



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

~ **Degrees and Related Qualifications**  
**Guidelines for Programme Approval and  
Accreditation to Provide Programmes**



# **Degrees and Related Qualifications – Guidelines for Programme Approval and Accreditation to Provide Programmes**

*for Tertiary Institutions other than Universities*

**Version 1.0**

**July 2014**

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# Introduction

The Guidelines are intended for tertiary institutions other than universities that are quality assured by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). NZQA will use the Guidelines with institutions applying for approval for programmes leading to degrees and related qualifications, and/or accreditation to provide degrees and/or related qualifications programmes that are listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF).

The Guidelines replace the *Approval and Accreditation of Courses Leading to Degrees and Related Qualifications* document<sup>1</sup>. The Guidelines have been designed to answer the need for clarity as expressed by the sector, and give detailed guidance on how to address the approval and/or accreditation criteria and what information NZQA requires. The relevant legislation and NZQA Rules have not changed.

Education in and through Māori language, tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori is an important part of New Zealand's tertiary education system. This recognises the important role of Māori as tangata whenua, and the Government's responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi. Tertiary education in these areas, particularly in wānanga, plays an important role not only in improving individual achievement of Māori but also in helping to sustain and revitalise Māori language, and advance mātauranga Māori research. This helps to sustain Māori culture and delivers economic value to New Zealand<sup>2</sup>.

NZQA acknowledges that a distinctive approach is required to quality assure mātauranga Māori qualifications, programmes, and organisations credibly. This approach will be applied to degrees and related qualifications in the near future, and the Guidelines will be amended where applicable. A process to develop this approach, appropriately involving the sector, will be undertaken beginning in the second half of 2014.

NZQA fully recognises that some institutions have highly developed quality management systems and academic board structures and procedures. External Evaluation and Review (EER) reports, as part of the NZQA Evaluative Quality Assurance Framework, provide confirmation of institutions' capability and performance. While the Guidelines provides across the board guidance for tertiary institutions, they do not limit the scope or findings of any future evaluative enquiries through EER.

For the purpose of the Guidelines, degrees also include related qualifications and comprise Graduate Diplomas and Graduate Certificates, Bachelor's Degrees, Post-graduate Diplomas and Post-graduate Certificates, Bachelor's Honours Degrees, Master's Degrees and Doctoral Degrees.

## Scope of the Guidelines

The Guidelines cover:

- the characteristics of a degree
- NZQA's requirements on how to gain approval for a degree programme and/or accreditation to provide a degree programme
- how to apply and what to include in the application

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<sup>1</sup> New Zealand Qualifications Authority – August 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2019.

- what happens during the evaluation process, including the role and composition of panels
- how to maintain approval and/or accreditation (including ongoing monitoring and graduating year review)
- how to make changes to approved degree programmes, and
- how to collaborate effectively with other institutions, including sub-contracting arrangements.

## **The Education Act 1989 and NZQA Rules**

The Education Act 1989 (the Act) is the foundation of NZQA's legislative authority in the education sector. An amendment to the Act in 2011 widened and clarified the authority of NZQA to act in the education sector.

The Act covers:

- the types of education organisations in New Zealand
- the rights and responsibilities of different education organisations
- how education organisations can operate in New Zealand, and
- how NZQA can monitor and interact with education organisations.

Under section 162 of the Act, institutions include institutes of technology and polytechnics, wānanga and private training establishments.

'A polytechnic is characterised by a wide diversity of continuing education, including vocational training, that contributes to the maintenance, advancement, and dissemination of knowledge and expertise and promotes community learning, and by research, particularly applied and technological research, that aids development'.

'A wānanga is characterised by teaching and research that maintains, advances, and disseminates knowledge and develops intellectual independence, and assists the application of knowledge regarding ahuatanga Māori (Māori tradition) according to tikanga Māori (Māori custom)'.

Private training establishment is a registered establishment that provides post-school education or vocational training.

NZQA Rules are made under section 253 of the Act, which gives NZQA the authority to make rules for the quality assurance processes it is responsible for.

The Rules set out what institutions have to do to meet NZQA's quality standards and comply with NZQA processes. They indicate what actions and information are required from institutions. All NZQA Rules are listed on the NZQA website at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>.

## **Listing qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework**

Applicants must seek approval to develop and list qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) from NZQA. For more information visit NZQA's web page Listing qualifications on the NZQF (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand/nzqf/listing-qualifications-on-the-nzqf/>).



All qualifications listed on the NZQF:

- are subject to quality assurance
- have the qualification title and details publicly available
- are defined by a qualification type and level
- are allocated a credit value
- have a subject area classification
- have a status to indicate whether the qualification is current, expiring or discontinued.

Applications for degree programmes approval are based on the qualifications meeting the listing requirements on the NZQF.

## **Granting of awards**

NZQA requirements for consent to award degrees and/or post-graduate qualifications are described in section 253B of the Act.

253B Powers of Authority in granting of awards

(1) A person may apply to the Authority for its consent –

(a) to grant an award that is described as a degree or the description of which includes the word bachelor, master, or doctor

(b) to grant an award that is described as a post-graduate qualification, for example, a post-graduate certificate or diploma.

(2) The Authority may, in accordance with this section, grant or refuse its consent.

(3) The Authority must not consent to the granting of an award of a kind referred to in subsection (1) unless it is satisfied that the award recognises the completion of a programme of advanced learning that –

(a) is taught mainly by people engaged in research; and

(b) emphasises general principles and basic knowledge as the basis for self-directed work and learning.

(4) The Authority must not withhold its consent to the use of any particular term or the granting of an award that, or whose name or description, includes any particular word, unless satisfied on reasonable grounds that it should do so’.

## **Approval and Accreditation**

Degree programme approval is confirmation that a programme of study meets defined criteria as specified in the Guidelines.

Accreditation to provide a degree programme is confirmation that an institution has shown it is capable of delivering and assessing an approved programme of study at degree level. Programmes of study leading to degrees approved by NZQA may only be provided by institutions accredited to do so by NZQA.

NZQA will accept applications for approval of a degree programme and/or for accreditation to provide a programme leading to an approved degree from tertiary education institutions (Sections 249-249A and 250-250A- 250B-250C of the Act).

Under section 249 of the Act, institution includes any institution, government training establishment, registered establishment, relevant school, industry training organisation, or other body.

Under section 250 of the Act, institution means institution, government training establishment, registered establishment, or relevant school.

NZQA rules covering the approval of degree programmes and accreditation for these programmes are the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#).

Where professional registration is a prerequisite for practising in a particular field or occupation, professional registration bodies will be involved in the content and quality of education being delivered. If a degree or related qualification is subject to professional registration requirements, NZQA will not approve a programme, or accredit an institution, until the specific requirements of relevant registration bodies have been met. Written formal agreements between registration bodies and NZQA detail the relevant processes and requirements.

### **Offshore delivery**

Qualifications listed on the NZQF can be delivered offshore. Tertiary education institutions planning offshore delivery of a programme leading to an NZQF qualification must meet the [NZQF Offshore Programme Delivery Rules](#) (Offshore Rules).

The Offshore Rules supplement the standard programme approval and accreditation rules to ensure that offshore programmes have comparable quality outcomes to programmes delivered in New Zealand.

NZQA has designed the [Guidelines to the implementation of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework Offshore Programme Delivery Rules for institutions other than universities](#) to assist institutions when making an application to NZQA for offshore programme approval and accreditation.

### **Terminology**

In the Guidelines:

- Programme is used to refer to the full programme of study leading to the degree or related qualification.

# Section 1: What is a degree?

The Act defines a degree as an award that recognises the completion of a programme of advanced learning that is taught mainly by people engaged in research:

- ‘a programme of advanced learning that –
- (a) is taught mainly by people engaged in research; and
  - (b) emphasises general principles and basic knowledge as the basis for self-directed work and learning.’

In other words, research-active teaching staff and the development of the learner’s ability for analytical and critical thinking through research-informed teaching are what separate a degree from other qualifications.

Degrees may vary in kind, for example reflecting a theoretical, practical, vocational or professional focus. However, all degrees must:

- demonstrate a similar robustness and adherence to the level at which they are set, and
- have a similar commitment to research by staff in its broadest sense as the foundation used to support the theory underpinning the programme to be offered.

## Defining research

The type of research undertaken by people engaged in research will be relevant to the nature of the degree. A professional or applied degree may well have a greater focus on applied research, while a theory-based degree could result in more theoretical, strategic and scholarship type of research.

The official New Zealand definition of research<sup>3</sup> applies to the Guidelines.

‘Research is original investigation undertaken in order to contribute to knowledge and understanding and, in the case of some disciplines, cultural innovation or aesthetic refinement.

It typically involves enquiry of an experimental or critical nature driven by hypotheses or intellectual positions capable of rigorous assessment by experts in a given discipline.

It is an independent<sup>4</sup>, creative, cumulative and often long-term activity conducted by people with specialist knowledge about the theories, methods and information concerning their field of enquiry. Its findings must be open to scrutiny and formal evaluation by others in the field, and this may be achieved through publication or public presentation.

In some disciplines, the investigation and its results may be embodied in the form of artistic works, designs or performances<sup>5</sup>.

Research includes contribution to the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines (e.g. dictionaries and scholarly editions). It also includes the experimental development of design or construction solutions, as well as investigation that leads to new or substantially improved materials, devices, products or processes.’

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<sup>3</sup> Performance-Based Research Fund Quality Evaluation [Guidelines](#) 2012 - Tertiary Education Commission Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua.

