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External Evaluation and Review Report

Aspire2 International Hospitality &
Healthcare Limited

Date of report: 1 July 2020

About Aspire2 International Hospitality & Healthcare Limited

Aspire2 International Hospitality & Healthcare trains international students in hospitality management, cookery and health services management to gain employment and effectively work in those sectors.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	20 Hobson Street, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	581 (581 equivalent international full-time students (EFTS)) in October 2019)
Number of staff:	53 full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	Aspire2 International Hospitality & Healthcare Ltd
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Highly Confident in the educational performance and Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Aspire2 International Hospitality & Healthcare Limited at the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2015. ¹
Scope of evaluation: ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International student support and wellbeing• New Zealand Diploma in Hospitality Management (Level 5)• New Zealand Diploma in Hospitality Management (Level 6)
MoE number:	7530
NZQA reference:	C38412
Dates of EER visit:	26-28 November 2019

¹ The PTE has changed its name and merged with two other organisations since the last EER.

² NZQA approval for the Diploma in Health Services Management (Level 7) was withdrawn in September 2019. Therefore, it was not a formal focus area of enquiry for this EER.

Summary of Results

Aspire2's health services management programme has not met the important needs of students and industry, while the hospitality management programmes have met many of these needs.³ This undermines NZQA's overall confidence in the PTE's educational performance. Self-assessment has addressed the majority of performance areas and has recently improved, giving sufficient confidence in self-assessment practice going forward.

Not Yet Confident in educational performance

- Around 90 per cent of students gained qualifications from 2016-2018. These are high completion rates, but significant weaknesses in assessment and moderation undermine the validity of the 2016 results of the Diploma in Health Services Management (Level 7).

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- The Diploma in Health Services Management has not matched the important needs of students and industry. Graduates did not gain management related employment. The PTE did not meet multiple NZQA rules. Some gaps were serious. The PTE rectified many, but not all key issues. NZQA therefore removed programme approval in September 2019.
- The level 5 and 6 hospitality management programmes match many of the important needs of students and industry. Most students work in the industry and some progress to related roles. Experienced tutors train students in on-site hospitality environments. The PTE has improved these programmes through generally strong self-assessment.
- Pastoral care is effective, supporting high proportions of students to complete their studies. Academic support is generally strong. The PTE managed compliance effectively, except for the serious level 7 diploma gaps noted above.

³ Level 7 health services management students made up 56 per cent of total enrolments from 2016-2018, while the Level 5 and 6 hospitality management students made up just 22 per cent. See Appendix 1 for further details.

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- The leadership effectively supported the hospitality management programmes. It addressed some of the serious flaws in the health care management programme. More generally, academic leadership, data quality, monitoring and reporting have considerably improved in the past 12 months.

Key evaluation question findings⁴

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>International students have enrolled on vocational programmes to prepare them for work in hospitality management, as well as cookery and health services management. Ninety per cent of students gained recognised hospitality management qualifications from 2016-18.⁵ There are similar completion rates for cookery and health services management. While completion rates have been consistently high, significant flaws in assessment and moderation practice in health services management during 2016 reduces NZQA's confidence in those results.⁶ This EER did not identify similar issues in the hospitality management programmes.</p> <p>The PTE has analysed cohort, campus and programme trends and used this information to inform corrective actions. Data quality, monitoring and periodic reporting to management and governance have significantly improved in the past year. The PTE now has a comprehensive understanding of the students' educational achievement.</p>
Conclusion:	There are consistently high levels of completions. However, significant assessment and moderation flaws undermined the validity of some results. The PTE's understanding and use of achievement data is now stronger and clearly improved.

⁴ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

⁵ Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

⁶ This impacted one third (475 students) of all completions from 2016-2018. (Refer to Appendix 1).

