

# Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review

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# Introduction

This document sets out the Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) policies, criteria and procedures for the external evaluation and review of institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs). The policies and procedures for ITPs are derived from, and consistent with, those established by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for all tertiary education organisations (TEOs).

## The Legislative and Policy Environment

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 & 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) & (e) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after initial approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration is granted. However, the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for university compliance, and the Institutes of Technology and Polytechnic Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for the polytechnic sector compliance.

## The Quality Assurance Framework

These policies and criteria are gazetted under the Education Act 1989. They provide for a quality assurance framework established by NZQA and comprising four components:

- initial entry processes of course approval, accreditation to deliver a course, registration of private training establishments and accreditation to assess standards on the National Qualifications Framework
- self-assessment
- external evaluation and review
- managing the consequences of poor performance.

The quality assurance framework uses the theory and practice of evaluation in order to focus on the quality of educational outcomes. Evaluation as a discipline provides a systematic basis for answering questions about quality and value. Its use in tertiary education provides a practical approach to focusing on outcomes and key contributing processes, using both qualitative and quantitative information.

Evaluative quality assurance draws on a wide range of international theory and practice, in particular mixed method and participatory approaches, to arrive at a robust process for reaching consistent and comparable judgements.

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The following four principles underpin the quality assurance framework.

### **‘High Trust and High Accountability’**

Evaluative quality assurance operates in an environment of ‘high trust and high accountability’ throughout the tertiary sector. The relationship between government agencies and TEOs is based on good communication and collaboration.

A high trust environment recognises a TEO has autonomy over its own processes, with minimal Crown intervention, except in relation to undertaking its regulatory roles.

The government recognises that quality is the direct responsibility of each individual TEO and that the TEO is accountable for the educational outcomes it achieves and the ongoing improvement of educational performance.

In return for greater autonomy, the Crown needs to have a high level of confidence in each TEO. External evaluation and review is the mechanism that will determine those levels of confidence. However, if the performance of a TEO falls below an acceptable level, that organisation will be monitored more closely by central agencies.

### **Quality as a Dynamic Concept**

Quality is dynamic and will look different in different contexts. In tertiary education, what matters is the value that learners gain from their learning experience, the utility of their qualifications and the extent to which positive, longer-term outcomes occur.

This dynamic concept of quality is consistent with international trends<sup>1</sup> where there is a shift from quality control (meeting input standards) to quality enhancement and striving for excellence. This approach emphasises the aspects of an education experience that generate better outcomes.

Every TEO will have an understanding of quality which varies according to the purpose and goals of the organisation. In the TEO context, quality relates to how well learners actually achieve and the extent to which that achievement meets both their needs and those of the wide range of groups and individuals that have a direct, formal and often economic interest in the work of TEOs.

### **A Focus on Outcomes**

Traditional quality assurance has focused mainly on inputs, systems and activities. This assumes that doing these well provides an assurance of quality.

Evaluative quality assurance is focused on the outcomes of tertiary education and the key processes that contribute to these outcomes. A key difference from traditional approaches is that while evaluative quality assurance also looks at processes, it does so from the perspective of the utility or impact of these processes on what is done and achieved – the ‘valued outcomes’ of tertiary education.

Outcomes are affected by contextual inputs such as student characteristics, staff and resources. An important indicator of quality in practice is a TEO taking all reasonable steps to maximise learner achievement.

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<sup>1</sup> NZQA has summarised extensive international literature on quality assurance in higher and further education. These summaries are available on the NZQA website: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-providers/tertiary/>

### **Distinctive Contribution**

Evaluative quality assurance is flexible and designed to constructively respond to the distinctive contributions and character of the wide range of tertiary education organisations in New Zealand.

Like the conception of quality, it recognises that evaluation will look different in different contexts, while still retaining the required consistency of approach to evaluate performance credibly.

In particular, the approach to evaluation taken by the distinctively Māori organisations, notably Wānanga and Māori private training establishments, will directly reflect their values, beliefs and aspirations.

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# Key Components

## Self-Assessment

Self-assessment includes the ongoing processes an ITP uses to gain evidence of its own effectiveness in providing quality education.

Responsibility for effective self-assessment is organisation-wide, actively involving governors, managers, teachers and support staff. Effective self-assessment is integrated into the business so that informed understanding of what is being achieved directly influences organisational decision-making, prioritising, planning and actions. It impacts throughout the organisation to maximise organisational effectiveness at all levels.

## Key Features of Effective Self-Assessment

Processes used for self-assessment should be comprehensive, authentic, transparent, robust, and focused on the following areas.

- **Needs assessment** – the extent to which an ITP systematically determines and addresses the needs of learners, employers and the wider community.
- **Processes and practices** – the processes and practices that help to achieve outcomes e.g. the primary importance of good teaching or the role of effective learner support services.
- **Learner achievement** – the impact of educational provision on learner progress and achievement.
- **Outcomes** – what is being achieved and the value of that for learners, employers and the wider community.
- **Using what is learned** – self-assessment should result in evidence-based conclusions and decision-making that will feed into strategic and business planning, leading to positive change for the whole organisation.
- **Actual improvement** – improvements achieved are relevant and worthwhile.

## External Evaluation and Review

External evaluation and review is a periodic evaluation of an ITP to provide a statement of confidence (judgement) about the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It uses a systematic process to make independent judgements about the following.

### **Educational performance**

is the extent to which the educational outcomes achieved by the ITP represent quality and value for learners and other stakeholders. An evaluation of educational performance involves answering questions focused primarily on the quality of learning and teaching, and the achievements of learners.

### **Capability in self-assessment<sup>2</sup>**

is the extent to which the ITP uses self-assessment information to understand performance and bring about improvement. It reflects the extent to which an organisation effectively manages its accountability and improvement responsibilities.

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<sup>2</sup> The term "self evaluation" as is it commonly used within ITPs is an acceptable alternative description of this process.

External evaluation focuses most directly on the:

- extent to which the ITP systematically determines and addresses learner and wider community needs
- key processes contributing to the achievement of outcomes for learners
- quality of educational provision and its impact on learner progress and achievement
- achievement of outcomes for learners and the wider community (employers, regions, local or national interests)
- effectiveness of the ITP's self-assessment in understanding its own performance and using this for improvement.

## Using Evaluation

An evaluative approach has some particular attributes, including that it:

- provides a systematic process for answering questions focused explicitly on quality, value and importance of tertiary education outcomes and key contributing processes
- applies a 'fresh eye' to ITP activities to validate effective practices, identify areas for improvement and recognise new and innovative ways of doing things
- focuses on needs assessment and 'met needs' as the basis for reaching conclusions about educational performance
- provides a robust basis for reaching judgements about educational performance and capability in self-assessment. This involves both quantitative and qualitative information, referenced within the ITP (through expectations) and externally (through benchmarking).

In addition, good practice in external evaluation and review:

- uses open and transparent processes which can contribute to improving self-assessment in the ITP
  - actively engages the ITP using participatory approaches
  - provides opportunities for the ITP to describe and explain its processes and outcomes, and for evaluators to fully understand what is happening
  - validates the evidence an ITP uses to substantiate its conclusions about quality and effectiveness
  - uses trained and competent evaluators with a wide range of experience in evaluating tertiary education to reach valid, comparable judgments about educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
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# Undertaking External Evaluation and Review

External evaluation and review uses evaluation methods, tools and processes to reach reliable and valid judgements about educational performance and capability in self-assessment. The following sections describe:

- evaluative tools developed for external evaluation and review
- evaluation methods and processes including guidelines to inform the conduct of each stage of external evaluation and review.