<sup>4</sup> The term ‘independent’ here should not be construed to exclude collaborative work.

<sup>5</sup> Investigation and its results may also be embodied in the form of inventions or programmes, or technical reports.

Research areas vary considerably in degrees and can include a wide scope of subject areas, examples include: computer and information sciences, small business management, early childhood education, nursing, sport and exercise science, animation, screenwriting, construction technologies, and manufacturing processing.

Research areas will also cover 'research that maintains, advances, and disseminates knowledge and develops intellectual independence, and assists the application of knowledge regarding āhuetanga Māori (Māori tradition) according to tikanga Māori (Māori custom)<sup>6</sup> including te reo Māori, wairuatanga, and hauora.

#### *What is excluded from research<sup>7</sup>?*

'The following activities are excluded from the definition of research except where they are used primarily for the support, or as part, of research and experimental development activities:

- preparation for teaching
- the provision of advice or opinion, except where it is consistent with the definition of research
- scientific and technical information services
- general purpose or routine data-collection
- standardisation and routine testing (but not including standards development)
- feasibility studies (except into research and experimental development projects)
- specialised routine medical care
- the commercial, legal and administrative aspects of patenting, copyrighting or licensing
- routine computer programming, systems work or software maintenance (but note that research into and experimental development of, for example, applications software, new programming languages and new operating systems is included)
- any other routine professional practice (e.g. in arts, law, architecture or business) that does not comply with the definition.<sup>8</sup>

The definition of research given above is specifically intended to be a broad characterisation that includes original investigation of a professional and applied nature'.

#### *Peer scrutiny*

Peer scrutiny in the Guidelines refers to the quality assurance of the research undertaking by others of an equal or higher status who are engaged in a field similar to that of the inquiry. Such scrutiny will be conducted in a manner which will not undermine intellectual property rights or commercial sensitivity.

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<sup>6</sup> As per the definition of a wānanga in the Education Act 1989.

<sup>7</sup> [Performance-Based Research Fund Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2012](#) – Tertiary Education Commission Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

<sup>8</sup> Clinical trials, evaluations and similar activities will be included where they are consistent with the definition of research.

NZQA will take into account factors including:

- the core discipline(s) of the degree and the current level of national and international research in these disciplines
- how the research-active staff engaged in teaching and/or supervising learners' research demonstrate they are qualified in the field they intend to teach and/or supervise
- the involvement of staff engaged in research in qualifications upgrading, and
- the extent of involvement of individual staff members in teaching the degree programme.

## NZQA's expectations

NZQA expects that the research activity and culture would increase with the level of degree programmes, and be clearly demonstrated. In all cases, it is expected that research will be exposed to peer scrutiny and its outputs recorded in an appropriate form.

NZQA expects that, collectively, staff engaged in research, teaching degree programmes, will:

- be engaged in a variety of research context(s) and activity(ies)
- separate the maintaining of professional currency from active research<sup>9</sup>
- have sufficient time and support from the institution to conduct the research programme
- conduct all research activities in accordance with recognised ethical standards.

In the event of any growth or turnover of the teaching staff, it is also NZQA's expectation that the institution will recruit mainly research-active staff and/or will be committed to undertake up skilling of newly appointed staff over an appropriate period of time.

## Degrees as listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework

### **Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma (Level 7<sup>10</sup>)**

A **Bachelor's Degree** provides individuals with a systematic and coherent introduction to bodies of knowledge of a recognised major subject (or subjects, in the case of a double degree or a double major) as well as to problem-solving and associated basic techniques of self-directed work and learning. A Bachelor's Degree involves at least one sequential study programme in which content is progressively developed such that it might form a basis for post-graduate study and/or professional practice.

A **Graduate Certificate** is designed primarily as a vehicle for degree graduates to pursue further study at an advanced undergraduate level. The Graduate Certificate is typically designed as a bridging qualification to post-graduate study for individuals developing educational, professional or vocational knowledge in a new discipline, profession or subject area and/or as a broadening or deepening of skills or knowledge already gained in an undergraduate degree.

A **Graduate Diploma** allows degree graduates to pursue a significant body of study at an advanced undergraduate level. The Diploma is typically designed as a bridging qualification

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<sup>9</sup> Maintaining professional currency alone is not considered as being research-active, but active research can contribute to maintaining professional currency.

<sup>10</sup> Level 7 Diplomas are not included in the Guidelines as they are evaluated under the programme approval and accreditation.

to post-graduate study and/or as broadening knowledge and skills in a familiar subject or discipline, developing knowledge in a new area.

Graduates of the above degrees demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- **Associated Knowledge:** Specialised technical or theoretical knowledge with depth in one or more fields of work or study.
- **Associated skills:** Analyse, generate solutions to unfamiliar and sometimes complex problems. Select, adapt and apply a range of processes relevant to the field of work or study.
- **Application of knowledge and skills:** Advanced generic skills and/or specialist knowledge and skills in a professional context or field of study.

Bachelor's Degrees, Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas are taught mainly by people engaged in research (section 253B of the Act).

### **Bachelor's Honours Degree, Post-graduate Certificate, Post-graduate Diploma (Level 8)**

A **Bachelor's Honours Degree** recognises distinguished study at level 8. It may either be a degree in itself, or a discrete Post-graduate Degree following a Bachelor's Degree. The award of honours recognises outstanding achievement, meritorious achievement or a pass; these may be termed first class honours, second class honours: first or second division, and third class honours.

Research in the context of a bachelor's honours degree develops a learner's ability to design and undertake a project under supervision, and to report on this in an appropriate form. It sharpens the individual's analytical and communication skills and provides a supported introduction to planning, conducting and reporting on the type of independent research that may be undertaken at higher levels.

A **Post-graduate Certificate** is designed to extend and deepen an individual's knowledge and skills. The Post-graduate Certificate involves credits from a specified subject and cognate areas. It recognises continuing professional development or academic achievement in advance of a Bachelor's Degree in the same area as the individual's original degree or Graduate Certificate or Diploma.

A **Post-graduate Diploma** is designed to extend and deepen an individual's knowledge and skills by building on attainment in the principal subject(s) of the qualifying degree, graduate diploma or graduate certificate. A Post-graduate Diploma prepares an individual for independent research and scholarship in the principal subject of the diploma. A post-graduate Diploma may be awarded with distinction<sup>11</sup>.

Learners can undertake Post-Graduate Certificates or Diplomas in areas complementary to their original undergraduate study. Post-Graduate Certificates or Diplomas can be multi-disciplinary.

Graduates of the above degrees demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- **Associated Knowledge:** Advanced technical and/or theoretical knowledge in a discipline or practice involving a critical understanding of the underpinning key principles.

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<sup>11</sup> While a Post-Graduate Diploma may prepare learners for research and scholarship, it may also prepare them for advanced professional practice.

- Associated skills: Analyse, generate solutions to complex and sometimes unpredictable problems. Evaluate and apply a range of processes relevant to the field of work or study.
- Application of knowledge and skills: Developing identification with a profession and/or discipline through application of advanced generic skills and/or specialist knowledge and skills. Some responsibility for integrity of profession or discipline.

Bachelor's Honours Degrees, Post-Graduate Certificates and Post-Graduate Diplomas are taught mainly by people engaged in research (section 253B of the Act).

## Master's Degree (Level 9)

A **Master's Degree** qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research, a pathway for further learning, professional practice and/or scholarship. Master's Degrees usually build on a Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Diploma, Bachelor's Honours Degree or a Post-graduate Diploma. They may also build on extensive professional experience of an appropriate kind. Their outcomes are demonstrably in advance of undergraduate study, and require individuals to engage in research and/or advanced scholarship. Master's Degrees are constituted in one discipline or coherent programme of study<sup>12</sup>. They may be undertaken by taught courses or research, or by a combination of both.

The research should be completed to internationally recognised standards and demonstrate that the graduate has a capacity for independent thinking.

Graduates of the above degrees demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- Associated Knowledge: Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge, and a critical awareness of issues in a field of study or practice.
- Associated skills: Develop and apply new skills and techniques to existing or emerging problems. Mastery of the field of study or practice to an advanced level.
- Application of knowledge and skills: Independent application of highly specialised knowledge and skills within a discipline or professional practice. Some responsibility for leadership within the profession or discipline.

Master's Degrees are taught mainly by people engaged in research (section 253B of the Act).

## Doctoral Degree (Level 10)

Research is the defining characteristic a **Doctoral Degree**. It is distinct from and of significantly higher status than a master degree. It is a research degree whereby the individual becomes an increasingly independent scholar who makes a substantial and original contribution to knowledge. It is normally the culmination of study which begins at bachelor level and reaches a stage beyond the master's. For the PhD/DPhil and the named doctorate (e.g. DMus), the development takes place under the guidance of recognised experts in the field of study and under circumstances that allow the individual access to appropriate research resources. The contribution to knowledge is judged by independent experts applying contemporary international standards of the discipline. The hallmark will be the individual's capacity for substantial independent research or scholarly creative activity as attested by his/her educational institution and/or as demonstrated by submitted work. The major component of all doctorates is original research.

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<sup>12</sup> A Master's degree may equally be multidisciplinary.



The body of work that leads to the award of a doctorate will be one or more of the following:

- a thesis (the PhD/DPhil)
- creative work in the visual or performing arts (the PhD/DPhil)
- a thesis or equivalent creative work in combination with coursework (the named doctorate)
- a creative work in the visual or performing arts (the named doctorate) with a thesis (the named doctorate)
- published work.

