability to consider trends or use information insightfully. |
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| Conclusion: | The Christian ministry and Chaplaincy programme design matches the needs of learners and Assembly of God church communities. The Youth Guarantee programme is being redeveloped to better understand and align to student and stakeholder needs. Academic processes are in place; however, the evidence to demonstrate the extent to which processes are effective and stakeholder needs are met remains a work in progress. |

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Field and practicum components of the Christian ministry and Chaplaincy programmes are well designed to ensure comprehensive support through arrangements with placements. In the Chaplaincy programme, highly effective support and guidance is provided by the placement supervisor and a spiritual mentor. The effectiveness of support for online learning is less well evidenced. As online is the primary mode of delivery for the academic content of these programmes, feedback mechanisms and student interviews did not show strong support in this area. AIC recognises a need to consider prerequisites that ensure learners' capability to study online and AIC capacity to support them.
	Youth Guarantee learners benefit greatly from an arrangement where Alphacrucis shares premises with trusts with expertise in working with youth, resulting in the provision of wrap-around services and support. Recent changes to the enrolment process, and increased engagement with the trusts by AIC management, provides assurance that expectations are transparent for the learner and whānau as well as supporting programme delivery.
	Student representation, student engagement and surveys have been systematically undertaken since the last EER, and all are useful. The data collected is recent, and collation and analysis are limited, but indicate that AIC is supporting learners well. The full extent of these outcomes, as anecdotally reported by AIC, are not yet convincingly demonstrated.
	International student support and wellbeing has the attention of a dedicated team to provide support and guidance to the few international student enrolments. AIC understands the effectiveness of support through surveys and ongoing connection with the students who study in the same programme.
Conclusion:	Learners are comprehensively supported in their learning, on site and in practicum components of programmes. Understanding of the effectiveness of online delivery and support is less strong.

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

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Over the past 18 months, AIC has undertaken a number of reviews, resulting in a strengthened governance and management structure, and improvements in stakeholder engagement, processes and reporting since the last EER. The council is active within the PTE. A member sits on the revised executive committee, providing support and advice on a weekly basis. The recent recruitment of a national director has refreshed the links and quality of communication with stakeholders, resulting in improved understanding of future needs. There are clear lines of responsibility, and programme managers have improved oversight and support to undertake their roles, including plans to implement changes to support improvement across processes within programmes. Implementing changes and ensuring consistency in the application of effective processes, such as internal and external moderation and data analysis (achievement and feedback), are at various stages within individual programmes. Some are being more developed than others. Appropriate processes and mechanisms are in place and data is collected, but it is too soon to demonstrate systematic, ongoing practice being used to understand quality and guide improvements. The PTE's need to respond to additional demands placed by COVID-19 has impacted the pace of change, but this is now improving. Strengthening the academic committee's responsibilities and the appointment of an academic director are priority areas where work is in progress. In the short term, any risk associated with educational performance is currently being managed by programme managers, the national director, the faculty dean and the outgoing principal. This is important to ensure current areas – including detailed programme oversight, management of Youth Guarantee programme changes and assurance on the quality of teaching–are effectively monitored.
Conclusion:	Significant and useful changes have occurred in governance and management, stakeholder engagement and in organisational processes and practices. A recent focus on improving quality

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	data collection and analysis is supporting educational achievement, but it is not yet convincingly evident that this contributes to improved outcomes.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Compliance accountabilities are managed by the executive committee. The council is aware of its compliance obligations and has an appropriate degree of oversight. The internal student support team monitors and audits code for international and domestic tertiary student requirements, and reports to the executive committee. Processes are sufficiently robust to manage compliance accountabilities, such as complaints, financial viability and legal matters. Until an academic director is appointed, the national director and faculty dean undertake more responsibility for some monitoring, for example the interim domestic Code.[2] As noted in 1.5, strengthening the academic committee's responsibilities and the appointment of an academic director will bolster these processes going forward and provide further assurance that the programmes are being delivered as approved. This was resolved following the previous EER. NZQA requirements are managed, but improvements demonstrating effective internal moderation are not evident, and programme monitoring of the Chaplaincy programme does not meet NZQA criteria. Temporary approvals for online delivery were well managed during COVID-19 in 2020, and AIC is currently working through applications for final approval of Type 2 changes in the Chaplaincy programme.
Conclusion:	Effective processes are in place to manage core compliance obligations and accountabilities.

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[2] Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019

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Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Youth Guarantee programmes – Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2) and Certificate in Retail (Level 2)

Performance:	**Marginal**
Self-assessment:	**Good**

2.2 Focus area: Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4)

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**

2.3 Focus area: Diploma in Chaplaincy (Level 5)

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Marginal**

2.4 Focus area: International Student Support and Wellbeing – Mandatory

Performance:	**Good**
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 Alphacrucis International College Limited:

- Strengthen evidence-based analysis of performance data to explore variances, and to understand patterns and trends of overall and disaggregated achievement for cohorts, ethnicities and programmes.

- Improve evidence-based analysis and understanding of the value of all the programmes to learners, to improve communication and clarity of programme outcomes, and inform programme developments that will ensure these match the needs of learners and stakeholders.

- Embed academic quality assurance processes and demonstrate the extent to which they have an impact and are effective.

Requirements

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

Appendix 1

Tables for performance by focus area

Table 1. Completion rates for Youth Guarantee: Retail

Youth Guarantee - Retail	2018	2019	2020
Enrolment No.	29	39	38
Course completion %	77	67	52
Qualification completion %	72	58	57

Table 2. Completion rates for Youth Guarantee: Foundation

Youth Guarantee- Foundation	2018	2019	2020
Enrolment No.	35	29	37
Course completion%	67	52	66
Qualification completion%	66	48	62

Table 3. Completion rates for New Zealand Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4)

Level 4- AIC	2018	2019	2020
Enrolment No.	9	10	16
Course completion%	83	66	88
Qualification completion%	100	0	50

Table 4. Completion rates for New Zealand Diploma in Chaplaincy (Level 5)

Level 5	2018	2019	2020
Enrolment No.	33	63	50
Course completion%	95	82	90
Qualification completion%	24	13	16

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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[3]*

- *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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[3]NZQA and the 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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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 452(1)(t) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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.

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.

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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