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

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The core purpose of this PTE is to produce work-ready graduates to gain relevant work in New Zealand industry. The outcomes have been inconsistent.</p> <p>Nearly all New Zealand Diploma in Hospitality Management (Level 5) students graduate. They gain the necessary technical and interpersonal knowledge, skills, practices and attitudes and confidence required for operational hospitality management. Most work part-time in the hospitality sector while studying. Seventy-three per cent have progressed to the level 6 programme; nearly all went on to complete the level 6 qualification. These are very strong outcomes.</p> <p>The level 6 hospitality graduates develop the capability to manage teams, and in addition reflect on their own and the business' performance.⁷ Some of the first cohort of level 6 graduates have moved into management-related roles. Nearly all level 5 and 6 hospitality students value their preparation for the workplace. Industry stakeholders interviewed by NZQA value the training and pathways the PTE provides.</p> <p>However, the many (800) graduates of the Diploma in Health Services Management (Level 7) from 2016-2018 did not gain management-related work; most remained in their healthcare support roles. This programme has demonstrated little value for the graduates, healthcare industry and wider community. The PTE did not effectively address this serious performance gap.</p> <p>Across the organisation there has been limited tracking and analysis of the graduates' workplace roles, or progression to more responsible roles. However, the quality of outcomes data has improved from the exit surveys. The PTE has sent out employer surveys and begun implementing surveys six and 12 months after graduation.</p>
Conclusion:	The level 7 health services management programme produced poor outcomes while the hospitality management outcomes have been strong. Self-assessment has been inconsistent, but the

⁷ Most level 6 students also work in hospitality roles while studying.

	quality has recently begun to generally improve.
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1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The hospitality management programmes have sound links to industry, addressing employer-identified needs for staff with the right mix of skills. Each of the three campuses provides the level 5 students with repeated opportunities to apply their learning in the on-site café facilities.⁸ A programme review led to revised learning outcomes and assessments, including the unit standards required for managing licensed liquor premises.</p> <p>Level 6 programme students develop more reflective and independent management skills. A just-completed review of the programme (after the first exiting cohort) has also identified various improvements requiring NZQA approval.</p> <p>The modular approach to programme reviews has benefits, but it does not holistically evaluate the programme. During this EER, NZQA did not identify any gaps in the assessment and moderation practice of either of the hospitality programmes. Student feedback showed that nearly all respondents were satisfied with their training programme. The PTE has in place systematic processes for identifying, monitoring and addressing academic dishonesty. Recently, the PTE has invested in developing the bicultural capability of its staff and students.</p> <p>However (as previously noted), NZQA identified significant flaws in assessment and moderation for the Diploma in Health Services Management (Level 7) programme. In response, the PTE rectified these gaps by April 2018. Programme changes to improve outcomes were belated and ineffective.</p>
Conclusion:	The hospitality programmes match the most important needs of students and industry stakeholders, while the health services management programme did not. The quality of the self-assessment varied.

⁸ The PTE has provided some reasonable evidence that the two cookery programmes match many of the important needs of its students and industry.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Pastoral care of students is systematic and effective. The PTE identifies the wellbeing needs of its students. Most of these young students are highly motivated to complete their studies. Student feedback shows that all respondents found the comprehensive orientation programme useful or very useful for providing guidance on living in New Zealand, academic expectations and pastoral care.</p> <p>The organisation has a range of feedback mechanisms which identify and respond to student concerns.</p> <p>The PTE revises its procedures in response to emerging needs: for example, the PTE amended its lockdown procedures after the 2019 mosque shootings in Christchurch.</p> <p>The PTE closely monitors the academic progress of individual students, and acts when needed. Student feedback has led to the PTE providing more academic and faculty-specific guidance in the orientation programme.</p> <p>The hospitality management tutors are industry-experienced and industry-qualified. However only some tutors have adult education qualifications. Others are being supported to gain these qualifications, while the PTE supports new tutors to gain relevant assessment and moderation unit standards. The academic support they offer is generally strong. The processes to improve tutor capability are detailed, well organised and effective.</p>
Conclusion:	The pastoral care and academic support provided has been generally effective in enabling high proportions of students to stay involved, learn and complete their studies. Self-assessment is comprehensive and effective with very few gaps.