## Tools for External Evaluation

The evaluative tools used in external evaluation and review are:

- key evaluation questions
- tertiary evaluation indicators
- rubrics describing the criteria used for making judgements.

### Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs)

There are six key evaluation questions that provide the structure and direction for the enquiry.

The key evaluation questions were developed as an integral part of an evaluative approach. The intention is to answer questions focused on 'what matters most' – the quality, value and importance of tertiary education in meeting the needs of learners and other relevant parties.

These high-level, open-ended questions focus on either the outcomes achieved or the key processes contributing to the outcomes.

#### Outcome Questions

These questions focus on the value of the outcomes achieved in tertiary education.

##### 1. *How well do learners achieve?*

Evidence of actual learner achievement, including, where possible, the progress or value-added component, is the primary indicator of effective educational delivery.

The outcomes include both the immediate outputs of tertiary education represented by measures such as retention rates, course and qualification completion rates and the longer term outcomes for graduates in terms of employment, further study, and the social and economic contribution to the community.

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## 2. *What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders,<sup>3</sup> including learners?*

The priority group to consider here is learners. However, other groups are also important such as employers, business, and local and wider communities. These groups are the users of the 'educational products' of the ITP. The ITP should be able to identify how they know that the needs of these users are being met through the achievement of identified, relevant and important outcomes.

### Process Questions

These questions focus on the quality and value of the key contributing processes in tertiary education.

## 3. *How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?*

Systematic needs identification and analysis provides the basis for programme design. This question focuses on the evidence of the extent to which stakeholder needs are well understood and used as a basis for the design and delivery of programmes and activities to meet those needs.

## 4. *How effective is the teaching?*

Research suggests that good teaching is the most important contributing factor to learner achievement under the control or influence of the ITP.

Teaching refers to the broader learning and teaching context. It might include the use of 'on the job' training and/or work experience, technology and distance learning strategies as well the more conventional instructional classroom-based or campus-based activities.

## 5. *How well are learners guided and supported?*

Support and guidance help to identify and respond to learner needs, and also provide a mechanism to actively engage and keep them engaged to the completion of their course and beyond.

## 6. *How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?*

A whole-of-organisation approach to managing educational performance and organisational capability is likely to ensure that organisational systems, processes, policies and practices are aligned to this effect.

## Tertiary Evaluation Indicators

The indicators provide a common understanding of the valued outcomes of tertiary education and the key processes likely to contribute to them. They are based on up-to-date research and experience in New Zealand and overseas.

The tertiary evaluation indicators point to the possible evidence to be drawn on. Evaluators use the indicators to:

- understand what might be important and needs to be looked at in the external evaluation and review
- develop enquiry questions for answering the key evaluation questions
- reach credible judgements by providing a description of 'what good looks like'
- identify strengths and areas where improvements could potentially be made.

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3 'Stakeholders' are likely to include some or all of: students, communities, employers, professional bodies and other relevant regional and national groups.

### Criteria for making judgements

The rubrics which follow contain the criteria used for making judgements relating to performance and capability in self assessment.

These rubrics provide the framework for reaching judgements about educational performance and capability in self-assessment both for focus areas and at the whole of organisation level.

### Stages of External Evaluation

An external evaluation and review involves four key stages:

1. developing the scope and the plan of enquiry
2. undertaking the enquiry on-site
3. making organisational judgements of educational performance and self-assessment capability
4. reporting the findings.

Each of these stages is explained in detail in the next part of this resource.

### ITP Quality Roles and Responsibilities for External Evaluation

The following is a general guide to the roles and responsibilities of ITP Quality in the conduct of the External Evaluation and Review (EER) of Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs). It should not be read as defining formal job descriptions for the various participants. All roles of the Board's employees are subject to formal delegation by the Board and job descriptions/contractual arrangements developed by the Executive Director.

#### ITP Quality Board

- Governance Role: Approves the processes to be used in exercising the delegation from NZQA and monitors the effectiveness of the overall process.
- Appeal Role: Considers appeals from ITPs where they wish to challenge the process used to reach the judgements.

#### Executive Director

- Advises the Board on the processes to be used in exercising the delegation from NZQA.
  - Responsible for making arrangements for scheduling of EERs, allocating the responsibilities of the Lead Evaluators and assigning Evaluators.
  - Responsible for signing off EER Reports after receiving advice from the Principal Adviser (In this context it is the responsibility of the Executive Director to confirm that the EER has been conducted according to the requirements of the Guidelines.)
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### **Principal Adviser**

- Advises the Executive Director on the development of EER processes.
- Works with the Executive Director in scheduling EERs and allocating personnel.
- Consults with the Lead Evaluators in determining the scope of EERs.
- Monitors the activities of the Lead Evaluators and their teams in the conduct of EERs and confirms with the Executive Director that they have been conducted according to the requirements of the Guidelines and that judgements being made are consistent between ITPs.

### **Lead Evaluators**

- Negotiate the scope of the EER with the ITP in consultation with the Principal Adviser.
- Manage the EER team and process in relation to their designated ITPs.
- Make judgements on performance and capability in consultation with the team of evaluators assigned to each review.
- Prepare the report.

### **Evaluators**

- Conduct conversations and contribute to judgements under the direction of the Lead Evaluator.
  - Contribute to the final report as directed by the Lead Evaluator.
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## Stage One:

### Developing the Scope and Plan for an External Evaluation and Review

#### Initiating an External Evaluation and Review

An external evaluation and review is initiated through the annual scheduling process based on:

- a maximum period of four years elapsed since the previous external evaluation and review or quality audit
- a request by the ITP e.g. following some major change in direction
- a requirement by ITP Quality e.g. where some significant quality issue has been identified by ITP Quality or a professional registration body.

The Chief Executive should designate a senior manager as the primary point of contact with ITP Quality

#### Information to be Provided by the ITP

In order to identify possible focus areas and to make a preliminary evaluation of the self assessment process the Lead Evaluator needs to understand the nature of the organisation and its strategic objectives. To achieve this the ITP is expected to provide the following information in advance of the scoping visit:

- General information on the ITP [Includes Prospectus, Investment Plan agreed with the TEC and any strategic plans developed to guide the direction of the institution.]
  - Information relating to self assessment [A portfolio of material already available within the ITP and being utilised for its self assessment processes. See Appendix 5 for details.]
  - Performance information including:
    - performance data supplied to TEC (from Single Data Return)
    - monitoring reports for degrees
    - audits or other reports from professional bodies or ITOs
    - most recent annual report
    - most recent audit or evaluation report
    - history of any complaints relating to the quality of educational performance.
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## Scoping Visit

The Lead Evaluator and the Principal Adviser will visit the ITP 4 to 6 weeks prior to the scheduled EER visit to discuss the following matters with the Chief Executive and senior managers.

- The nature of the ITP and its strategic objectives,
- the effectiveness of the ITP's self-assessment processes and results by reviewing examples provided by the ITP,
- the focus areas to be evaluated and reviewed, and
- the most effective and efficient ways of accessing the information needed to make the required judgements.

