

# **Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality**

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## **Academic Audit**

## **Summary Report**

**Wellington Institute of Technology**  
(March 2007)



## **INTRODUCTION:**

Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec) is a major provider of trades, technical and professional education, to meet the learning needs of students and the workforce productivity needs of those who employ them. It focuses on the mid-level skills vital to the New Zealand economy and industries such as manufacturing, tourism, construction, engineering, service industries and trades.

WelTec's vision is: to be the first choice of customers for applied learning and development through innovation and partnership. Its mission is: to be an internationally recognised centre of excellence in vocational education and to contribute to the economic and social growth of the Wellington region, New Zealand and the global knowledge economy.

Formed in 2001 from the merger of Hutt Valley Polytechnic (established in 1906) and Central Institute of Technology, WelTec currently offers six first degree programmes, about 30 diploma programmes and over 80 certificate programmes. In 2006, the Institute achieved 4261 EFTS of which 2648 were Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funded, 863 were funded by industry training organisations (ITOs), 318 were international and 407 were Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) funded. The target for 2007 is a total of 4277 EFTS, including 2767 TEC funded, 851 ITO funded, 285 international and 335 STAR. The approximate EFTS split between centres is likely to be:



WelTec is based in Petone where it delivers from several sites that are in close proximity to each other. The Institute also has a Central Wellington site in Church Street, where about 600EFTS are delivered, and small campuses in Auckland (about 70 EFTS) and Christchurch (about 25 EFTS) which offer Alcohol and Drug programmes and Counselling programmes (Auckland campus only).

A major policy review project is close to completion. The new Business Policy Manual (BPM) will soon provide comprehensive coverage of all Institute-wide policies and procedures.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:**

The first full audit of the Wellington Institute of Technology was conducted in October 2002 by NZPPC (the predecessor of ITP Quality) in accordance with NZQA's delegation of powers under Section 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989. Acting on the recommendation of the audit team, the NZPPC Board awarded the WelTec Quality Assured Status for four years. A Mid Term Review conducted by ITP Quality in August 2005 confirmed that WelTec was using effective internal audit and review processes to help maintain academic quality consistent with its Quality Assured Status.

The second full audit, to which this report refers, was undertaken in accordance with the agreed schedule of audits by ITP Quality to determine the continuation of Quality Assured Status. The

Audit was conducted against the twelve ITP New Zealand Academic Quality Standards, over four days in March 2007. A team of four ITP Quality academic auditors sampled twelve programmes of study, delivered by four centres and the Academic Directorate. WelTec's support services were also audited.

WelTec is clearly committed to attaining the highest standards of excellence in education, training and research, with due concern for the public interest and the wellbeing of students attending the institution. This is particularly evident in its Profile 2007-2009 and in the WelTec Sustainable Business Case which was recently approved by Cabinet. A culture of continuous improvement was evident throughout the Institute.

The Institute is committed to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the audit team found evidence of this commitment at both strategic and operational levels of the organisation.

WelTec has sound, effective processes for the development, approval and review of its qualifications, programmes and courses. Stakeholders are regularly consulted, and are involved in the development and review of programme outcomes. The processes used to identify and allocate financial, administrative, human and physical resources ensure that programme and course outcomes are achieved and health and safety requirements are met. Admission processes were found to be effective and a comprehensive range of student support services is provided.

The auditors were impressed by the student-focus, competence and commitment of staff at all levels of the organisation. WelTec's teaching and learning practices are educationally sound and appropriate to the programmes of study. Off-site workplace components are effective and integrated into curricula. Assessment and moderation systems ensure the fair, valid and consistent assessment of student achievement, and reporting and certification systems meet the requirements of students and external stakeholders.

WelTec has clear and substantive goals for research, with a particular emphasis on practical and applied research and linkages with industry. Internal academic audits, and improvements arising from audits, are effectively managed.

The audit team found that corrective action was necessary to increase the effectiveness of WelTec's staff performance management and development processes. Appropriate actions were agreed with the institute.

Seven areas of good practice were highlighted by the auditors:

- The support provided by academic coordinators
- WelTec's Academic Plan 2006-2011
- Well-maintained central programme approval records and Academic Board minutes
- WelTec's Personal Education Plan system for students
- The tracking, analysing and reporting of the complaints that are recorded centrally
- WelTec's Teaching and Learning policy
- Student study guides that identify Library resources supporting each programme

Ten recommendations were made and these are summarized below:

- That the authority to admit students be expressly delegated to those staff members authorizing the admission of students

- That the Annual Academic Report template be modified
- That the procedure used to obtain informed consent in one programme be amended
- That staff induction processes be reviewed
- That the evaluations policy and procedure be updated
- That a standard template for memorandums of agreement be adopted
- That staff be encouraged to complete postgraduate research qualifications in a timely manner and use them to generate quality assured research outputs
- That full bibliographic information be required when reporting research publications, and that the distinction between research and other activities be clarified
- That the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students be internally audited again in the near future
- That the current internal audit process be reviewed

The audit team concluded that Wellington Institute of Technology continues to meet all twelve ITP New Zealand Academic Quality Standards, and recommended that the ITP Quality Board confirm the Institute's Quality Assured Status for a further period of four years.

**BOARD DECISION (11 June 2007)**

**That Wellington Institute of Technology be awarded Quality Assured status for a further four years, consistent with ITP Quality requirements.**