Graduates of the above degrees demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- **Associated Knowledge:** Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of study or professional practice.
- **Associated skills:** Critical reflection on existing knowledge or practice and the creation of new knowledge.
- **Application of knowledge and skills:** Sustained commitment to the professional integrity and to the development of new ideas or practices at the forefront of discipline or professional practice.

Doctoral Degrees are taught mainly by people engaged in research, see s253B of the Education Act 1989.

For more information about degree definitions and requirements, including entry conditions, outcomes, credits and requirements, see [the New Zealand Qualifications Framework](#).

### Terminology

- **A major or major subject** refers to a substantial component of a degree (usually at least one-third and often consisting of one subject only) selected by the learner, in accordance with the regulations, as the principal area of study for the degree. In addition, a major normally includes outcomes at the highest level of the degree
- **A minor or minor subject** refers to a component of an undergraduate degree, usually of at least 60 credits, in a subject area selected by the learner, in accordance with the regulations, to formally recognise a secondary area of study for the degree. Minors need not be a compulsory component of a degree.
- **Endorsement** refers to a subject that is appended to the name of a qualification, most commonly a graduate or post-graduate diploma or certificate (e.g. Diploma for Graduates in Finance) but not excluding an undergraduate qualification, to normally indicate a minimum of a 40% concentration of study in that area. An endorsement with at least such a minimum would be named on the graduation certificate.
- **Double Degree** refers to a programme of study that leads towards two degrees (e.g. BA and BCom), normally including cross crediting.
- **Double Major** refers to a programme of study for a bachelor's degree which includes the major subject requirements for two subjects (two separate sets of 300-level papers are required).



## Section 2: Degree programme approval

This section explains how a tertiary institution can gain degree programme approval, including the criteria the programme has to meet.

### Relevant legislation and criteria

Institutes of technology and polytechnics, wānanga, private training establishments and other bodies are eligible to apply to NZQA for programme approval, under section 249 of the Act.

NZQA uses the criteria in Rule 4.1 of the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#) to determine whether an application will be approved or not.

### Understanding the criteria

#### Criterion 1: Qualification to which the programme leads

The programme meets the definition published on the NZQA website of the applicable qualification type listed in the second column of the Table in the Appendix to the NZQF Listing and Operational Rules 2012.

#### Key information

A degree programme of study leading to a qualification must meet the definition of the qualification to which it leads.

The level and credit value of any qualification to which the degree programme leads are appropriate, clearly identified and meet the minimum requirements of the NZQF.

For more information about qualification definitions, see Table 1: Summary of qualification definitions - levels 1-10 in [the New Zealand Qualifications Framework](#).<sup>13</sup>

#### Criterion 2: Title, aims, learning outcomes and coherence

The title, aims, stated learning outcomes, and coherence of the whole programme are adequate and appropriate and clearly meet the graduate profile and specification for the qualification as listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

#### Key information

Institutions must demonstrate the purpose of the qualification in addition to how the degree programme's aims and outcomes will be fulfilled through the subjects, delivery modes and practical components to give the degree programme its unique focus.

#### Graduate outcomes

To maintain consistency with other qualifications and degree programmes listed on the NZQF, degree programmes must specify a graduate profile for the degree programme/qualification in addition to the learning outcomes specified for each course.

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<sup>13</sup> For further information: Appendix to the *NZQF Listing and Operational Rules 2012* – [NZQF structure – Levels and qualifications types](#). The [Understanding New Zealand qualifications](#) page on the NZQA website has separate web pages describing each type of qualification.

## **Title**

The title of the degree programme must provide an accurate indication of the subject area of the degree and the qualification to which it leads.

The title of any qualification(s) awarded on the basis of successful completion of the degree programme, or part of the degree programme, is consistent with the title of the degree programme and the requirements on nomenclature of the NZQF.

## **Aims**

The stated aims of the degree programme must be clearly defined, and be appropriate to the nature and the level of the qualification to which the degree programme leads.

The aims of the degree programme clearly match the qualification's purpose. The qualification's use and relevance to learners, industry and communities are developed from identification of the need for the degree programme. The learner group is identified and the degree programme clearly articulates the purpose of the degree programme and the qualification to which it leads.

The aims must include identification of any specifically-targeted learner body, and the relationship between the degree programme and any industrial, professional or community need.

## **Learning outcomes of courses**

Learning outcomes of courses must be consistent with the degree programme aims and demonstrate how the student will achieve the qualification outcome statement.

Learning outcomes must be:

- consistent with the degree programme aims and demonstrate how learners will achieve the graduate profile
- clear, and specified for each component of the degree programme
- measurable and achievable, and integrated to provide a balanced and logical degree programme
- presented in a logical, progressive way that demonstrates learners' development of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

## **Coherence**

The degree programme structure must also integrate the aims and learning outcomes in order to form a coherent programme, and demonstrate that:

- the components of the degree programme are appropriate for the level, type and credit value of the qualification
- the degree programme length and components are clearly defined and appropriate for the level of learning and the qualification outcomes
- the progression and integration of learning through the degree programme meets the purpose statement, graduate profile, level and credit value of the qualification
- the combination of components is consistent with and supports the aims and learning outcomes of the degree programme
- there is clear evidence of the manner in which majors are connected to each other if relevant and/or to the overall degree programme.

### Criterion 3: Delivery methods

The delivery methods are adequate and appropriate, given the stated learning outcomes for the programme. Where specific resources are necessary for the programme to be provided, those resources are clearly outlined.

#### Key information

The applicant institution must:

- demonstrate the appropriateness of the degree programme delivery modes (e.g. face-to-face, online/distance, blended) and methods
- ensure that academic integrity<sup>14</sup> will be maintained through the delivery process.

It is important that the delivery methods do not place learners or the public at risk. The institution must identify any potential risks, and demonstrate how they will be addressed.

Delivery methods also need to include consideration of cultural safety and ethical practice.

#### Practical or work-based components

The institution must identify and describe any practical, field-based or work-based components of the degree programme, including research and supervision of research, that are based away from the stated delivery site.

#### Research components

In the case of degree programmes with research components<sup>15</sup>, the institution must provide systems and facilities appropriate to the level and scale of the research involved in the degree programme. These systems and facilities need to enable learners to undertake relevant research within the degree programme.

The institution's systems and facilities may include:

- guidance on the development and approval of research projects
- criteria and procedures for appointing appropriately qualified and experienced supervisors
- guidelines for researchers and research supervisors
- mechanisms for ethical approval of research projects.

### Criterion 4: Acceptability of the programme and consultation

There is a written summary of the consultation undertaken, the views expressed, and consideration of the views. The consultation and summary must cover the acceptability of the programme to the relevant communities (*including whānau, hapū, iwi, or hāpori Māori*) and other key stakeholders (*including any relevant academic, employer, industry, professional and other bodies*).

#### Key information

The consultation will consider the wider needs of stakeholders and practices used in the degree programme.

<sup>14</sup> Academic integrity in this context is a commitment from staff and learners to fundamental values including honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

<sup>15</sup> Including rangahau/Māori research.

Acceptability of the degree programme can be demonstrated by having identified partner institutions that would provide an academic pathway for graduates of the degree programme where this is appropriate. Evidence of this could be provided in the form of an articulation agreement.

A written summary of the consultation must be provided, and adequately describe aspects such as:

- the extent and method(s) of consultation at various stages of development
- the range of stakeholders consulted (key stakeholders and other relevant organisations, groups and communities)
- feedback and consideration of key findings, including a demonstrated need for the degree programme expressed by key stakeholders.

The written summary may draw on or be supported by:

- notes of meetings with external advisors and/or stakeholders
- letters of support from stakeholders.

### **NZQA's expectations**

It is expected that an institution offering a degree programme would have appointed a designated advisory group for degree programmes within a specified subject area. The group should be composed mainly of external representatives of industry, academic and tangata whenua.

The group is expected to have not only been appointed, but to have met, been consulted on, and contributed to, the development of the degree programme.

### **Criterion 5: Regulations**

There are clear, relevant, and appropriate regulations that specify requirements for:

- admission
- credit recognition and transfer
- recognition of prior learning
- programme length and structure
- integration of practical and work-based components
- assessment procedures, including authenticity of student work
- normal progression within the programme.

### **Key information**

#### **Admission**

Admission requirements must:

- be clear and appropriate to the level
- mention international learners if applicable
- include special admission provisions (including English language entry requirements for international learners)
- match or exceed qualification requirements.

## **Recognition of prior learning, cross-credit and credit transfer**

The institution's application must clearly define how the provisions and procedures for the awarding of recognition of prior learning, cross-credit or credit transfer<sup>16</sup> will be applied to the degree programme for which approval is being sought.

It is important that credit recognition and any recognition of prior learning are undertaken in such a way to ensure the degree programme still meets the legislative requirements.

## **Degree programme length and structure**

Minimum and maximum periods for completion of the degree programme for both full time and part-time learners must be clearly stated.

Degree programme length and structure, including any pre- and co-requisites, mandatory and optional/elective components and exit points must be included.

Integration of practical and work-based components should be clearly stated with the relevance to the degree programme identified.

## **Assessment procedures**

Assessment procedures must be clearly stated and:

- be appropriate to the level of degree programme and provide the range of assessment types that will be utilised
- ensure the authenticity of learners' work including how individuals are assessed in group work.

### **Criterion 6: Assessment and moderation**

Assessment methodology is fair, valid, consistent and appropriate given the stated learning outcomes.

There is an effective system for moderation of assessment materials and decisions.