An important purpose of this preliminary engagement and review is to gain an initial understanding of the comprehensiveness and robustness of the ITP's self-assessment, as a source of evidence for the enquiry stage of the external evaluation and review.

## Determining the Scope of the Evaluation and Review

The Lead Evaluator is responsible for deciding the scope of the external evaluation and review, in consultation with the ITP and the Principal Adviser. The scope determines the focus areas of the ITP's business which will be included in the external evaluation and review. It needs to ensure:

- that the depth and breadth of the external evaluation and review is sufficient to answer the key evaluation questions and reach robust judgements about the ITP as a whole
- the best use of the available resources. The evaluation team needs to be able to assure the ITP that the integrity of the review process is not compromised by the availability of resources.

## Reviewing Available Information

### Determining the Number of Focus Areas

The number of focus areas is determined by the size and complexity of the ITP and the programmes it provides. The number of focus areas selected does not need to be statistically representative but should represent a 'reasonable range' of the ITP's activities.

### Deciding Which Focus Areas to Select

Lead Evaluators need to consider a balance between vertical and horizontal dimensions in conjunction with the factors outlined in Table 1. A selection of horizontal, vertical and mandatory focus areas make up the scope of an external evaluation and review where:

- vertical focus areas include programmes or clusters of programmes
- horizontal focus areas include processes and activities that directly or indirectly affect learners and the quality of education, across multiple programmes or organisational activities, e.g. student support services, or library
- mandatory focus areas are those identified by the Crown as such. Currently these include the support services provided for international students and the management and governance of the institution.

It is important to ensure that focus areas chosen are sufficiently representative of the range of educational activities offered by the ITP to enable valid and defensible statements of confidence to be made at the institutional level.

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Table 1: Factors to Consider in Selecting Focus Areas

GUIDING FACTORS	EXAMPLES
<b>ITP self-assessment activities, findings and priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• areas the ITP has identified as possible issues or areas where the current performance is unknown</li> <li>• comprehensiveness and veracity of the ITP self-assessment</li> <li>• important or high stakes areas of the ITP's operation</li> <li>• pilot or new initiatives, especially if they are likely to be expanded</li> <li>• areas relevant to critical learner needs</li> <li>• areas where there is a likely impact on meeting student needs and/or where a large proportion of students may be affected.</li> </ul>
<b>ITP type, size and complexity</b>	<p>Issues arising from complexity of the TEO through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the type and number of approved and accredited courses</li> <li>• number of sites</li> <li>• nature of their distinctive contribution</li> <li>• delivery methods, for example, mixed mode delivery</li> <li>• number of students enrolled.</li> </ul>
<b>Past and current performance issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• areas where there is a record of previous problems</li> <li>• areas raised in monitoring reports</li> <li>• previous low levels of confidence in the self-assessment</li> <li>• number and types of complaints to external bodies upheld</li> <li>• achievement in other credible quality assurance systems e.g. professional and registration bodies.</li> </ul>
<b>Crown, agency, professional &amp; employer needs and priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government funding priorities and concerns, national focus areas and areas of public interest</li> <li>• strategic priorities from national or regional perspectives</li> <li>• employers, industry groups and professional bodies may have specific areas of interest from EER.</li> </ul>

### Recording the Preliminary Scope

As scoping decisions need to be defensible, Lead Evaluators must record and explain the reason for selecting each specific focus area.

## Preparing the Plan for the On-Site Enquiry

The Lead Evaluator is responsible for developing the broad outline of a plan of enquiry including a timetable for the visit (in consultation with the designated senior manager). Individual team members are responsible for identifying the enquiry questions and the sources and types of information they will use to undertake the evaluation on-site.

For each focus area, the plan of enquiry involves the 'what, who and how' aspects of the evaluation process.

- What is it that the evaluators need to find out to answer the relevant questions?
- Who do the evaluators need to talk to?
- How will the necessary information be gathered?
- Individual evaluators will be given responsibility for reviewing specific focus areas and will be expected to prepare a plan of approach prior to the visit.

## How to Plan the Enquiry

For each focus area, the evaluator identifies:

- the relevant key evaluation questions
- the proposed enquiry questions
- the likely or possible sources of information that will be required.

The tertiary evaluation indicators provide useful assistance for evaluators in identifying possible enquiry questions and evidence sources. An example is provided in Appendix Four.

The Lead Evaluator will be responsible for developing (in consultation with the designated senior manager) a timetable showing a planned and logical process for each activity to be completed as part of the enquiry. The activities are:

- enquiry into the focus areas
- regular de-briefings and discussions between members of the evaluation team
- synthesising and recording judgements within each focus area
- summarising and recording the evidence and reasoning underpinning the judgements
- synthesising and recording the ITP level statements of confidence for educational performance and capability in self-assessment
- checking key emerging findings with the ITP as the external evaluation and review progresses
- a 'meeting to conclude' the on-site stage where all key findings and judgements are discussed and clarified.

Evaluators discuss with the ITP the most effective and efficient ways of accessing and understanding the information required to answer the relevant questions. To achieve the best results for both the ITP and evaluation team, evaluators encourage the ITP to explain what the people in the ITP know, and how they use that understanding to bring about improvements.

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## Stage Two: Undertaking the On-Site Enquiry

The plan of enquiry guides the on-site component of the external evaluation and review. The plan needs to be sufficiently flexible to respond to issues and questions as they arise.

The aim of the on-site component is to gather sufficient evidence to answer the relevant key evaluation questions for each focus area, using self-assessment information where possible.

Individual evaluators and the evaluation team record summaries of evidence and interpretations to reach judgements within focus areas and at the ITP level. The team maintains a clear record of their process and conclusions reached on-site before the report is drafted.

If the self-assessment information is robust, the external evaluation and review team should be able to rely on it to a significant extent to reach judgements about the ITP's performance and capability. If it is insufficient, the external evaluation and review team will need to make a more direct enquiry using other sources, including ITP staff and other relevant stakeholders. Discussion between evaluators and the ITP is important in understanding the meaning and implications of documented information and reports.

### Using Information from the ITP's Self-Assessment

The initial information source for the evaluation team is the ITP's self-assessment. The robustness and comprehensiveness of the self-assessment is reviewed to consider the scope, main findings and actions of the ITP's self-assessment activities since the last review. In particular, the level of detail with which the ITP has analysed and interpreted information, and how they have acted on it.

An ITP's ability to sufficiently answer enquiry questions will influence the level of confidence the evaluation team develop in their capability, as will major concerns about the credibility and reliability of the information. A more direct and independent approach is taken where ITP's self-assessment is inconsistent or weak, or the results are not used effectively.

Where the ITP does not have good information about its performance, or doesn't effectively use the information that it has, evaluators will encourage the ITP to work with them to gather and interpret the information that is available. It is the responsibility of the ITP to explain what is happening in its programmes and activities to the evaluators.

The preliminary scope may need to be altered part way through the external evaluation and review if unexpected circumstances arise during the on-site stage. For example, where new information or understandings emerge, or if misleading or incomplete information has been provided, possibly leading to skewed evaluation results.

