



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

Alphacrucis Limited trading as
Alphacrucis College New Zealand

Date of report: 4 August 2023

About Alphacrucis Limited, trading as Alphacrucis College New Zealand

Alphacrucis College New Zealand (ACNZ) is the recognised national training college for the Assembly of God New Zealand, delivering Christian ministry programmes from levels 4-7. Programmes are delivered via a blended model of distance, face-to-face and online.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment
Location:	60 Rockfield Road, Penrose, Auckland
Eligible to enrol intl students:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 60 equivalent full-time students; approximately 5 per cent Māori, 31 per cent Pasifika. ACNZ does not collect data on students with disabilities. International: 10 equivalent full-time students (all Korean)
Number of staff:	Full-time, five; part-time, 23 (6.6 full-time equivalents)
TEO profile:	See ACNZ on the NZQA website. ACNZ is 90 per cent owned by Alphacrucis University College Australia and 10 per cent by Assemblies of God New Zealand.
Last EER outcome:	The previous external evaluation and review (EER) of ACNZ, held in March 2021, resulted in summative judgements of Confident in educational performance and Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The current EER looked at the following focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bachelor of Contemporary Ministry [ref: 114382/3] and Bachelor of Contemporary Ministry (Korean Language) [ref:123786/1]• Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4) [ref:121931/3] leads to the award of New

Zealand Certificate in Christian Ministry (Level 4) [Ref: 2772]

- International Students: Support and Wellbeing

MoE number: 8573

NZQA reference: C53310

Dates of EER visit: 13-16 June 2023

Summary of results

ACNZ is providing quality education and student support leading to high levels of stakeholder satisfaction and positive outcomes for its graduates, ministry partners and the community.

Confident in educational performance

- ACNZ has strong course completions, along with high student satisfaction with their education. Students are achieving their academic and personal goals, leading to valued and sustained outcomes.
- Graduates gain relevant paid or voluntary employment, engaging successfully in further study and/or Christian leadership.
- ACNZ is effectively using its expertise and long-standing sector relationships to develop, deliver and continuously improve programmes that closely meet individual and stakeholder needs. Programmes are fit for purpose and regularly reviewed and updated.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- ACNZ's internship placements enable students to learn in a real-world environment that is matched to their individual strengths and aspirations.
- ACNZ underpins its teaching with a sound research culture and infrastructure, which is well resourced and supported.
- The organisation is well governed and managed and has a clear vision and values which are reflected throughout its operation. The learning activities are well resourced, including recent upgrades to facilities and technology to better support blended learning.
- Many of the contributing processes that lead to ACNZs' improved performance – and the self-assessment practices that underpin them – are recently established or renewed and are yet to be fully embedded and refined over time. The next challenge is to formalise and deepen self-assessment processes and continue to use findings insightfully to make improvements and to sustain and build on current levels of achievement and valued outcomes.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>ACNZ students' course completion rates have been consistently around 80 per cent across all programmes.² Achievement compares favourably with similar full-time programmes in the religious education field.</p> <p>Qualification completion rates, however, sit below ACNZ's own key performance indicators, which was explained as the result of students studying part-time and taking longer to complete their qualification. The reasons may be more complex than that, and more should be done by ACNZ to pinpoint, understand and address the reasons for low qualification completion.</p> <p>There is generally a disparity of course and qualification completion of 5-10 percentage points each year for Māori and Pasifika students, as compared with non-Māori/Pasifika completions. This has varied year to year, and data to date is insufficient to give a reliable conclusion. Nevertheless, ACNZ should continue to focus its inquiry and efforts to reduce or eliminate this disparity by raising the level of Māori and Pasifika achievement.</p> <p>There is work in progress to define and identify students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the Tertiary Education Commission's disability action plan. ACNZ provides sound support for those students who are identified with learning or other disabilities.</p> <p>The high level of graduate employment (discussed in 1.2) is due, in part, to the focus that ACNZ has put on preparing graduates for Christian leadership roles. The merit of the programme lies not only in the long-term professional</p>

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

² Refer achievement statistics Appendix 1.

