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# Report of External Evaluation and Review

TAFE College (NZ) Limited  
trading as TAFE College New Zealand

Not Yet Confident in educational performance

Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 4 October 2017

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# 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:                        | TAFE College (NZ) Limited trading as TAFE College New Zealand   |
| Type:                               | Private training establishment (PTE)  |
| First registered:                   | 20 July 1992  |
| Location:                           | 6 Mitchelson Street, Ellerslie, Auckland  |
| Delivery sites:                     | Distance learning and tutorials at above address  |
| Courses currently delivered:        | National Certificate in Real Estate (Salesperson) (Level 4) (credits 47)  |
| Code of Practice signatory:         | No  |
| Number of students:                 | Domestic: 135 at July 2017<br>International: nil  |
| Number of staff:                    | Three full-time equivalents; one part-time tutor  |
| Scope of active accreditation:      | <a href="http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/ngf-accreditations.do?providerId=867730001">http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/ngf-accreditations.do?providerId=867730001</a> |
| Distinctive characteristics:        | The course is six months long and is completed by distance learning.  |
| Recent significant changes:         | New owner in November 2014 and a change of premises November 2015   |
| Previous quality assurance history: | At the 2014 external evaluation and review (EER), NZQA was Confident in TAFE's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-                         |

assessment.

TAFE has met The Skills Organisation's external moderation requirements for its assessment of real estate unit standards. The organisation does not have any other moderation requirements.

Other:

TAFE is approved by the Real Estate Agents Authority (REAA) to deliver a two-day verifiable training course that counts towards the annual 20 continuing training hours required by real estate agents to maintain a real estate licence.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The National Certificate in Real Estate (Salesperson) (Level 4) (credits 47) was chosen as the focus area for the EER because it is the only programme the organisation delivers. The verifiable training is not a formalised course and therefore was not included in the scope of this evaluation.

## 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.*

The EER team spent one day at the organisation's head office in Ellerslie, Auckland. They spoke with the chief executive, who is also a tutor, as well as a part-time tutor, industry stakeholders, and current students. The lead evaluator also spoke to the newly appointed tutor/programme manager via telephone following the visit.

Documents reviewed on site included the quality management system, students' enrolments forms, student records, tutors' guide and handbook, student handbook, unit standard assessment handbooks, and a recent moderation report from The Skills Organisation.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Not Yet Confident** in the educational performance of **TAFE College (NZ) Limited trading as TAFE College New Zealand**.

The achievement of the National Certificate in Real Estate enables graduates to apply for a real estate licence. Around two-thirds of TAFE students complete the certificate, and nearly all of these graduates gain a licence. However, it is not clear how good the rate of achievement is for this level of qualification. This is because TAFE has not demonstrated that it analyses how well its students achieve overall to systematically identify the reasons for success or failure.

The organisation's policies and procedures need to be updated to ensure they reflect actual practice. This includes management of student files, documenting internal moderation activities, and student feedback. In addition, there is no risk management framework for managing compliance.

The chief executive provides the resources to carry out the training and is open to new ideas to improve delivery. For example, the tutors use a newly developed online marking system which provides better feedback to students, reducing the number of resubmissions. The tutors have professional experience in real estate, bringing their knowledge and expertise to the training, which students reported was helpful. The tutors provide relevant online support. There is also an option for Auckland-based students to drop in on a weekly evening tutorial.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Not Yet Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **TAFE College (NZ) Limited trading as TAFE College New Zealand**.

TAFE's self-assessment capability needs to be developed. For example, it has yet to develop a way to record student progress and achievement to analyse how long it takes on average for students to complete, rather than monitoring progress individually. This would enable the organisation to identify whether it can improve overall student completion rates. The PTE also does not have a system for recording stakeholder feedback to understand the value of the various outcomes for graduates and the sector.

Although the organisation has a strong understanding of the real estate sector, TAFE needs to improve its knowledge of educational practices and compliance with regulations to ensure it meets the requirements of a registered tertiary education organisation.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

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

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

The organisation's records show that 203 out of the 309 students enrolled between 2015 and 2016 have completed the qualification to date. However, the organisation did not provide any compelling evidence to demonstrate that it understands how well students achieve, in particular how many students finish early and how many take longer than six months to complete and why, or whether the current rate of achievement is good or not. The organisation believes that most students complete within four to six months and attributes this to those students starting their studies soon after enrolment, while those that defer the start are less likely to complete the qualification. The organisation also does not analyse trends in achievement by student ethnicity or by age.

Student achievement is monitored by tutors independently when assessments are overdue, which is not sufficient to give an understanding of how well students are performing overall, or whether any improvements could be used to help increase completion rates. There are no formal self-assessment practices and processes used to understand student achievement. The organisation would benefit by establishing reasonable achievement targets for a level 4 qualification completed via distance learning to monitor how well students are progressing and to understand overall achievement.

## 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 **Good**.

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

The course offers an industry qualification required to apply for a real estate licence. Anecdotal feedback from the course tutors indicates that the majority who complete the qualification gain a licence that enables them to list a property. However, this outcome is not formally tracked by TAFE.

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

A smaller number of people enrol in the course to improve their knowledge, such as property investors and property managers. The organisation does not formally record students' employment status or career intentions to see whether the course outcomes met the expectations of all graduates. However, it does get informal feedback about the value of the course at industry training events and meetings. Formalising feedback from both graduates and employers would help the organisation to understand whether the course is leading to valued outcomes for the various types of students and identify ways in which the course could add further value.