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Throughout the evaluative enquiry, evaluators need to consider the quality and utility of the self-assessment information, its interpretation and its use for bringing about improvement. The methodological question in this regard is:

***In this focus area, or for this key evaluation question, how well is self-assessment information used to understand educational performance and bring about improvements?***

## Engagement On-Site

After being welcomed the evaluation team will hold an opening meeting with senior managers as determined by the ITP. This initial meeting provides an opportunity for team members to be briefed on the strategic direction and plans for self assessment of the ITP and to consider how well the ITP's self-assessment activities (as evidenced by the information in the portfolio) meet the characteristics of effective self-assessment.

The evaluation team will discuss the conduct of the evaluation and expectations of both the team and participants from the ITP.

### Evaluative conversations

Focused evaluative conversations are used to explore the meaning and context of the self-assessment information in order to answer the key evaluation questions. Evaluative conversations provide a mechanism to understand the quantitative and qualitative data and how it has been interpreted and used by the ITP, particularly as this may not be recorded formally in records and reports.

In a well-conducted evaluative conversation the external evaluators will:

- use open-ended, exploratory questions, based on the tertiary indicators, to explore the effectiveness of the ITP's self-assessment
- explore how well the ITP identifies and meets the needs of learners and other stakeholders (based on the six Key Evaluation Questions).

## Identifying Other Sources of Information

From evaluative conversations and analysis of the self-assessment, both strengths in performance and gaps in information or areas needing further clarification may be identified and lead to the need to enquire more deeply or widely. This may require the evaluation team to source raw data and/or information from students and others who meet with the evaluation team.

To ensure data is reliable and valid it should be triangulated. Emerging findings can be triangulated through:

- considering data from different sources, e.g. staff, learners, external stakeholders, documents
  - using multiple methods of enquiry, such as interviewing and reviewing documents
  - using more than one evaluator to interpret the information/data.
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Evaluators schedule formal and informal debriefing sessions to discuss the emerging answers and underpinning logic as they proceed. Agreement needs to be reached within the team on how these emerging answers will be discussed with the ITP. The Lead Evaluator is responsible for giving the ITP agreed formative feedback.

## Using the Tertiary Evaluation Indicators

The tertiary evaluation indicators are available to assist in the enquiry in order to provide:

- enquiry questions
- relevant information and sources of evidence
- relationship between the outcomes achieved and the contributing processes and activities.

The tertiary evaluation indicators can contribute to thinking about how quality and value may be identified. They allow a common understanding of what constitutes quality in the way ITPs operate and the outcomes they achieve. Using the indicators supports a consistent approach to evaluation across all ITPs and assists evaluation teams make robust judgements. Appendix One contains a table showing how specific indicators can be used as prompts for the key evaluation questions.

Information on the indicators can be found in the publication, *Tertiary Evaluation Indicators for Tertiary Education Organisations, 2009* and is also available on the NZQA website.

## Rating Answers to the Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation teams seek answers to all relevant key evaluation questions in each focus area and then draw on the multiple sources of information collected and interpreted to make an indicative rating for the question. The answers are then rated according to the criteria in Rubric 1.

If there is insufficient information to answer the key evaluation question either additional information can be sought or, if it is not available or inadequate to make a rating, a finding of 'insufficient evidence' may be recorded.

It is likely that where there is 'insufficient evidence' there are significant implications for conclusions about the ITP's capability in self-assessment.

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**Rubric 1: Criteria for Rating Answers to Key Evaluation Questions**

CRITERIA FOR RATING ANSWERS TO KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	
<b>Excellent</b>	Performance is clearly very strong or exemplary in relation to the question. Any gaps or weaknesses are not significant, have been identified and are being managed effectively.
<b>Good</b>	Performance is generally strong in relation to the question. No significant gaps or weaknesses, and less significant gaps or weaknesses have been identified and are mostly managed effectively.
<b>Adequate</b>	Performance is inconsistent in relation to the question. Some gaps or weaknesses which either have not been identified or are not yet being managed effectively. Meets minimum expectations/requirements <sup>4</sup> and students are not at risk.
<b>Poor</b>	Performance is unacceptably weak in relation to the question. There are gaps and weaknesses that have not been identified or addressed. Does not meet minimum expectations/requirements and some students may be at risk as a consequence.
<b>Insufficient evidence</b>	Evidence unavailable or of insufficient quality to determine performance.

The progression from “Poor” to “Excellent” is further elaborated in a matrix in Appendix Seven

**Establishing an Information File**

Comprehensive notes from interviews, any observations and comments on documents sighted must be recorded. The information that has been used must be documented and will form part of the evidential file collated on each external evaluation and review. Where the external evaluation and review team uses the ITP’s own data, reports etc., the document referenced should be cited in the evaluation records with a statement on how the information was used. It is not normally necessary to retain a copy of the original source of information in the evidential file.

An information file is required to support the judgements the evaluation team has made as a result of the external evaluation and review. Documents in the evidential file must meet the standards required for evidence and may be requested through the Official Information Act, 1982.

<sup>4</sup> For example, many professional or registration bodies such as those for accountancy, nursing, medical radiation technology, and social work, have expected levels of performance or professional standards that graduates are required to meet.

## Stage Three:

### Reaching Judgements on Educational Performance and Capability in Self-Assessment

Once answers to the key evaluation questions in each focus area have been obtained, and the responses rated, the evaluation team progresses to synthesising ratings into organisational level judgements on educational performance and capability in self-assessment. In this process account should be taken of the extent to which improvements are integrated into a 'whole of organisation' response.

The following section identifies the three key steps and describes each sequentially. At each step, CORE, a tool for synthesis designed for external evaluation and review is used. A step-by-step guide to using the performance criteria rubrics is contained in Appendix Two.

An external evaluation and review team must be able to demonstrate how they reached their conclusions and cite the evidence used to support their judgements.

### Steps to Reaching Organisational Level Judgements

1. Rate educational performance and capability in self-assessment in each focus area.
2. Rate educational performance and capability in self-assessment on each key evaluation question i.e. an organisational rating for the key evaluation question.
3. Reach statements of confidence in educational performance and capability in self assessment at an organisational level.

The following are important points to consider in making ratings:

- emerging findings and judgements should be tested by discussing and clarifying interpretations of the evidence with the ITP personnel most directly involved and knowledgeable about the focus area
  - evaluators should work collegially, meeting and discussing emerging conclusions, synthesising ratings and reaching statements of confidence as a team
  - indicative ratings may change as the answers to all key evaluation questions are synthesised into an overall rating. For example, the evidence might suggest high performance on a key evaluation question that is not particularly important in the context of the overall performance
  - evaluators should carefully distinguish between the rating levels and be prepared to explain and justify their conclusions to colleagues and the ITP on the basis of evidence and its analysis
  - judgements must demonstrate a consistent understanding and interpretation of evidence based on the tertiary evaluation indicators and the performance criteria set out in the relevant rubrics
  - the team should collectively reach all the major findings and judgements that will be included in the report
-

- the meeting to conclude the on-site stage of external evaluation and review should be used to explain, test and, if necessary, modify emerging conclusions with the ITP. Any modifications are made on the basis of further analysis of substantive evidence or explanation. This is not a negotiation process
- clear records of judgements, reasons and evidence are maintained, these will form the basis for writing the report.