## **Key information**

### **Assessment methodology**

Details of the assessment rationale, methodology or methodologies include:

- how the learner will meet the learning outcomes and/or graduate profile criteria
- the type of assessment used for the degree programme (e.g. theory, practical skills)
- contexts of degree level assessment (e.g. classroom-based, work-based, project-based)

<sup>16</sup> Recognition of prior learning means a process that involves formal assessment of a learner's relevant and current knowledge and skills (gained through prior learning) to determine achievement of learning outcomes of a qualification for the purpose of awarding credit towards that qualification; and for the avoidance of doubt it does not include credit recognition and transfer. Credit recognition and transfer means a formal process whereby credit for outcomes already achieved by a learner in relation to a qualification is recognised as credit for comparable outcomes in another qualification. Cross-crediting is the awarding of credits from another programme within the institution. Credit transfer is the awarding of credits from a programme offered by another institution.

- the method of assessment being clearly stated and appropriate to the learning outcomes degree level programme
- culturally appropriate methodologies.

### **Effective system for moderation of assessment**

Institutions must ensure that:

- assessment methodology and planning are appropriate to a degree level programme
- the required standards for assessment are clearly specified in relation to each component of the degree programme
- learners are provided with fair and regular feedback on progress and fair reporting on final achievements
- where appropriate, assessment policies and practices allow learners to request assessment in te reo Māori
- pre-assessment moderation of summative assessment tasks ensure that they are fair, valid and consistent
- external post-assessment moderation of examples of learner work and marking/grading ensure that assessment outcomes are fair, consistent and appropriate.
- assessment is balanced across the degree programme both in terms of quantity and timing of assessment.

Details of the system for internal and external moderation of degree programme assessment materials and decisions must include:

- scheduling of pre- and post-assessment moderation
- administration and record keeping
- procedures for compliant and non-compliant material and decisions
- provision for considering appeals of degree level assessment decisions and implementing identified improvements to the system as a result of moderation is also required.

### **Assessment of research**

All research components exceeding 60 credits are required to be assessed by at least one external assessor, suitably qualified and appropriate to the research discipline. Normally the assessors would be academics, engaged in a similar field of research, and employed by a university, polytechnic or similar institution delivering in that subject area. Where appropriate, the external individual may be a person of standing in the community or industry who is qualified to judge the quality of the research presented.

The assessment of the research components will be paired with an effective moderation system that examines assessment materials, process and decisions for fairness, equity, validity and consistency.

Provision for considering the appropriateness of assessment materials and, as a result of moderation, implementing identified improvements to the system is also required.

### **Criterion 7: Assessment<sup>17</sup> and review**

The institution:

- assesses the currency and content of the programme
- has adequate and effective processes for the ongoing review of the programme, taking account of the results of any review of the qualification
- has adequate and effective processes for monitoring the quality of outcomes for learners and other stakeholders, and for reviewing programme regulation and content
- updates the programme accordingly.

#### **Key information**

Institutions must describe the procedures they will use to ensure that the degree programme remains relevant and accurate, and continues to deliver quality outcomes to learners and stakeholders.

The institution must demonstrate how it will:

- assess the currency and content of the degree programme
- ensure adequate and effective processes for the ongoing review of the degree programme, taking account of the results of any review of the qualification
- ensure adequate and effective processes are in place for monitoring the quality of outcomes for learners and other stakeholders, and for reviewing degree programme regulations and content
- update the degree programme accordingly.

The institution's participation in self-assessment and EER must include adequate and effective processes for the ongoing review of the degree programme.

This will require evidence of an effective system for the regular monitoring, evaluation and review of degree programmes to ensure that the degree programme approval and accreditation criteria and requirements continue to be met, and that changes and updates to approved degree programmes are managed consistently with external requirements, including registration bodies' requirements.

### **Criterion 8: Research required for degrees and post-graduate qualifications**

The links between research and the curriculum are clear, adequate, and effective.

#### **Key information**

The quantity and quality of staff research outputs<sup>18</sup> are monitored, and the collective output is consistent with the development and maintenance of an ongoing research culture in support of the degree programme.

Degree teaching staff members conduct research within their area of expertise which advances knowledge and understanding, and/or supports the continued development of the degree programme and its delivery. Teaching staff should be able to demonstrate the link between their research and the degree programme and its delivery.

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<sup>17</sup> Refers to self-assessment.

<sup>18</sup> For a list of research outputs, see the Appendix.

## Section 3: Accreditation to provide degree programme

This section explains how a tertiary institution can gain accreditation to provide degree and degree related programmes of study, including the criteria the application must meet.

### Relevant legislation and criteria

Institutes of technology and polytechnics, wānanga, and private training establishments are eligible to apply to NZQA for programme accreditation, under section 250 of the Act.

NZQA uses the criteria in Rule 6 of the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#) to analyse applications.

### Understanding the criteria

#### Criterion 1: Assessment and Moderation

The institution has the capability and capacity to ensure assessment materials and decisions are fair, valid, consistent and appropriate, given the stated learning outcomes.

#### Key information

##### Assessment

The assessment methodology used must:

- ensure that degree level assessment of the learners is fair, valid, equitable and reliable
- information is provided to learners giving clear specification of what is required to pass each component part of the degree programme
- ensure systems are in place to maintain academic integrity in degree programme assessment
- include mechanisms to detect academic misconduct and instances of academic fraud
- where appropriate, assessment policies and practices allow learners to request assessment in te reo Māori
- learners are provided with fair and regular feedback on progress and fair reporting on final achievements
- include information on what learners should do if they wish to appeal an assessment decision
- demonstrate that the teaching staff has the capacity to design appropriate degree level assessments.

Providing evidence of the experience of staff teaching and assessing degree level programmes would demonstrate the institutions ability to design assessments and to assess via the different assessment methods appropriate for degree level programmes.

The degree level assessment requirements must be clearly specified for each component of the degree programme. Providing sample assessments for each level of the degree programme, which should reflect different assessment methods, or evidence of the experience of staff teaching and assessing degree level programme would demonstrate the



institutions ability to design degree level assessments and to assess via the different assessment methods appropriate to the degree.

### **Moderation**

The institution must have an effective system for both internal and external moderation pre- and post-assessment. This will include the identification of external arrangements for post-assessment moderation.

### **Criterion 2: Resources**

The institution has the capability and capacity to support sustained delivery of the programme through appropriate academic staffing, teaching facilities, educational and physical resources, and support services.

#### **Key information**

The institution has the financial infrastructure and administrative systems in place to support the implementation and sustained delivery of the degree programme.

#### **Teaching staff**

The institution delivering degree programmes has:

- degree programmes taught mainly by research-active teaching staff
- sufficient teaching staff involved in the degree programme to deliver the range of content and skills development required
- policies and procedures relating to teaching staff as part of their quality management system.

The application will identify any additional teaching staffing needs and provide detailed recruitment and/or staff development plans appropriate to the degree programme implementation timetable.

#### **Teaching staff qualifications**

The institution delivering degree programmes has adequate and appropriately qualified and experienced teaching staff:

- Teaching staff would normally be qualified at a minimum of one level higher than the course they deliver, assess, and/or supervise or have relevant professional experience<sup>19</sup>.
- For degrees where research includes developing and recording indigenous knowledge it is expected that teaching staff, while they may not hold a higher academic qualification, have equivalent standing within their indigenous community.

Where there is evidence that there is no higher qualification in the relevant subject area, the applicant institution will need to provide evidence that teaching staff members are experts in their profession, and have sufficient delivery, assessment and/or supervision experience at an appropriate level.

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<sup>19</sup> When a teaching staff member does not hold a 'plus one' qualification, industry experience in the discipline and/or higher education teaching experience and/or standing within their indigenous community must be demonstrated as professional equivalency, and/or a timeframe for the completion of the qualification be included.

Where relevant, teaching staff must hold a tertiary teaching qualification or the applicant institution must provide an undertaking that those yet to qualify will enrol in such a programme.

### **Teaching staff engaged in research**

Most staff teaching on the degree programme will be engaged in research, in a field that supports the delivery of the degree programme and underpins its theoretical framework.

Staff members supervising learner's research will have experience and expertise in the supervision of research at the appropriate level or under supervision. Where they are developing such experience it is expected they will work under guidance of a lead researcher.

### **Appropriate resources and facilities**

The institution must:

- clearly identify the range of teaching facilities and physical resources, including library facilities, necessary for the implementation and sustained delivery of the degree programme, in all proposed modes of delivery
- demonstrate the institution's commitment to provide any additional equipment and resources required to deliver the degree programme<sup>20</sup>, and
- put in place the necessary teaching facilities and physical resources, or established detailed development and acquisition schedules appropriate to the degree programme implementation timetable.

In the case of degree programmes with practical, field or work-based courses, the roles and responsibilities of the supervisory staff, the institution and, if relevant, the registration body must be formalised.

In some situations experience in Māori language and culture, and appropriate knowledge, skills and tikanga Māori will also be necessary.

### **Support services**

#### *Support Staff*

Evidence is required that there is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and/or experienced support staff for the outcomes of the degree programme to be met<sup>21</sup>. Support systems and staffing will include learner enrolment, pastoral care, learning support, Māori, Pasifika and international learner support as appropriate.

#### *Learner guidance and support systems*

Evidence is required that adequate and appropriate degree programme information, guidance and support systems are accessible to learners.

#### *Financial and administrative infrastructure*

Evidence is required that the institution's financial infrastructure, administrative systems and resource management practices will be adequate to support implementation and sustained delivery of the degree programme.