	<p>outcomes for students, but also in the attributes (such as critical thinking, confidence, communication, teamwork and positive attitudes) that students acquire on the courses. ACNZ has embedded the teaching of these characteristics into the programmes and internships.</p> <p>Staff are highly student-centred and are encouraged and resourced by the organisation to use many opportunities for discussing student achievement and strategies to ensure that every student has a positive experience at ACNZ.</p> <p>Understanding and analysis of data and presentation in such a way that staff can recognise trends to inform evidence-based improvement strategies is being well embedded into the organisation.</p>
Conclusion:	ACNZ's educational achievement is generally strong. The PTE has a focus on learner achievement and strives to better understand the variables that influence it, and systematically uses this understanding to make improvements.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students gain worthwhile skills from the programmes that ACNZ delivers, which enables them to build a career in Christian leadership. Stakeholders report that the skills and knowledge gained are immediately applicable to Christian leadership roles and are valued by both the graduates and the organisations in which they serve.</p> <p>Internship enables students to gain and practise their knowledge and skills in a real-world context. Meaningful interaction with potential employers, and feedback from internship host providers, has enabled ACNZ to gain a good appreciation of the extent to which students have acquired the attributes mentioned in 1.1. Student reflective journals completed during internships provide good evidence of the growth of student attitudes and capabilities.</p> <p>Students and graduates are making positive changes in their own lives and the lives of their families and the communities in</p>

	<p>which they serve as a result of the education and experience they gain at ACNZ. Many or even most students interviewed described the experience as 'life changing' for themselves and their whānau. They said their ACNZ study had transformed themselves, their household and the way they relate to their spouse and children. Students interviewed about their goals for the future mentioned aims to become chaplains, pastors and evangelists.</p> <p>Destination tracking has improved since the last EER, and the information gained is used insightfully for programme review. Surveys of graduates in the focus areas indicated high levels of agreement by graduates and employers that their programme had prepared them well for their current roles. The alignment of graduate surveys with the graduate profile outcomes for their respective qualifications has also improved ACNZ's capability in determining consistency with the qualification purpose.</p> <p>ACNZ staff engage in research that informs programmes and often involves students and external stakeholders as partners. Students and their communities benefit from the strength and scale of the applied research, with the support of Alphacrucis University College.</p>
Conclusion:	Self-assessment material reviewed by the evaluators, alongside commentary from students, graduates and external stakeholders confirms the success, extent and value of the educational outcomes of ACNZ.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	ACNZ's processes are effective in ensuring that stakeholder and student needs are understood and met, and high standards are maintained. ACNZ has regular, ongoing interaction with a wide stakeholder group through varying mechanisms and at all levels of the organisation. These mechanisms include frequent contact with students; student satisfaction surveys; regular staff meetings; discussions with ministry partners; participation in

	<p>ministry networks; church and community events; and the Assembly of God board.</p> <p>The information from stakeholder interactions is fed back through the organisation to inform future strategy and the programme review process. The formal processes around stakeholder engagement are largely new and are still being fully embedded in the organisation.</p> <p>There is a robust and comprehensive, annual whole-of-programme review into which a wide range of staff and stakeholders have input. This process ensures that the PTE systematically updates its programmes and learning activities to meet the existing and emerging needs of students and stakeholders.</p> <p>Students regularly complete surveys to provide feedback on the learning methods, course delivery and their learning environment. The feedback is analysed and used effectively to inform improvements to course delivery. There is a high level of student satisfaction with the support, teaching and facilities. The student evaluation process could be improved by periodically reporting back to students what has changed as a result of their feedback.</p> <p>Assessment practice includes a range of approaches that ensure fairness, validity and consistency. Students can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through written work, project work and practical presentations. Internal and external moderation processes are well managed and ensure quality assessment. Academic standards are clear, understood and maintained.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>ACNZ's regular and purposeful interaction with its students and stakeholders and subsequent analysis and reflection, ensures that programmes and activities meet their existing and emerging needs. This is a strong feature of the organisation. The long-term relationships that ACNZ has with its stakeholders are a good indicator of organisational success.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>ACNZ staff at all levels of the organisation provide active, integrated and ongoing social and academic support for the students. There is a sense of shared accountability across all staff for the support of the students. The nature of the organisation means that its staff go above and beyond the scope of a traditional educational organisation to provide social, spiritual and academic support.</p> <p>Intending students are well guided into courses appropriate to their aspirations and capabilities. Attendance expectations are effectively communicated to the students and are monitored closely, using the Moodle learning management system, with very prompt, proactive and appropriate follow-up of emerging needs as required.</p> <p>Initiatives such as the Tongan learning hub and the appointment of a Korean/international student engagement officer have provided important support for specific student cohorts within ACNZ. Staff are building their own cultural competency, particularly around strengthening their understanding of Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This also enhances educational support for the students and the inclusiveness of the learning environment.</p> <p>The PTE has effective processes to review how well it meets the spirit and intent of the Code of Practice.³ ACNZ has submitted an attestation to NZQA that they had completed a self-review of their implementation of the Code, as required. Through the self-review they identified areas for further development and continue to address these. This, and other evidence sighted provide assurance that international and domestic students are well supported.</p>
Conclusion:	ACNZ staff are passionate about the care and support they provide for the students. The family culture is clearly evident, with open doors and easy informality between staff and students. Students are effectively supported to complete their studies.