## CORE

CORE is an approach for synthesising judgements designed specifically for external evaluation and review. Although other synthesis techniques may be appropriate, using CORE in external evaluation and review provides a consistent and transparent basis for reaching judgements.

CORE (synthesis) can be used at any stage of external evaluation requiring judgements based on multiple dimensions, data sources or types of evidence. It will be used to synthesise:

- answers from several KEQs to reach an overall judgement for a focus area
  - judgements across key evaluation questions for the organisation as a whole
  - judgements across all focus areas and from organisational level performance in answering key evaluation questions to produce statements of confidence in the educational performance or capability in self-assessment of the ITP.
-

**Table 1: The CORE Approach**

<b>Concentration of ratings</b>	Identify the mode and median ratings on the range. The ratings provide the initial baseline ratings which may be modified through the subsequent CORE steps.
<b>Outlier ratings</b>	<p>Identify any outlying levels of really low or high performance, and whether this would cause a shift in the rating.</p> <p>High or very high levels of performance in some areas do not necessarily compensate for low levels of performance in others.</p> <p>Decide the appropriate emphasis to give to the more extreme performance ratings and determine if there is sufficient reason to raise or lower the 'concentration rating' based on consideration of any extreme ratings.</p>
<b>Reflection</b>	<p>Reflect on whether the important findings have been given the appropriate weight. Determine if the 'what is so?' and 'so what?' questions have been answered. Consider if the emerging judgement is credible and reflects common sense.</p> <p>Judgement, justification, impact – are evaluators clear about the judgement being reached? Is there sufficient evidence to reach the judgement and is the evaluative interpretation of the evidence plausible? and explainable? Why does this thing matter – what is the impact on outcomes? In context, how significant is this finding?</p> <p>Consider whether there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any other reasons for adjusting the rating</li> <li>• alternative explanations for an unexpected or extreme rating.</li> </ul> <p>The external evaluation team may review the earlier analysis and interpretation of information and/or adjust the final judgement. Differences in interpretations between evaluators and/or evaluators and the TEO can be discussed and alternative explanations explored.</p>
<b>Explanation</b>	<p>Identify the most critical and relevant findings that led to the judgement and which need to be reported.</p> <p>The report should contain sufficient information to substantiate the judgements that have been made and explain why the findings are important.</p>

The matrix in Appendix 7 provides a guide to the appropriate levels of concern in terms of impact and significance.

## Rating Educational Performance and Capability in Self-Assessment in Each Focus Area

The ratings for the key evaluation questions are synthesised into an overall judgement in the focus area using CORE. The descriptors for the ratings of educational performance in focus areas provided below in Rubric 2.

### Rubric 2: Criteria for Rating Educational Performance in Focus Areas

	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR FOCUS AREAS
<b>Excellent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highly effective focus area in terms of both contributing processes and outcomes.<sup>5</sup></li> <li>Comprehensively meets the needs of learners/stakeholders.</li> <li>Any gaps or weaknesses have been identified, are not significant and are being managed effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>Good</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective processes and outcomes.</li> <li>Generally meets the needs of learners and relevant groups.</li> <li>No significant gaps or weaknesses, and less significant gaps or weaknesses have been identified and are mostly being managed effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistently meets needs of learners and relevant groups i.e. meets some needs and not others.</li> <li>Some gaps or weaknesses that have mostly been identified and are being addressed effectively.</li> <li>Meets minimum expectations/requirements<sup>6</sup> as far as can be determined and no students are at risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus area is ineffective, or has serious weaknesses.</li> <li>Weaknesses not identified or not being addressed effectively and still require significant improvement to meet minimum expectations/requirements. Students may be at risk.</li> </ul>

### Rating Capability in Self-Assessment in a Focus Area

Once a judgement about educational performance in a focus area has been reached, the following question is asked and the response rated using the criteria in Rubric 3: "In this focus area, how well is self-assessment information used to understand educational performance and bring about improvements?"

<sup>5</sup> Refer tertiary evaluation indicators and the characteristics of effective self-assessment.

<sup>6</sup> For example, many professional or registration bodies such as those for accountancy, nursing, medical radiation technology, and social work, have expected levels of performance or professional standards that graduates are required to meet.

**Rubric 3: Criteria for Capability in Self-Assessment in Focus Areas and Across KEQs**

	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR CAPABILITY IN SELF-ASSESSMENT
<b>Excellent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear evidence of effective self-assessment<sup>7</sup> used to gain a comprehensive (full) understanding of educational performance and bring about wide-ranging, worthwhile improvements.</li> <li>• Any gaps or weaknesses in self-assessment are not significant and are being addressed effectively.</li> <li>• In this context, self-assessment is clearly part of a coherent and comprehensive approach across the TEO.</li> </ul>
<b>Good</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good evidence of effective self-assessment used to understand educational performance and bring about many worthwhile improvements.</li> <li>• No significant gaps or weaknesses in self-assessment, and less significant gaps or weaknesses are mostly being addressed effectively.</li> <li>• In this context, self-assessment is part of a reasonably coherent and comprehensive approach across the TEO.</li> </ul>
<b>Adequate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-assessment is of inconsistent quality and/or used inconsistently to understand educational performance and bring about improvements. Some improvements may be occurring but not in a systematic manner.</li> <li>• Some significant gaps or weaknesses in self-assessment but being addressed. Not yet clear if improvements are sufficiently effective.</li> <li>• In this context, self-assessment is not part of a coherent and comprehensive approach across the TEO.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-assessment is ineffective, or has serious weaknesses.</li> <li>• Weaknesses not being addressed effectively or still require significant improvement to meet minimum expectations.</li> </ul>

## Organisational Rating

### Rating Performance on Key Evaluation Questions across the Organisation

The ratings for the key evaluation questions in individual focus areas are synthesised into an overall rating, across all focus areas, sampled across the organisation (using CORE). For example, if there are ten focus areas, the ten individual ratings for KEQ 1 are synthesised into an overall rating for that question, repeated for KEQ 2, and so on for all six key evaluation questions. The descriptors for the ratings of performance in individual key evaluation questions are provided in Rubric 1.

## Rating Capability in Self-Assessment across Focus Areas

Rubric 3 is also used to rate capability in self-assessment based on the key evaluation questions in all focus areas across the organisation. This is done by answering the methodological question:

*In the context of the key evaluation question across the ITP, how well is self-assessment information used to understand educational performance and bring about improvements?*

Synthesising the answers and ratings across the sample of focus areas is an important stage. It means that evaluators can discuss transparently the evidence and reasoning leading to the judgements with both the evaluation team and the ITP.

In some circumstances, during the process of synthesising performance it may become apparent that other areas of enquiry, beyond the formal scope, are needed to be made to confirm emerging findings. For example, if the rating on one key evaluation question across four focus areas is variable, evaluators might want to undertake some straightforward further enquiry into one or two other areas of the ITP's operation to assist them reach a final judgement.

## Reaching Statements of Confidence on Organisational Educational Performance and Capability on Self-Assessment

### Statements of Confidence

The organisational level judgements reached through external evaluation and review are expressed as statements of confidence.

The validity of these judgements will depend on the sample agreed in the scoping exercise being sufficiently representative to support the conclusions.