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<sup>20</sup> Usually in the form of a letter from the chief executive.

<sup>21</sup> Professional programmes with work-based components may have additional requirements for support staff (e.g. organising work-based components, managing contracts with providers of work-based components, etc.).

### *Quality management system*

The institution quality management system includes policies and procedures to:

- ensure the recruitment of appropriately qualified staff
- support staff professional development as teachers and/or supervisors
- support staff engagement in research and the development of a robust research culture
- supervise those staff developing their research and supervision of research expertise.

The institution's quality management system must also include structured processes associated with an academic board or equivalent (with delegations to faculty or programme committees as appropriate). Procedures for academic supervision, examination of thesis and management of intellectual property and commercialisation should be in place.

#### **Criterion 3: Support for delivery**

If the applicant institution is not the holder of the programme approval, there is support from the holder of the programme approval.

#### **Key information**

If the applicant institution does not hold the degree programme approval, it must submit the formal agreement made between itself and the holder of the degree programme approval.

The agreement is required to include provisions for dispute resolution, managing changes to the degree programme and arrangements should the degree programme cease.

#### **Criterion 4: Assessment and review**

There must be adequate and effective review of programme performance and the institution's capability to support the programme.

There must be monitoring of improvement following review, and processes for determining whether the programme should continue to be delivered.

#### **Key information**

The applicant institution must demonstrate that:

- There is an effective system for the regular monitoring, evaluation and review of the degree programme. The system will include structured processes, associated with the academic board (or equivalent), for ensuring that the views of learners and representatives of relevant industries, professions, academic and research communities, Māori and other stakeholders are taken into account.
- There is an effective system for monitoring the efficacy of any improvements made to the degree programme as a result of any reviews.
- Changes to approved degree programme are managed consistently with any external requirements, including registration bodies' requirements.
- There is a process for determining whether the degree programme should continue to be delivered.
- The assessment and review systems in place will be sufficient to allow the institution to conduct graduating year reviews for the degree programme.

### **Criterion 5: Research activity required to deliver degrees and post-graduate qualifications**

Research facilities and the support of staff involved in research are adequate, the levels of research activity of staff involved in the programme are satisfactory, and the ways by which the research-teaching links are made in the curriculum are appropriate.

#### **Key information**

The applicant institution must demonstrate that:

- The quantity and quality of research outputs of staff teaching degree programme are monitored, and the collective output is consistent with the development and maintenance of an ongoing research culture in support of the degree programme. This may involve the establishment of a research centre.
- Teaching staff must mainly be engaged in, and continue to conduct, research within areas of their expertise, which advances knowledge and understanding and supports the continued development of the degree programme.

#### **NZQA's expectations**

It is expected that there will be an appropriate balance between pedagogical and discipline-specific research, and that the collective research outputs will be varied and appropriate to the nature of the degree programme.

If the institution is already engaged in Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF), its rating will be included in the application. If the institution is not engaged in PBRF, consideration should be given to this, or an alternative way of measuring research output should be included. Research activity and outputs of staff teaching in relevant degree programmes will be included in the application.

#### **Systems and facilities**

Organisational systems and facilities provide appropriate support to teaching staff involved in research, including access to an appropriate ethics committee.

In the case of degree programmes with research components, evidence of appropriate systems and facilities appropriate to the level and scale of the research must be provided to enable learners to undertake relevant research, including:

- guidance on the development, approval and submission of research projects
- criteria and procedures for the appointment of appropriately qualified and experienced supervisors
- a code of conduct for researchers and research supervisors
- mechanisms for ethical approval of research projects.

## Section 4: Application and Evaluation

This section explains how to apply for degree programme approval and/or accreditation to provide degree programme, and also outlines the requirements for panel nominees.

### Applying for degree programme approval and/or accreditation to provide a degree programme

#### **Rule 5.2 of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013**

- 5.2 Applications by institutions (*other than universities*) for approval of programmes leading to degree and post-graduate qualifications at levels 7 to 10 must contain the following:
- (a) the Data Requirements (*as defined in Rule 3.1*)
  - (b) programme documentation that includes: a clear statement of title and aims of the programme; a clear articulation of the structure, components and length of the programme; specified learning outcomes for each component of the programme; clearly identified links between the programme component learning outcomes and the qualification graduate profile outcomes; and allocation of appropriate levels and credits for each component
  - (c) information that demonstrates the programme meets the criteria specified in Rule 4.1
  - (d) a self-assessment report addressing the key evaluation questions for programmes that are published by NZQA on its website
  - (e) evidence of internal quality assurance approval of the programme by the institution.

#### **Rule 7.2 of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013**

- 7.2 Applications by institutions (*other than universities*) for accreditation to provide an approved programme or part of an approved programme leading to a degree or post-graduate qualifications at levels 7 to 10 must contain the following information:
- (a) the Data Requirements (*as defined in Rule 3.1*)
  - (b) information that demonstrates the institution meets the criteria specified in Rule 6.1
  - (c) a self-assessment report addressing the key evaluation questions for accreditation that are published by NZQA on its website
  - (d) evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution.

### Specific requirements

#### *Internal quality assurance approval*

Evidence of internal academic quality assurance approval must be provided with all applications. The institution needs to provide a formal record of internal quality assurance approval in writing.

The formal record must not be more than six months old, and can be any or all of the following or the equivalent for the institution:

- academic board minutes
- teaching committee minutes
- management team sign-off.

#### *Self-assessment reports*

Rule 5.2 (d) and Rule 7.2 (c) of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013* state that an application for programme approval and/or accreditation needs to include a self-assessment report addressing the key evaluation questions for programmes and/or accreditation.

Except where NZQA otherwise requires, Category 1 institutions do not have to submit self-assessment reports (Rules 5.3 and 7.3).

The relevant key evaluative questions are published on NZQA's website <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/self-assessment/make-self-assessment-happen/tools-and-resources/key-evaluation-questions/>

#### *Submitting an application*

Applications must be submitted online through the secure [TEO login](#) on the [NZQA website](#). This will mean filling out an online form and attaching the relevant documents.

The NZQA website and [The Guidelines for approval of programmes of study leading to qualifications listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework and accreditation](#) provide [guidance](#) for different processes. This includes:

- degree programme approval and/or accreditation to provide application
- degree programme change application.

While applications must be made online, institutions should note that if a panel visit is required, they may be asked to supply panel members with a bound hard copy of the application materials.

#### *The notification process*

To assist with NZQA planning processes, institutions are asked, wherever possible, to notify NZQA, at least three months prior to submitting their documentation, of their intention to submit an application for degree programme approval and/or accreditation to provide a degree programme.

#### *Help with online applications*

Contact the [Service Support team](#) if assistance with online applications is needed.

## The evaluation process

Once NZQA receives the application, an NZQA evaluator will pre-assess the application to determine if it could be put forward for a full panel evaluation:

- If the pre-assessment indicates that further work is required, the application will be returned to the institution for further development.
- If the NZQA evaluator determines that an evaluation should proceed, NZQA will determine whether a full or reduced panel will be required, and whether any other requirements are to be considered (e.g. registration bodies' involvement on the panel, or multiple site approvals).

The NZQA evaluator will<sup>22</sup>:

- select the appropriate number of panel members from the nominees submitted, and
- engage panel members through a contract for service for their involvement in the panel process. If further panel nominations are required, the evaluator will liaise with the institution.

## The contribution of a panel

The members of a panel contribute to the specialist knowledge and skills needed to effectively evaluate degree programmes approvals and/or accreditations to provide degree programmes.

They have, collectively, knowledge of current research and best practice, appropriate teaching and assessment methods, and the context of the degree programme.

The composition of a panel will be decided on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the scope of the application, the institution's experience in delivery in the subject area, and the institution's experience in delivery of other programmes of a similar level.

Full panels will be used to evaluate degree programme applications, unless the application is considered to meet the requirements for a reduced panel.

NZQA will decide to appoint a reduced panel or to conduct a desk evaluation on a case-by-case only. This may take into consideration the type of application, the experience of the institution in delivering in the given subject area or at a similar level or other factors.

## Panel nominees

Two nominees are required for each position on the panel, for example two nominees for each of the university academics. Full resumés and contact details are required for all panel nominees. NZQA will appoint the NZQA representative and the independent chairperson.

## The composition of a panel

### *Full panel composition*

Normally, a full panel will be made up of:

- an independent chairperson
- an NZQA representative with overall responsibility for the evaluation process (this may be the NZQA evaluator or an appropriately qualified external person contracted to perform this role)

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<sup>22</sup> Where applicable, registration bodies are also involved in the evaluation process including in the composition of full and reduced panels.

- two university academics, chosen from four nominees (from New Zealand or overseas) from the area of specialisation appertaining to the application
- one senior academic, chosen from two nominees, from the applicant institution, but from a different discipline
- one senior academic, chosen from two nominees, from a similar institution with accreditation to award a degree in a similar subject area
- two representatives of industry, chosen from four nominees, relevant to the subject area to which the degree programme relates or relevant professions, endorsed by relevant stakeholder groups (Note: when the proposed degree programme leads to professional registration, one of these representatives will be appointed by the appropriate registration body.)
- one Māori and, where appropriate, a representative of Pasifika or other relevant communities, chosen from two nominees, who has knowledge and understanding of the discipline to which the application relates.

Additional panel members may be required, depending on the scope of the application.

Where a regulatory body is involved, the panel may include representation of that body. This is on a case-by-case basis.