³ [The Education \(Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners\) Code of Practice 2021](#)

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>ACNZ is governed by a board appointed by, and representative of, the owners of the entity. There is strong educational, financial and leadership expertise within the board. Reporting relationships between management and governance are well-defined, transparent and robust. Senior academic staff are highly qualified and experienced for their roles, providing the basis for effective academic leadership.</p> <p>ACNZ's organisational strategy is formally documented, with clear strategic goals in key areas such as mission, vision, values, academic, operational effectiveness, research and staff development. Management and staff have a common understanding of the PTE's vision and direction, and processes are in place to measure the direction against strategic goals.</p> <p>Teaching and learning are well resourced, with good equipment, teaching materials and technology which are well maintained and updated.</p> <p>ACNZ underpins the teaching with a sound research culture. At any time, about half of the permanent full-time teaching staff are research-active and are allowed paid time to undertake research, which in many cases is additionally funded by ACNZ to meet associated costs or for conference presentation. The organisation has a well-established infrastructure to support research, including access to the Alphacrucis University College research and ethics committee which provides high-level and strategic guidance.</p> <p>In the two years since the last EER, ACNZ has, in their own words, 'totally cleaned the house'. This has involved investment in review and renewal of processes and resources including, but not limited to: key staff including leadership; policies and processes; internal and external communication; library resources; courseware; staff appraisal and professional development; student support; IT systems and equipment; and painting and décor of the entire campus. The result is an energetic and refreshed organisation with the renewed confidence of its governance board, and a strong focus on</p>

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	educational quality and student success. As previously highlighted in this report, many processes are new and practices are not necessarily fully embedded, but the indications so far are very positive. Self-assessment is being well led by management and is comprehensively understood and adopted throughout the organisation.
Conclusion:	ACNZ has a clear vision and understanding of its enterprise and leadership which is committed to providing effective support for educational achievement. The leadership has made a range of recent quality improvements to its key internal resources and processes.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The recent improvements described in previous sections of this report ensure that ACNZ now has a clear understanding of its compliance accountabilities and manages them effectively to ensure obligations are met and that all staff are aware of their part in compliance. Compliance is overseen by the national manager and delegated as appropriate. A compliance calendar is well used to identify, schedule, monitor and report on compliance obligations.</p> <p>Indications of effective compliance management include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZQA attestations and returns have been submitted within required timeframes. There is no 'risk' history with NZQA since the last EER. • The programmes at ACNZ are being delivered consistent with their NZQA approval. • NZQA monitoring of degree programmes have found that ACNZ is delivering the programmes in a competent and professional manner. • ACNZ is meeting its obligations with respect to the Code of Practice.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies are in place to manage requirements for fees protection (e.g. Public Trust, withdrawal and refund policies, etc) and visas (e.g. attendance requirements). • Alphacrucis University College’s research ethics committee framework ensures that research involving human participants conducted by students or staff of ACNZ complies with appropriate ethical standards. • All staff and internship mentors are police vetted to meet the requirements of the Children’s Act 2014. Alphacrucis also oversees the police vetting of students on internship, although this is reported directly to internship hosts.
Conclusion:	ACNZ has a clear understanding of its compliance accountabilities and manages these proactively and effectively to ensure obligations are met.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Bachelor of Contemporary Ministry [ref: 114382/3] and Bachelor of Contemporary Ministry (Korean Language) [ref:123786/1]

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Certificate in Christian Ministries (Level 4) [ref:121931/3] - leads to the award of: New Zealand Certificate in Christian Ministry (Level 4) [Ref: 2772]

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

2.3 International Students: Support and Wellbeing

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The goals of the international students are well understood, and they are well supported by management, lecturers and international student support staff to achieve their goals. Staff clearly understand their responsibility for the progress and welfare of the international students.</p> <p>International students interviewed described the range of pastoral care services and interventions, confirming how well they have been supported. Many said they feel 'thankful' and 'lucky' to have discovered ACNZ because of the difference it has made to their lives.</p> <p>ACNZ leadership is effective in managing areas of compliance, including Code of Practice obligations and immigration requirements.</p>
Conclusion:	International students are well supported to achieve their goals, both academic and personal, and for studying and living in New Zealand.

Recommendations

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

NZQA recommends that Alphacrucis College New Zealand:

- Establish a plan to better understand and address strategies to increase qualification completions.

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 and course completions 2020-22⁴

Year	Course Completion	Qual completion	Retention rates
KPI	85%	85%	95%
2022	83%	54%	81%
2021	86%	45%	79%
2020	81%	49%	80%

⁴ Data supplied by ACNZ.

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 fraud⁵*
- *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.*

⁵ 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 2021, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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

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

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2021, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2021 and the Training Scheme Rules 2021 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2021 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, training schemes and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2021. 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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