Each statement of confidence is derived from two lines of synthesis. One synthesises judgements across the overall ratings in the focus areas. The other synthesises the judgements for organisational ratings across key evaluation questions. One line of synthesis is used to confirm or question the other as a means of ensuring maximum validity of the results.

Once an organisational statement of confidence is reached, the evaluation team apply the reflection and explanation steps of CORE to ensure the level of confidence is credible and can be robustly explained.

### Reaching a Statement of Confidence in Educational Performance

The overall statement of confidence in educational performance is derived from two lines of synthesis (using CORE and rubric 4):

- ratings across the key evaluation questions at organisational level
- ratings across the educational performance in focus areas.

The intention is that each line of synthesis reinforces, or calls into question, the conclusions reached from the other. Evaluators confirm or adjust the rating in light of the second rating to reach a final statement of confidence about educational performance in the ITP.

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**Rubric 4: Criteria for Judgements about Organisational-level Educational Performance**

<b>LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE ABOUT EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE AT AN ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL</b>
<b>Highly Confident</b>	<p><u>ALL</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and comprehensive evidence that the organisation is meeting all of the most important needs of learners and other relevant groups.</li> <li>• Clear evidence of highly effective processes that contribute to learning and other important outcomes.</li> <li>• No significant gaps or weaknesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Confident</b>	<p><u>ALL</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good evidence that the organisation is meeting many of the most important needs of learners and other relevant groups.</li> <li>• Good evidence of adequate quality in the processes that contribute to learning and other important outcomes.</li> <li>• The body of evidence may not be comprehensive and/or clear enough OR the magnitude or range of outcomes may not be sufficient to justify a rating of highly confident.</li> <li>• Areas of weakness are not serious and are effectively managed.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Yet Confident</b>	<p><u>ALL</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least some evidence that the organisation is meeting the most critical needs of learners and other relevant groups.</li> <li>• At least some evidence of adequate quality in the processes that contribute to learning and other important outcomes.</li> <li>• EITHER, evidence of important outcomes and/or quality contributing processes is too patchy to justify a rating of confident OR evidence is sound but shows several important (but not critical) gaps or weaknesses.</li> <li>• Adequate plans are in place or are being actively developed to address areas of weakness but needed improvements in outcomes, outputs and/or their contributing processes are not yet fully apparent.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Confident</b>	<p><u>ANY ONE OR MORE</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient evidence that the organisation is meeting the most important needs of its learners.</li> <li>• Evidence shows that some important needs are not being met to an acceptable level and that as a consequence students are being placed at risk.</li> <li>• Plans to address gaps and weaknesses in educational programming, delivery or outcomes are insufficient, nonexistent or not being given high enough priority.</li> </ul>

### **Reach a Statement of Confidence in an ITP's Capability in Self-Assessment**

To reach a statement of confidence in an ITP's capability in self-assessment, two ratings are taken into account. The first is the ratings in the focus areas and the second is the organisation ratings on the key evaluation questions across the focus areas.

CORE is used to synthesise the ratings for capability in self-assessment on firstly the focus areas and then Rubric 5 is used to reach a statement of confidence.

Next, a statement of confidence is reached by synthesising the capability in self-assessment ratings on the key evaluation questions across the focus areas using Rubric 5.

The primary rating is confirmed or adjusted in light of the secondary rating to reach a final statement of confidence about educational performance in the ITP.

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**Rubric 5: Criteria for Judgements about Organisational-level Capability in Self-Assessment**

LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE	DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE ABOUT ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY IN SELF-ASSESSMENT
<b>Highly Confident</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation has effective<sup>8</sup> self-assessment that evaluates all of its high priority programmes and activities on an ongoing basis, along with periodic reviews of other focus areas.</li> <li>• The quality and validity of the self-assessment information reviewed as part of the EER is consistently high.</li> <li>• Findings are used insightfully to make comprehensive improvements.</li> </ul>
<b>Confident</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation has a wide-ranging self-assessment system in place that evaluates the majority of its high priority programmes and activities on an ongoing basis, along with periodic reviews of other focus areas.</li> <li>• The quality and validity of the self-assessment information reviewed as part of the EER is generally good, although there may be some important areas where quality and validity should be strengthened in order to help justify a highly confident rating.</li> <li>• Self-assessment is purposeful and findings are used to make useful improvements.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Yet Confident</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation has a self-assessment system in place that evaluates a reasonable proportion of its high priority programmes and activities.</li> <li>• The quality and validity of most of the self-assessment information reviewed as part of the EER is generally acceptable to good, although some important areas need to be strengthened in order to help justify a confident rating.</li> <li>• There is evidence of at least some use being made of findings to create improvements.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Confident</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The self-assessment system is narrow and/or covers too few of the organisation's high priority programmes and activities; or</li> <li>• coverage and prioritisation may be adequate but the validity or utility of evidence or conclusions are too weak to usefully inform decisions or improvements. There are critical weaknesses evident in the ITP's capability in self-assessment.</li> </ul>

## Meeting to Conclude the On-Site Stage of External Evaluation and Review

A meeting with the ITP is held at the end of the on-site stage to discuss and clarify key emerging findings and the basis on which they were reached. This meeting is intended to cover all significant findings likely to appear in the written report. The meeting itself, however, is not an 'oral report' in that it provides probably the last opportunity for findings and judgements to be discussed directly. The meeting helps ensure the written report contains no significant surprises and that findings and judgements are accepted and used constructively by the ITP.

The meeting should include the designated senior manager as well as the Chief Executive and the Chair of Council and other members of the ITP at the discretion of the CEO.

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# Stage Four:

## The External Evaluation and Review Report

### Purpose

The purpose of external evaluation and review reports is to clearly set out the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, including the reasons for the conclusions being reached.

The report is intended to support both accountability and improvement in ITPs. It has multiple audiences which include:

- potential and enrolled students who want to know the level of confidence they can have in the quality of the programmes and the nature of the learning environment that the ITP provides
- the Tertiary Education Commission which needs to know the level of confidence it can have in the ITP's educational performance and capability for investment purposes
- the ITP itself which gains a more in-depth understanding about what is working well, what can be improved and/or possible opportunities for innovation for the organisation as a whole
- professional bodies which gain information about the quality of TEOs in which they have an interest.

The report is the product of external evaluation and review and is intended to be used by the ITP to maintain or strengthen its self-assessment and educational design, delivery, assessment and evaluation processes. The findings and judgements in an external evaluation and review report will also inform the scope of the next external evaluation and review when it is scheduled.

### Style

The style of external evaluation and review reports is intended to be succinct and evaluative. The report will present significant findings including:

- strengths and areas for improvement for the organisation as a whole
- judgements, justifications, and impacts (“what we think, why we think it, why it matters”)
- sufficient information for the ITP to use for ongoing improvement
- an explanation of any important implications for the ITP and/or relevant groups.

Information may be presented in tables and graphs to summarise information and clarify findings.

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## Report Outline

A series of standard statements (refer Appendix 3) in italicised text will be included in each report about the:

- overall purpose of the report
- basis for external evaluation and review
- processes used to derive the findings in the report
- purpose of individual sections of the report
- regulatory basis for external evaluation and review
- future actions.

## General Conclusion

The report's general conclusion:

- presents the statement of confidence about educational performance, including a summary of the key findings and reasoning leading to this conclusion
- presents the statement of confidence about capability in self-assessment, including a summary of the key findings and reasoning leading to this conclusion.