### 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 **Good**.

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

Many students choose to complete the qualification with TAFE because they can study while they are working and/or study from home. The flexible course structure makes this possible because students can complete the assessment at their own pace, with an option to extend their enrolment period. While the organisation does not formally track students' employment prior to enrolment, it estimates that around 70 per cent of students are already in employment, with a number of those already working as personal assistants in a real estate company, demonstrating that it is meeting needs.

The feedback from students interviewed provides evidence that the course is relevant and up to date, and that the tutors are knowledgeable and provide them with good support. The tutors have a high level of experience in the real estate industry and use their experience and knowledge to support students and inform the course content. The tutors remain current with industry in the delivery of the REAA verifiable training course required as part of real estate agents' annual licensing requirements. In addition, all tutors hold unit standard 4098 *Use standards to assess candidate performance*.

The course content covers the unit standard requirements of the National Certificate in Real Estate (Salesperson) developed by The Skills Organisation, the industry training organisation responsible for developing qualifications and monitoring the quality of assessment for the real estate sector. Students are assessed using The Skills Organisation's assessment handbooks, which align to the unit standards. TAFE has met The Skills Organisation's moderation requirements. It has recently introduced internal moderation at monthly meetings where tutors review each other's assessments for consistency. It is recommended

that these meetings be documented to capture where improvements to the training or assessment can be made.

Students submit assessments by email, which are marked using a newly developed online marking form. The form enables tutors to provide more meaningful feedback, and since its introduction the manager has noticed that the clearer feedback has led to a reduction in resubmissions of assessments. The organisation has an internal standard of returning marked assessments within five days. Recent graduates spoken to attested to this occurring, as well as the value to them of receiving timely and useful feedback from the tutors. Assessment of two unit standard can be verified using workplace supervisors. The final assessment is assessed by the tutor face to face at the end of the course and includes questions relating to the workplace evidence.

The managers review course evaluations to identify any changes required to the teaching or assessment. A more comprehensive analysis of course evaluations, along with formalising informal feedback from students, graduates and employers for analysis would help inform whether the course structure and content are meeting these stakeholders' needs. For example, this could identify whether there are additional skills that would suit industry, such as interpersonal communication and developing checklists to support students in the workplace.

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

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

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

Learning support is provided in the form of email and Skype communications and a fortnightly evening tutorial session at head office for Auckland-based students. At enrolment, the organisation assesses the suitability of applicants and discusses course expectations. Once enrolled, the students are allocated a tutor who is their primary point of contact during the course. They are also provided with a student handbook and sent a login to the student portal where they can access online video tutorials. They can also download all course material and workbooks including key notes developed by TAFE to support them to navigate and understand the course content in the workbooks. Students are also sent a hard copy of all assessment handbooks.

It is the student's responsibility to complete the assessments within the timeframe due or contact their assigned tutor with any questions. Tutors initiate contact after the first month. Those that do not submit assessments within the due period are contacted by the tutor to identify reasons for non-completion and to develop

strategies to support them. Students are withdrawn if they do not submit anything after five months.

An online check-up one month after enrolment is being trialled to determine how well students are going and to identify what TAFE could do to better support the students after enrolment. Currently, tutors review the end-of-course evaluations and have not identified any major concerns. However, a formal analysis of student progress and student feedback would provide information on where the support is needed to remove any barriers to completion. For example, earlier contact from the tutor may help lift students' confidence and engage them earlier, enabling them to complete within the six-month timeframe. In addition, assessment information needs to be clearer at the start and in the student handbook, specifically about how the practical assessment is carried out.

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

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

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

The chief executive has a background in real estate and has employed tutors with the specialist knowledge and skills to deliver the training. The chief executive's involvement in the recent review of real estate sector qualifications provides evidence that the organisation has good knowledge of the sector standards. There is evidence to show that the chief executive provides a strong vision to staff.

The resources are up to date and there is a culture of improvement, demonstrated by staff restructuring to enhance programme delivery and student support; the promotion to programme manager of a tutor who has demonstrated leadership capability; and the introduction of an online marking tool to encourage greater consistency in assessment. With the downturn in tertiary enrolments affecting enrolments in the real estate course, the organisation has identified new course offerings to meet the needs of the sector.

The evaluation team identified a number of discrepancies between the policies and processes in the quality management system and what was occurring in practice. The quality management system needs to be reviewed to reflect current practices and legislation. In addition, the tutor handbooks need to be revised to ensure they are current and contain all relevant information for tutors about enrolment, assessment and support practices.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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

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

Overall, the organisation is keeping up to date with NZQA requirements and seeking understanding of its compliance obligations. However, there is no systematic approach for identifying and managing areas of risk to ensure the PTE is meeting all compliance requirements.

Some important compliance requirements not being met, as identified by the evaluation team, include the current site not being approved prior to moving to the site. In addition, the organisation enrolled an international student without the approval required under the Code of Practice for international students. The organisation has quickly responded to both issues. An application for site approval has been submitted, and the PTE has withdrawn the international student and refunded their course fees.

The organisation should undertake a risk assessment of the management and handling of student records to protect students' privacy when attaching assessment results to emails.

# Focus Areas

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

## 2.1 Focus area: National Certificate in Real Estate (Salesperson) (Level 4)

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

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

# Recommendations

NZQA recommends that TAFE College:

- Improve recording of student progress and achievement to identify trends and any barriers to completing the qualification within the six-month time period.
- Formalise feedback from key stakeholders, including graduates and employers, to better understand the value of the course and relevance to the sector.
- Document monthly internal moderation activities and outcomes for understanding achievement.
- Revise the quality management system and the tutor handbook to ensure both align with current policy and practices, including checking assessment practices and students' eligibility at the beginning of a course.
- Identify areas of risk and compliance and establish a system for monitoring this.

# 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](http://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/>.*

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