#### *Reduced panel composition*

A reduced panel is likely to be made up of:

- an NZQA representative with overall responsibility for the evaluation process
- one senior academic from an institution with accreditation to provide a degree programme in a similar subject area
- one representative of industry, commerce or the professions, endorsed by relevant stakeholder groups
- one academic from the applicant institution not involved in the development of the degree programme.

#### **The criteria for a panel**

Collectively, the panel should have the following characteristics:

- expertise in the field or discipline covered by the application and in the proposed mode of delivery
- relevant experience in industry, commerce, or professions relevant to the degree programme
- experience, expertise and familiarity with current practice and developments in teaching, learning, assessment and (where relevant) research supervision and examination at the level of the proposed qualification
- the ability to make, and credibly explain, impartial judgements about how the proposed degree programme compares with similar ones offered elsewhere in New Zealand and overseas (where appropriate), and to consider the degree programme in a national and international perspective
- the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the institution's educational quality management systems relevant to the degree programme, as part of its self-assessment
- familiarity with good practice in quality assurance



- where possible, the panel should include representatives of Māori, Pasifika and other relevant communities in a variety of roles, and have a gender balance.

Nominees must not have been involved with the development of the degree programme, and must not have any potential conflict of interest.

The number of nominees requested is greater than the size of the panel so that the NZQA evaluator can ensure that the most appropriate panel is sought. NZQA will work with the institution to confirm the panel for the evaluation.

### **The activities of a panel during an evaluation**

Collectively, the panel is required to:

- evaluate the application against the rules and provide NZQA with an evaluation
- engage in the panel process and provide their specialist expertise
- make recommendations to NZQA that contribute to the final report
- comment on and confirm the final report
- be available to engage in any follow-up evaluation that may be required.

### **Evaluating the submitted documentation**

The applicant institution will be required to send out the application documentation to all appointed panel members. In addition to an electronic copy, it will send panel members a bound hard copy version of all application materials.

Each panel member receives the application documentation and makes an initial evaluation of the documentation against the appropriate criteria.

NZQA provides panel members with a preliminary panel evaluation template to fill in when evaluating the application documents, and return to NZQA. The NZQA evaluator will write the preliminary report for the panel and the chair to consider.

### **The evaluation process**

A visit by the panel to evaluate a degree programme for approval and/or accreditation to provide a degree programme will be organised by the institution.

The institution will assist, as appropriate, with logistical arrangements for the evaluation.

#### *What happens during an evaluation visit?*

The visit will generally include:

- meetings with:
  - senior management, including the chief executive
  - the degree programme developers and the degree programme leader
  - members of the teaching team
  - learners from a similar field of study to that of the proposed degree programme
  - the support staff, the advisory group, and
- a tour of the facilities.

There will also be time allocated for private meetings of the panel.

At the end of the visit, the panel will provide informal feedback to the institution on the outcome of the panel's findings.

### *Possible outcomes of the evaluation*

The panel will produce a report which will either:

- recommend approval and/or accreditation by NZQA
- specify one or a series of requirements that need to be met before the panel can make a recommendation to NZQA
- recommend one or a series of conditions that should be enforced by NZQA, or
- recommend that NZQA declines the application for approval and/or accreditation.

The panel may also make recommendations to the institution. Note that the report is only a recommendation and that the final decision is made by NZQA.

During the site visit, if the panel agrees that it is likely to recommend a decline, the Chair and the NZQA representative may inform the applicant that a decline is likely, so that the institution has the opportunity to withdraw its application. In this case, the panel will meet with representatives from the institution and provide verbal feedback. A report will not be issued to the institution.

### **Specifying requirements for the institution**

If the panel decides to specify requirements to be met by the institution before a recommendation to approve or decline the application is made to NZQA, the panel will:

- notify the institution of these requirements
- invite the institution to respond to the requirements
- make contact or meet with the institution to discuss any supplied response.

Once the panel has evaluated the institution's response to the requirements, it will make a recommendation for the application to be approved or declined. NZQA will make the final decision regarding the panel's recommendation, with the registration body if applicable.

### **The final report**

The report is drafted by the NZQA representative and takes into account the recommendations of the panel. The report sets out the key reasons for the decision, explaining the main evidence considered, which evidence was considered the most important, and how the evidence was interpreted to reach the decision (the logic). The reasoning underpinning the judgements and decision will be transparent to the reader.

The draft report is sent to the panel to ensure the panel's findings are reflected, and then to the institution to confirm accuracy<sup>23</sup>. The final version will reflect the views of the whole panel and include any corrections from the institution. The panel needs to confirm that the final version is acceptable and accurate.

NZQA will consider this report and confirm the final decision about the application (i.e. approved, approved with conditions, declined), in association with the registration body if applicable. Once this decision is made, NZQA will inform the institution and send a copy of the final report. The panel costs are the responsibility of the applicant institution.

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<sup>23</sup> In terms of matters of factual accuracy, errors of interpretation of evidence, or the logic of the report conclusion(s).

## Section 5: Post-approval

This section outlines the requirements that apply after a degree programme approval and/or accreditation to provide a degree programme is granted.

It also explains the processes NZQA uses to ensure institutions continue to meet legislative and NZQA requirements for approval and accreditation.

These processes include:

- maintaining approval for a degree programme and/or accreditation to provide a degree programme
- monitoring of degree programme
- self-monitoring of degree programme delivery by institutions
- special reviews initiated by NZQA.

Institutions, as part of their own self-assessment processes, should ensure that they continue to meet the relevant criteria to deliver the degree programme.

### Relevant legislation and NZQA rules

All the rules underpinning these NZQA processes are in the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013*. The specific rules are listed below:

- Maintaining approval – Rule 11.2
- Maintaining accreditation – Rule 12.2
- Monitoring – Rule 12.2 (e) (i)
- Graduating year reviews – Rule 12.2 (e) (i)
- Self-monitoring – Rule 12.2 (e) (ii)
- Special reviews – Rule 19.

### Maintaining approval for degree programme

Ongoing approval of degree programme is conditional on an institution demonstrating that the degree programme continues to meet the relevant criteria<sup>24</sup>.

#### ***Rule 11.2 of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

11.2 To continue to maintain approval of a programme leading to a degree or post-graduate qualification at levels 7 to 10, institutions (other than universities) must:

- a. ensure the criteria specified in Rule 4.1 continue to be met
- b. ensure regular reviews of the programme are undertaken.

### Guidance for applicants

The approved degree programme must be maintained so it continues to meet the relevant NZQA criteria.

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<sup>24</sup> Where applicable, registration bodies also have monitoring processes in relation to maintaining approval.

The most effective way to do this is to have:

- ongoing monitoring of the quality and content of the degree programme and the educational outcomes for learners including graduate outcomes as employment and further study
- a regular and comprehensive review of the degree programme every few years.

### **Regular review of degree programme**

The institution is responsible for ensuring the approved degree programme is relevant and has current content.

Accredited institutions are required to undertake a comprehensive review of any degree programme, at least once every five years, in addition to a graduation year review (see p 38). This evaluation should include input from the relevant professional and academic communities. The institution must report the findings of these reviews to NZQA at the time of the annual report.

### **Maintaining accreditation to provide degree programme**

Ongoing accreditation is conditional on an institution demonstrating that the delivery of the degree programme continues to meet the relevant criteria.

#### **Rule 12.2 of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013**

12.2 To continue to maintain accreditation to provide an approved programme or part of an approved programme leading to a degree or post-graduate qualification at levels 7 to 10, institutions (other than universities) must:

- a. ensure the criteria specified within Rule 6.1 continue to be met
- b. undertake self-assessment
- c. provide the programme (or part) as it was approved, including adhering to the programme regulations, unless a specific change has been approved in writing by NZQA
- d. participate in external evaluation and review
- e. participate in monitoring, which will consist of either:
  - (i) annual visits to the institution by the NZQA appointed monitor, reports by the monitor on the implementation of the programme, and reviews of the first graduating years of programmes by the institution; or
  - (ii) where NZQA permits, self-monitoring in accordance with any conditions imposed by NZQA.

### **Self-assessment for accredited institutions**

The institution must be engaged in an ongoing process of self-assessment to ensure quality educational outcomes for learners and continuous improvement of degree programmes by the institution, and ensure that the criteria contained in Rule 6.1 continue to be met.

See [Self-assessment resources](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/self-assessment/) on the NZQA website for more information and tools (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/self-assessment/>).

## External evaluation and review (EER)

All institutions with degree programme approval and accreditation to provide degree programme, or accreditation to provide degree programme only, need to participate in the EER process.

An EER provides an independent judgement of the educational performance and capability in self-assessment of all non-university tertiary education organisations (TEOs).

For more information about the EER process, see the following resources:

- EER web page on the NZQA website (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>).
- Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>).
- Tertiary evaluation indicators (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/Registration-and-accreditation/registration-accreditation-evaluation-indicators.pdf>).

## Monitoring and self-monitoring of degree programme delivery

### Rule 12.2 (e) of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013

12.2 To continue to maintain accreditation to provide an approved programme or part of an approved programme leading to a degree or post-graduate qualification at levels 7 to 10, institutions (other than universities) must:

- e. participate in monitoring, which will consist of either:
  - i. annual visits to the institution by the NZQA appointed monitor, reports by the monitor on the implementation of the programme, and reviews of the first graduating years of programmes by the institution; or
  - ii. where NZQA permits, self-monitoring in accordance with any conditions imposed by NZQA.

### Guidance for applicants

When a degree programme is approved, NZQA works with the institution to appoint a monitor to ensure the degree programme is being delivered as approved.