## ITP in context

The description of the ITP will contain:

- a statement of the location, size (by EFTSs), sites main characteristics of the ITP
- previous quality assurance history.

## Scope of external evaluation and review

- What the main focus areas are.
- How they were selected.
- Contextual details on focus areas.
- Recent significant changes (if any) to this ITP.

## Conduct of external evaluation and review

- Reference to evaluative method followed (and NZQA weblink).
  - Composition of EER team, list of those consulted at the ITP, other sources of evidence used, time spent on the site.
  - Note that as part of the quality assurance process the ITP has had a chance to comment on the report and submissions have been considered before the report was finalised.
-

## Findings

This section provides a picture of the ITP's performance as an organisation in terms of the outcomes achieved and the key contributing processes. Performance judgements are based on the answers to key evaluation questions across the focus areas sampled. This section also provides a judgement about the extent to which the organisation uses self-assessment information to understand its own performance and bring about improvements, i.e. capability in self-assessment.

The key evaluation questions are explicitly answered with an outline of the reasoning and most important evidence behind the findings, supported with examples of exceptional performance identified in the focus areas. Exceptional performance may be either strong performance or weak performance.

Ratings (*excellent, good, adequate, poor*) are reported for performance in relation to the key evaluation question along with a rating for capability in self-assessment.

Ratings for each focus area are included as a matrix in Appendix 2 of the report, along with an opportunity to provide further comments for each of the focus areas.

## Recommendations

Recommendations may be included depending on the nature of the findings and on the level of confidence evaluation teams have in the ITP's ability to self-manage areas for improvement.

## Further Actions

A statement is included explaining any future actions that might be taken by ITP Quality.

## Draft Reports

ITPs will have the opportunity to comment on the report before final sign-off by ITP Quality and subsequent publication on the relevant website.

This provides a further opportunity to ensure that the report does not contain factual errors and that the judgements and statements of confidence are reasonable and based on substantive evidence.

ITP Quality is responsible for the findings and conclusions in the final signed-off report.

Although it is preferable that there is agreement on the findings and conclusions, they do not have to be agreed with the ITP.

Where there is disagreement, a statement to this effect may be included in the general conclusion section of the report. ITP Quality retains the right to include all findings and conclusions considered relevant, provided it is confident of both the underlying evidence and the logic of the judgements reached.

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# Appendix One:

## How the Tertiary Evaluation Indicators Relate to the Key Evaluation Questions

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	TYPES OF INDICATORS THAT MAY BE USED TO HELP ANSWER THE KEQS
<p><b>How well do learners achieve?</b></p>	<p>Learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete formal qualifications</li> <li>• acquire useful skills and knowledge and develop their cognitive abilities</li> <li>• improve their well being and enhance their abilities and attributes.</li> </ul> <p>Graduates gain employment, engage with further study and/or contribute to their local and wider communities.</p>
<p><b>What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is created and disseminated through applied research.</li> <li>• Community/iwi development is supported.</li> <li>• TEO actively engages with communities.</li> <li>• Relevant groups are clearly identified and engagement is appropriate and ongoing.</li> <li>• Relevant groups are informed of developments, barriers and possibilities.</li> <li>• Effective engagement is encouraged at all levels in the TEO.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?</b></p>	<p>Programme design is reviewed regularly to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporate ongoing needs analysis</li> <li>• maintain relevance to interested groups and communities</li> <li>• reflect changes in subject content</li> <li>• incorporate relevant teaching practice and technologies</li> <li>• ensure resources are adequate and appropriate.</li> </ul>

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	TYPES OF INDICATORS THAT MAY BE USED TO HELP ANSWER THE KEQS
<b>How effective is the teaching?</b>	<p>Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• environments are planned and structured for the benefit and needs of learners</li> <li>• activities reflect the needs of, and engage learners</li> <li>• is enhanced for degree students by their teachers' use of research experience</li> <li>• activities provide opportunities for learners to apply knowledge and skills in a range of relevant contexts</li> <li>• is assessed through assessment processes which are valid, sufficient, fair and transparent and which provide learners and teachers with useful feedback on progress.</li> </ul>
<b>How well are learners guided and supported?</b>	<p>Learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are provided with comprehensive and timely study information and advice</li> <li>• are provided with continued support to assist them achieve their goals</li> <li>• experience an appropriate range of responses to their well-being needs</li> <li>• experience an inclusive learning environment</li> <li>• and teachers relate effectively</li> <li>• experience minimal barriers to learning.</li> </ul>
<b>How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?</b>	<p>The senior managers and governors of the TEO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anticipate and respond to change</li> <li>• use results of self-assessment constructively for improvement</li> <li>• balance innovation and continuity</li> <li>• establish a clear organisational purpose and direction</li> <li>• provide effective leadership</li> <li>• allocate resources to support learning, teaching and research</li> <li>• ensure all policies and practices are legal and ethical</li> <li>• value their staff and put in place appropriate and effective processes for their recruitment and development.</li> </ul>

## Appendix Two:

### A Step-By-Step Guide to Using the Performance Criteria Rubrics

Here are the steps involved in using the criteria and some instructions for each one.

1. In each focus area, answer all six key evaluation questions (if possible) through the enquiry process.
  2. Rate the answer to each KEQ according to the criteria in Rubric 1.
  3. Using CORE, synthesise an overall rating for educational performance in the focus area according to the criteria in Rubric 2.
  4. Based on the steps so far, use the criteria in Rubric 3 to answer and rate the self-assessment question: *in the context of this focus area, how well is self-assessment information used to understand educational performance and bring about improvements?*
  5. Complete this process for all focus areas.
  6. Using CORE, synthesise an overall rating for performance in each key evaluation question across the organisation according to the criteria in Rubric 1.
  7. Based on the ratings for key evaluation questions across the organisation, use the criteria in Rubric 3 to answer the self-assessment question: *in the context of this KEQ across the ITP, how well is self-assessment information used to understand educational performance and bring about improvements?*
  8. Complete this process for all key evaluation questions.
  9. The overall statement of confidence in educational performance is derived from two lines of synthesis (using CORE and Rubric 4):
    - ratings across the key evaluation questions at organisational level
    - ratings across the educational performance in focus areas.

The intention is that each line of synthesis reinforces, or calls into question, the conclusions reached from the other. Evaluators confirm or adjust the rating in light of the second rating to reach a final statement of confidence about educational performance in the ITP.
  10. Using CORE, synthesise an ITP statement of confidence for capability in self-assessment in the organisation using the criteria in rubric 5. For capability in self-assessment the first rating is from the ratings in the focus areas and the second rating is the organisation ratings on the key evaluation questions across the focus areas (the order of the ratings is not critical).