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

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>This PTE is part of the Aspire2 Group, which provides substantial governance and strategic direction and some independent quality assurance.</p> <p>The group monitors programme-level educational performance using reports that have been enhanced in 2019. It has invested in systems, people and resources to enable strong performance. Significant examples include a new client management, learning and student management system (improving data management, quality and analysis), and upgrading the café facilities to support learning. The leadership has a systematic approach to recruiting capable tutors, ensuring regular observations and ongoing professional development.</p> <p>However, significantly, as previously noted, the leadership team only effectively addressed some of the serious flaws in the Diploma in Health Services Management (Level 7) programme.⁹ The PTE has subsequently strengthened its academic leadership, creating new roles, bolstered programme reviews and assessment and moderation practices. Aspire2 now has in place generally stronger quality assurance and self-assessment systems.</p>
Conclusion:	While the leadership team has effectively supported some strong educational performance, the health services management programme performed below minimum expectations. The PTE's self-review practices only partially addressed the serious weaknesses NZQA identified. However, other self-assessment has improved and is now mostly good quality.

⁹ See Section 1.2, 1.3 and 1.6 for further details.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The Aspire2 Group and its PTE stay current with evolving regulatory requirements. The PTE has revised some practices and identified some, but not all, gaps through internal reviews.</p> <p>The PTE has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertaken sound reviews of its pastoral care¹⁰, making various improvements • sound procedures to ensure only eligible students are enrolled. A random sample of 10 student files identified no significant gaps • engaged appropriately experienced and qualified staff • updated and used detailed quality assurance processes • stated that there have not been any significant legal or ethical issues since taking ownership. NZQA did not identify any issues during this evaluation. <p>However, there were serious breaches of NZQA rules connected to the Diploma in Health Services Management (Level 7) that NZQA initially identified in November 2016. Issues, addressed by April 2018, included inadequate assessment and moderation practice, plagiarism and reduced delivery. The PTE failed to demonstrate that graduates gained management related employment. NZQA withdrew programme approval in September 2019.¹¹</p>
Conclusion:	While the PTE effectively managed many key compliance requirements, the level 7 programme breached numerous regulatory requirements, which were only partially addressed. Self-assessment is generally strong in other compliance areas.

¹⁰ Against the required outcomes in [The Education \(Pastoral Care of International Students\) Code of Practice 2016 \(including Amendments 2019\)](#)

¹¹ Aspire2 did not meet the requirements of Rule 4.1 of the approval and accreditation rules, and therefore, Rule 5.1.9 (a) of the Registration Rules.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: International student support and wellbeing

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
	The pastoral care of the international students is systematic and effective. The wellbeing needs are being well met. The review of the code against the key outcomes is comprehensive and robust. Ongoing improvements have been made to better meet the wellbeing needs of students and meet evolving regulatory requirements.

2.2 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Hospitality Management (Level 6)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
	This programme met many of the important needs of students and industry. Self-assessment was generally effective. Enrolments on this level 6 programme made up 3 per cent of total enrolments from 2016-2018.

2.3 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Hospitality Management (Level 5)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
	This programme comprehensively met the most important needs of students and industries. Self-assessment was mostly effective. Enrolments on this level 5 programme made up 19 per cent of total enrolments from 2016-2018.

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Aspire2 International Hospitality & Healthcare Limited:

- strengthen the collection and analysis of graduate destination data and use this information to make improvements
- enhance the current programme reviews to include a whole-of-programme approach and explicitly show how stakeholder feedback informs the improvements being made.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

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

Appendix 1

Table 1. Qualification completion rates for 2016-2018 (%) (number of students completed/total students) and student count by programme¹²

Programme	2016 (%)	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2016-2018 student count	% of total students in each programme
New Zealand Diploma in Hospitality Management (Level 5)	N/A	93 (118/127)	87 (130/149)	276	19
New Zealand Diploma in Hospitality Management (Level 6)	N/A	N/A	88 (35/40)	40	3
Diploma in Health Services Management (Level 7)	98 (467/475)	98 (176/179)	96 (151/157)	811 ¹³	56
New Zealand Certificate in Cookery (Level 4)	97 (70/72)	100 (43/43)	93 (67/72)	187	13
New Zealand Diploma in Cookery (Level 5)	98 (43/44)	98 (45/46)	100 (42/42)	132	9
Total				1446	100

Source: Achievement data from Aspire2 International Hospitality & Healthcare Limited

¹² All programmes are worth 120 credits, which equals one EFTS.

¹³ 171 of these level 7 students enrolled with [Aspire2 International Business and Technology Limited](#).

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud¹⁴*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

¹⁴ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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