Most often, the monitor is selected from the academic representatives on the panel. In some cases, a second monitor representing the relevant industry is appointed. This forms part of the annual report to NZQA that all institutions with degree programmes approvals and/or accreditations to provide degree programmes are required to submit.

The monitor visits the institution every year and reports on the management and delivery of each degree programme they are monitoring. Monitoring will continue until NZQA is satisfied that the quality of the degree programme is maintained by the institution.

Where registration bodies are involved in the degree programme approval and accreditation to provide, or accreditation to provide only, the monitors will be appointed in conjunction with the registration body.

## Self-monitoring by institutions

When the degree programme is well established and is running smoothly (usually after the first cohort), the monitor may recommend that the institution applies to NZQA to discontinue external monitoring and thereafter continue to provide an Annual Programme Evaluation Report (APER) to NZQA.

This arrangement must be approved by NZQA, and may include conditions the institution has to keep.

It is expected that an institution will continue to use an external monitor as part of the self-monitoring process. Where NZQA approves self-monitoring, this does not abrogate the responsibility for other registration bodies to continue their role.

## Graduating year review

The purpose of the graduating year review is to conduct a comprehensive review of the first cohort of a degree programme, taking a cumulative rolling number of years based on a full-time programme's cycle.

Review of the first graduating year of a degree programme needs to occur as a part of the institution's annual programme evaluation, and the findings reported.

This will become integrated with the monitors' role in the annual monitoring of the degree programme.

The review is required to include the following:

- a degree programme statement with a brief overview of the programme, the extent to which its original aims have been achieved and any major changes that have occurred
- a description of the review process
- the outcomes of the review process, including the ongoing acceptability of the degree programme to stakeholders, assessment and learner performance, enrolment and completion data
- the outcomes of any external evaluations, for example by professional registration bodies
- a statement of intention to continue or discontinue the degree programme and a rationale for that decision.

## Special reviews

### **Rule 19 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

- 19.1 NZQA will give an institution (other than a university) reasonable notice of any special review NZQA intends to undertake in relation to a programme approval or an accreditation of the institution to provide an approved programme.
- 19.2 Notice under Rule 19.1 will be given where concerns about the programme approval or accreditation are raised with NZQA, or where concerns otherwise come to the attention of NZQA.
- 19.3 The institution must provide relevant information and otherwise cooperate with NZQA for the purposes of the special review.

NZQA retains the right to conduct a special review of the approval of a degree programme and/or accreditation to provide a degree programme. NZQA will give the institution reasonable notice of any special review.

NZQA will implement a special review if serious or ongoing concerns about the quality and/or stability of the degree programme come to the attention of NZQA.

This review will generally be conducted by a panel convened at the time and for that specific purpose.

## Section 6: Changes to approved degree programmes

This section explains NZQA requirements for making changes to approved degree programmes, the different types of changes, and how institutions can apply for changes.

Changes to a degree programme may be a result of:

- ongoing quality management and improvement
- changes in the industry or sector, or
- improvements the institution wishes to make.

Depending on the extent and type of the change, NZQA needs to either be notified of changes to approved degree programmes or approve the changes<sup>25</sup>.

### Relevant legislation and NZQA rules

All the rules underpinning these NZQA processes are in the [NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013](#). The specific rules are listed below:

- when a new degree programme approval application is needed – Rule 15.5
- making a Type 1 change – Rule 14.1
- making a Type 2 change – Rules 14.2 and 14.3.

### Types of changes

There are two types of changes. See the information below to determine if the change is a Type 1 or Type 2 change, or if the change is significant enough to need a new degree programme approval application.

#### Type 1 changes

##### **Rule 3.1 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

- “Type 1 change” means one or more changes to components of an approved programme which do not impact on the programme as a whole.

Type 1 changes relate to one or more components of a degree programme which do not have an impact on the overall degree programme and where the qualification to which the degree programme leads is unchanged. A component means the courses, papers, modules or assessment standards that make up the programme leading to the qualification.

The institution needs to notify NZQA and provide the information stated in the data requirements as defined in Rule 3 before amending the approved degree programme.

##### **Rule 3.1 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

- “Data requirements” means the details required to be filled out in the fields in the relevant online application form available on NZQA’s website.

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<sup>25</sup> In association with the registration body if applicable.



Applications for Type 1 changes are considered case-by-case, and NZQA makes the final decision on whether the change is a Type 1 or a Type 2 change, or requires a new degree programme approval application.

In order for NZQA to make a professional judgement against criteria as to whether the change is type 1 or type 2, the institution needs to provide NZQA with information that clearly identifies what the degree programme was approved as and then, identifies the changes that the institution wishes to make. That way NZQA can assess the level of change. New documentation should be provided once those changes have been approved in order for NZQA's records to be up-dated.

NZQA reviews the nature and the number of changes to a degree programme to:

- ensure that they are indeed minor Type 1 changes and
- do not fall into the Type 2 category
- do not need a new degree programme approval.

This work is undertaken as part of any application approval.

### *Examples of Type 1 changes*

These can include changes to the:

- content of a course
- title of a course
- learning outcomes or purpose/aim statement of a course (but not the overall outcomes or purpose/aim of the qualification)
- level of a course (with no change to the overall level of the qualification)
- credit value of courses (with no change to the overall credit value of the qualification)
- pre- or co-requisite that does not affect the entry requirements for the degree programme
- teaching/learning strategies of the course
- assessment of the course (quantitative change)
- elective courses of the degree programme.

Typically, an accumulation of Type 1 changes may lead NZQA to consider them as Type 2 changes. NZQA advisor and the institution academic manager are expected to discuss this matter before NZQA decides if these changes fall into Type 2 category.

### **Type 2 changes**

#### **Rule 3.1 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

- “Type 2 change” means one or more changes to components of an approved programme which do have an impact on the programme as a whole.

Type 2 changes may occur as a result of a review of the qualification which means the degree programme leading to the qualification consequently needs to be changed to meet the new qualification requirements.

NZQA needs to evaluate and approve the changes to the approved degree programme.

In some cases, a panel may be formed to consider changes and conduct a site visit to determine whether approval should be recommended.

### *Examples of Type 2 changes*

The following changes require evaluation by NZQA and may include consultation with the monitor and relevant stakeholders, and possibly a visit to the institution/new site:

- changes to the qualification to which the degree programme leads such as:
  - qualification type (e.g. certificate, diploma)
  - title
  - level
  - credit value
  - outcome statement
  - specification
- changes to the degree programme including:
  - structure of the degree programme
  - regulations
  - delivery methods (e.g. from classroom learning to distance learning)
  - components (e.g. levels, credits, learning).

### **Guidance for applicants**

The following changes normally require evaluation by an external panel:

- introduction of a new major
- changes to the mode of delivery
- delivery at another site (including overseas sites)
- significant changes to the structure of the degree programme.

### **Changes that require a new degree programme approval application**

If changes to a degree programme have a significant impact on the programme as a whole, an application for a new degree programme rather than a Type 2 change should be considered.

NZQA will make any final decision on the type of change involved.

#### **Rule 15.5 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

- 15.5 If there are a significant number of changes made to the programme NZQA may decline the application and require a new programme approval application to be submitted.

For guidance on the above, contact your relationship manager.

## Making a Type 1 change

### Rule 14.1 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013*

- 14.1 Before an institution carries out a Type 1 change to an approved programme, the institution must notify NZQA of amendments that result in changes to the Data Requirements (as defined in Rule 3.1).

### Guidance for applicants

The institution has to provide NZQA with details of the amendments to the degree programme, but no further information is needed. These amendments will be reviewed by an evaluator to ensure that they do come under the category of Type 1 changes.

The change requires notification, but not approval, by NZQA.

## Making a Type 2 change

### Rules 14.2 and 14.3 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013*

- 14.2 Before an institution carries out a Type 2 change to an approved programme, the institution must obtain approval from NZQA for the change after applying to NZQA and providing the information in Rule 14.3.
- 14.3 The information required for the purposes of an application for a Type 2 change under Rule 14.2 is:
  - a. any changes to Data Requirements (as defined in Rule 3.1)
  - b. full details of the changes made to the approved programme and any impacts on the accreditation of institutions to provide the programme or part of the programme
  - c. information that demonstrates the programme continues to meet the criteria specified in Rule 4.1
  - d. evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution.

### Guidance for applicants

NZQA needs to approve Type 2 changes to ensure that the approved degree programme still meets the:

- requirements of the qualification it leads to, and
- the degree programme approval criteria in the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013*.

### Information to include in the application

The application must include sufficient details for NZQA to confirm that the criteria for degree programme approval and accreditation to provide degree programme will continue to be met after the change.

The application should include:

- any changes to the basic details about the degree programme (e.g. level, credits)
- information showing the current degree programme and the proposed changes, including full details of the proposed changes
- any impacts on the accreditation of other institutions who are delivering part or all of the degree programme
- sufficient evidence that the amended degree programme still meets the degree programme approval criteria
- the changes have been examined and approved by the institution.

## Section 7: Collaboration

This section gives guidance on how different institutions can work together to develop and provide degree programme(s). This includes what information needs to be provided when a collaborative application is submitted.

It also outlines NZQA rules for sub-contracting arrangements for providing degree programmes.

If the degree programme is jointly developed and provided, it must be clear which institution(s) will award the qualification it leads to. The institution that awards the qualification will apply its own accreditation and approval procedures as if it were the only provider.