Confirm or adjust the primary rating in light of the secondary rating to reach a final statement of confidence about capability in self-assessment in the ITP.
  11. Repeat the last two steps of CORE – reflection and explanation – to finalise all judgements and confirm records of conclusions and reasons in the relevant file records.
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## Appendix Three:

### Standard Text to Be Included in All Reports

#### Purpose of the Report

*The purpose of this report is to provide a public statement about the Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic's (ITP's) 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 ITP itself for quality improvement purposes.*

*External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission through the investment plan.*

#### Basis for External Evaluation and Review

*Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 & 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) & (e) of the Act.*

*Institutes of Technology and Polytechnic Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for the polytechnic sector compliance.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the ITP Quality Board. Statements of confidence are reported as highly confident, confident, not yet confident or not confident.*

*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 public information and are available from the ITP Quality website ([www.itpq.ac.nz](http://www.itpq.ac.nz)).*

#### Findings

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

#### Answers to Key Evaluation Questions Across the Organisation

*This section provides a picture of the ITP's overall educational performance as an organisation. The ratings for individual key evaluation questions are aggregated and reported at the ITP level across all of the focus areas evaluated.*

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## Overall Performance in Focus Areas.

*This section reports on overall performance in each of the focus areas (including the mandatory focus areas).*

*The level of achievement of the most significant outcomes and contributing processes are described. Findings in response to individual key evaluation questions are reported and explained if exceptional performance is identified.*

## Future Actions

A statement is included explaining any future actions that might be taken by ITP Quality.

In cases where ITP Quality has been able to express confidence or high confidence in both the educational performance and capability in self assessment the statement will read:

*“The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with ITP Quality’s regular scheduling policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report”*

If the statement of confidence about educational performance and/or capability in self-assessment is *not yet confident* or *not confident*, the statement will read;

*Because ITP Quality is [not yet confident/not confident in (ITP name)’s educational performance and/or not yet confident/not confident in (ITP name)’s capability in self assessment, ITP Quality will contact (ITP name) within 20 working days of this report to agree upon an appropriate quality improvement plan.*

*The plan is intended to enable (ITP name) to work towards achieving a judgment of at least Confident in relation to educational performance and/or capability in self assessment. Implementation of this plan will be monitored by ITP Quality. When the plan has been completed, or at any time deemed necessary for ITP Quality, another external evaluation and review will be scheduled.*

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## Appendix Four:

### Generic Example of Developing a Plan of Enquiry

Here are key evaluation questions one and two for a focus area, such as an academic programme (this example combines these two closely associated questions):

- How well do learners achieve?
- What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

Here are some possible enquiry questions:

- What is the extent and quality of the information on learner progress and achievement?
- How well is the information interpreted to understand learner achievement in terms of 'met needs'?
- What use is made of this understanding for programme design or improvement purposes?
- What evidence is there of actual improvements in shorter term outcomes/outputs (e.g. course and qualification completion)?
- How well does the ITP make the connection between longer term outcomes and the shorter term outcomes (outputs) of tertiary study?
- How well does the ITP determine the value of the longer term outcomes in terms of employers and business, possible further study or positive contribution to local and wider communities?
- How well does the ITP use self-assessment information to understand and improve performance in this area?

Here are some possible sources of evidence (refer to the tertiary evaluation indicators):

- Employment outcomes, career advancement, creative enterprise, voluntary work, community/iwi participation, further achievement in scholarship, research, publications or awards? (taken from alumni information, graduate surveys, employer surveys, economic trend data, societal trend data, census data, etc) .
  - Trends from learner assessment information, improving trends over time that are crossed referenced to other relevant programmes and ITP's, evidence that demonstrates that the ITP uses benchmarking information to revise/set its goals and expectations appropriately.
  - Evidence of positive changes in literacy and numeracy, concentration and study skills, communication and inter-personal skills.
  - Trends from learner assessment information including learner progress/educational value added.
  - Evidence of positive changes in motivation, life skills, self-management, physical health, cultural awareness, sense of belonging, community engagement, family relationships.
  - Evidence drawn from publications, citations, research outputs, consultancies, presentations, co-operative ventures, new technologies, new or improved industry/business processes and products, community/iwi initiatives.
  - Trends in economic data, employment statistics, health statistics, education participation and outcomes, census data.
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## Appendix Five:

### Self Assessment Portfolio

It is not intended that this be a specially written report but rather a collation of material already available within the ITP and currently being utilised for its own self assessment processes.

The portfolio should include, but not be limited to:

- the policies and procedures which guide the self assessment process
- examples of planned self assessment activities undertaken since the last EER
- self assessment activities planned for the next year
- actions taken as a result of learnings produced through the self assessment process
- actions taken to ensure that learnings produced through the self assessment process lead to institutional quality improvement.

## Appendix Six:

### Criteria for Rating Answers to Key Evaluation Questions

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	ADEQUATE	POOR
<b>General Performance</b>	Exemplary	Good to Very Good	Acceptable	Not acceptable
<b>Identification of gaps or weaknesses</b>	All significant gaps or weaknesses identified	All significant gaps or weaknesses identified	Most significant gaps or weaknesses identified	A number of gaps or weaknesses not identified
<b>Management of weaknesses</b>	All being managed	Most being managed	Some significant not yet being managed	Inadequate management of weaknesses
<b>Risk to students</b>	No risk to students	No risk to students	No risk to students	Some students at risk

## Appendix Seven:

### Criteria for Making Judgements about Performance and Capability

Rubric 4: Criteria for Judgments about Organisational-level Educational Performance

	<b>HIGH CONFIDENCE</b>	<b>CONFIDENCE</b>	<b>NOT YET CONFIDENT</b>	<b>NOT CONFIDENT</b>
	<b>All of</b>	<b>All of</b>	<b>All of</b>	<b>Any of</b>
<b>Needs of learners and other stakeholders</b>	Clear evidence of all needs being met	Clear evidence of all critical needs and most others being met	Evidence not clear and/or most critical needs being met	Insufficient evidence and/or some critical needs not being met
<b>Effectiveness of processes contributing to outcomes</b>	Highly effective	Generally effective	Evidence not clear and/or processes only adequate	Insufficient evidence and/or some processes not adequate
<b>Significance of gaps and weaknesses</b>	No significant gaps or weaknesses	Some gaps or weaknesses, but being addressed	Some gaps or weaknesses, not all being addressed	A number of gaps or weaknesses which are not being addressed
<b>Risk to students</b>	No risks to students	No risk to students	No significant risks to students	Some students at risk

### Rubric 5: Criteria for Judgments about Organisational-level Capability for Self Assessment

	<b>HIGH CONFIDENCE</b>	<b>CONFIDENCE</b>	<b>NOT YET CONFIDENT</b>	<b>NOT CONFIDENT</b>
	<b>All of</b>	<b>All of</b>	<b>All of</b>	<b>Any of</b>
<b>Range of Self assessment activities</b>	Includes all high priority programmes and activities	Includes most high priority programmes and activities	Reasonable proportion of programmes and activities included	Narrow scope with few high priority programmes and activities included
<b>Quality and validity of information</b>	Consistently high	Generally good, some opportunities for improvement	Acceptable, but need for some important areas to be strengthened	Too weak to usefully inform decisions
<b>Analysis leading to judgements and actions</b>	Findings used insightfully	Purposeful	Opportunities are provided	Inadequate opportunities for making judgements
<b>Improvements resulting</b>	Comprehensive improvements made	Findings being used for improvement	Some use made for improvements	Little or no use made for improvements

### CORE Process: Rating for Levels of Concern

	<b>SMALL NUMBER ENROLLED</b>	<b>LARGE NUMBER ENROLLED</b>
<b>High impact effect</b>	Medium concern	Major concern
<b>Low impact effect</b>	Minimum concern	Medium concern