### Collaborative arrangements between institutions

Institutions can collaborate to:

- design the learning and develop the content of the degree programme (e.g. joint ownership of the degree programme)
- provide suitable facilities and equipment
- supply qualified teaching and support staff
- source work or job experience for learners
- jointly provide degree programmes.

Different types of institutions can work together to develop and provide degree programmes. Some examples are:

- Institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) and universities
- ITPs and private training establishments (PTEs)
- Multiple ITPs.
- Multiple PTEs.

Where institutions collaborate to provide an approved degree programme, they will need to establish a formal agreement.

#### Establishing a written formal agreement

A written formal agreement that clearly and accurately records how the institutions will work together to develop and/or maintain and/or provide the degree programme should be established.

Partner institutions need to identify who is responsible for all relevant aspects of the degree programme and its management and/or provision. This includes maintaining the quality of the degree programme and its delivery.

The written formal agreement:

- sets out how the degree programme will be maintained
- ensures that collaborative arrangements are clear and operate smoothly
- identifies clear lines of authority and areas of accountability.

## Contents of the written formal agreement

The written formal agreement must be signed by the legally recognised signatories of the parties to the agreement and must specify, as appropriate to the application:

- the names of the parties to the agreement
- who bears ultimate responsibility for the quality of the degree programme
- the location of delivery
- how responsibility is allocated for the management of quality systems to oversee and maintain standards
- procedures for resolving any differences which might arise between the parties to the agreement
- procedures and responsibilities for securing degree programme approval and accreditation to provide degree programme
- procedures and responsibilities for managing the degree programme and its ongoing monitoring, and implementing changes to the degree programme
- assessment and moderation arrangements
- procedures for agreeing on all necessary financial arrangements and the provision of resources, both physical and human
- responsibility for communication of all necessary reports and other information to NZQA
- an indication of the wording which will appear on certificates awarded to learners who have met all the requirements of the degree programme
- responsibility for all administrative arrangements such as learner enrolment, learner welfare services, decisions relating to progress through the degree programme, assessment, appeals, reporting learner results, and remuneration of monitors and moderators (if applicable)
- clear process for the review of the agreement and for the termination of agreement, and
- procedures for the protection of learners if the arrangement is terminated.

### *Collaboration between a university and a non-university*

The section below details the information that needs to be provided with an application for a joint degree programme.

The following procedures had been agreed between NZQA and [Universities New Zealand \(UNZ\)](#).

### *Awarding a qualification from a jointly developed or taught degree programme*

There are three possibilities with three different requirements:

- a. If the qualification is awarded solely in the name of a university, [Universities New Zealand's Committee on University Academic Programmes \(CUAP\)](#) procedures would apply, as set out in the CUAP booklet.
- b. If it is awarded solely in the name of another institution, the relevant procedures would apply, as set out in NZQA policy.
- c. For a degree awarded in the name of two institutions, one of which is a university, a combination of the procedures will apply (e.g. negotiated between the institutions).

### *One set of documentation*

If the application involves a university and an ITP, or PTE, a wānanga, the applicant institutions should submit only one set of documentation. The documentation needs to go to NZQA first.

After an initial analysis, and only if it addresses all requirements, the application will be sent to CUAP by one of the due dates (see below).

### *One approval process*

1. When NZQA receives the application, an initial analysis of the documentation will be undertaken to ensure that the application can meet the relevant criteria.
2. If the documentation is incomplete or not to the right standard, NZQA will consult with the applicant institutions and return the documents for the required improvements or amendments.
3. When the documentation has been satisfactorily amended, it should be sent to CUAP in time to fit in with CUAP cycles, i.e. by 1 May or 1 September.
  - NZQA will attach any comments to the documentation so that they can be considered by CUAP, in the same way that comments from any university will be considered.
  - If there are concerns, CUAP will discuss these with NZQA.
4. When the application meets the relevant criteria CUAP will recommend approval and notify NZQA.
  - If CUAP does not approve the application, it will advise NZQA and both applicant institutions.

### *Site approved visit*

The site where the degree programme will be delivered must be approved by NZQA. The approval of the site, as part of accreditation visit, will assist institutions with their growth and development. It will not be a full panel visit, as it will focus on accreditation only.

The panel for the visit will consist of one representative from the universities and one from the industry/profession with other representatives as appropriate.

In order to reduce the overall timeframe, the accreditation visit may take place while the CUAP process is under way. The outcome of the accreditation visit may be reported to CUAP if necessary.

### **Collaboration between institutions that are not universities**

Institutions may wish to form partnerships for:

- the development and maintenance of a programme that leads to the award of a degree or related qualification; and/or
- the delivery of a programme that leads to the award of a degree or related qualification.

## Applying for a joint degree programme

Before applying, institutions need to determine that the application meets the relevant criteria and that any documentation submitted is not secret or commercially sensitive.

### Joint arrangements

Joint arrangements might also include:

- provision for a joint degree programme coordinating committee
- a written formal agreement covering any issues raised by the application and arrangements for the joint development of material, research and intellectual property ownership.

## Sub-contracting

An institution can arrange for another institution to provide approved degree programmes or part of approved degree programmes on their behalf.

There are different requirements when an institution engages a sub-contractor depending on whether the sub-contractor involved has accreditation to provide the approved degree programme (see Rule 17 of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013).

### Deciding which requirements apply to a sub-contracting relationship

#### **Rule 17.1 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

17.1 Where an institution (other than a university) proposes to use a sub-contractor to provide an approved programme or part of an approved programme on the institution's behalf, and the institution and the sub-contractor are both accredited to provide the programme (or part), the institution must notify NZQA of the sub-contracting arrangement prior to the programme (or part) being provided.

### Guidance for applicants

Rule 17.1 applies when both the institution and the sub-contractor have accreditation for the degree programme.

The institution must notify NZQA of the sub-contracting arrangement prior to the programme (or part) being provided.

#### **Rule 17.2 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

17.2 Where an institution (other than a university) proposes to use a sub-contractor to provide an approved programme or part of an approved programme that the institution is accredited to provide, and the sub-contractor does not itself hold accreditation, the institution must apply to NZQA for approval to engage the sub-contractor prior to any provision of the programme (or part) by the sub-contractor.

### Guidance for applicants

Rule 17.2 applies when the institution has accreditation for the degree programme, but the sub-contractor does not. The institution must apply to NZQA for approval to engage the sub-contractor prior to any provision of the degree programme (or part) by the sub-contractor.



### **Information to include when the sub-contractor does not have accreditation**

Rule 17.3 lists the information the institution needs to supply if the sub-contractor does not have accreditation for the degree programme.

#### **Rule 17.3 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

17.3 The institution needs to provide the following information:

- a. the name of the sub-contractor
- b. identification of the programme(s) (or part(s)) to be provided under the arrangement
- c. the rationale for the proposed sub-contracting arrangement
- d. a copy of the sub-contracting arrangement between the institution and the sub-contractor
- e. evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution.

### **Criteria for approving sub-contracting arrangements**

Rule 17.4 gives the criteria used to evaluate the request.

#### **Rule 17.4 of the *NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013***

17.4 NZQA will grant approval to an application under rule 17.2 where it is satisfied that:

- a. the institution remains responsible for the sub-contractor meeting all of the institution's obligations that are relevant for the accreditation
- b. the sub-contractor will meet all relevant obligations in the Act and in rules made under section 253 of the Act in relation to the provision of the programme
- c. there is a formal documented arrangement between the holder and the sub-contractor that includes provisions to ensure that NZQA is able to exercise its quality assurance and enforcement powers and functions in respect of the acts or omissions of the sub-contractor relating to the provision of the programme
- d. the information and advertising for the study or training clearly states that it is provided through a sub-contracting arrangement
- e. all student enrolments are through the institution, and the institution maintains all student enrolment and academic information.

### **Guidance for applicants**

#### **Formal documented arrangements**

The agreement between an institution and a sub-contractor is required to be legally binding (i.e. formal written agreement) and cover the following aspects of the working relationship:

- the division of responsibilities between the institution and sub-contractor
- how the sub-contractor will meet all the relevant obligations in the Act and in rules made under section 253 of the Act when delivering the degree programme
- how enrolments will be processed and where learner information will be kept.

**Advertising for programme and study information**

It must be clear to potential learners that the degree programme is being provided by a sub-contractor. This could be reflected in any advertising for the degree programme and/or information supplied to learners about the programme.

**Maintaining learner records**

The institution needs to confirm that it will enrol learners and collect, store, and maintain their academic information.

# Appendix

## List of research output types<sup>26</sup>

Research outputs may be one of the following types:

- Artefact/Object/Craftwork
- Authored Book
- Awarded Doctoral Thesis
- Awarded Research Master's Thesis
- Chapter in a Book
- Commissioned Report for External Body
- Composition
- Conference Contribution
  - o abstract
  - o full conference paper
  - o conference paper in published proceedings
  - o poster presentation
  - o oral presentation
  - o other
- Confidential Report for External Body
- Discussion Paper
- Design Output
- Edited Book
- Exhibition
- Film/Video
- Intellectual Property (e.g. patent, trademark)
- Journal Article
- Literary translations, where these contain significant editorial work in the nature of research
- Monograph
- Oral Presentation
- Performance
- Scholarly Edition
- Software
- Technical Report
- Working Paper
- Other Form of Assessable Output (including but not limited to book reviews, magazine articles, new materials, structures, devices, images, products, buildings, food products and processes, published geological and/or geomorphological maps, and explanatory texts).

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<sup>26</sup> Performance-Based Research Fund Quality Evaluation Guidelines 2012 – Tertiary Education Commission Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua.