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<b>To</b>	Executive Leadership Team Te Poari Mātauranga Academic Board	<b>From</b>	Simon Nash Interim Executive Director Ako
<b>Title</b>	Academic Quality Action Plan Update March 2020	<b>Date</b>	01 / 04 / 2020

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**Purpose**

To provide an update on our EER response – the Academic Quality Action Plan (AQAP) progress for your information.

**Background**

This is the eighth monthly report on the AQAP and is accompanied by the AQAP ‘Overview’ and ‘Project Plan’.

**Covid 19 risks**

In this update I am raising significant risks for our EER outcomes related to Covid 19.

An almost complete ‘pause’ on EER-specific activity was taken at the end of March as the institution responds to Covid 19. A return of focus to EER for Unitec teams will be essential post-Easter.

NZQA have been contacted to advise of the risks for Unitec’s EER outcome associated with Covid 19. On 27 March they issued the generic advice that is attached at the bottom of this update. Key points:

*The following activities are on hold, pending a further update from NZQA towards the end of the current four-week ‘lockdown’ period.*

- *All EERs and Consistency Reviews.*
- *All deadlines for TEO submissions to NZQA (e.g. of self-assessment documentation)*
- *Distribution of first and later drafts of EER and Consistency Review reports*
- *Publication of finalised EER and Consistency Review reports*
- *Fieldwork or any other direct engagement with TEOs*

This is temporary advice, and we will continue to plan for an October EER. Merran will seek further advice from NZQA in the near future.

**Progress on AQAP actions**

The specifics of progress against actions in the AQAP Project Plan updates attached are correct at time of reporting (late March), but do not reflect the potential and likely impact of Covid 19 on future progress.

My progress assessment is as follows:

Rec 1: Student Achievement targets will be negatively impacted by an expected higher number of withdrawals and DNCs, as learners make decisions about their ability to remain in study in an online environment and given other life situations. Targets and associated action plans may need to be revised to reflect this.

Recs 2,4,6: Academic Board (and sub-committee) improvements will continue, including embedding of our academic risk register. Committee functions will all shift online.

Recs 3 & 5: Student Support & Completion activities are well-underway. The *Learner Outreach Project* is being expanded to provide more outreach to learners in-need in the Covid 19 environment. Further work on most *I See Me* initiatives have been paused while online teaching is established. Given the emphasis in *I See Me* on face-to-face and on-campus activities, this team will need to reconsider its approach for an online environment.

Rec 7: Renewal Plan Progress – nothing additional to report.

Recs 8, 9: Māori and Pacific Success Strategies are well underway. Reporting is largely through the “I See Me” Initiatives in Recs 3 & 5. Retention and success targets will be negatively impacted by Covid 19. Targets and associated action plans may need to be revised to reflect this.

Recs 10, 11, 12: Individual School Reviews and actions are underway, but progress will be at-risk with the distractions of Covid 19. I will work with these schools to address this.

Rec 13: Review resourcing for the Executive actions are all complete – nothing to report.

### **Preparation for the October 2020 EER visit**

The Internal Evaluation and Review (IER) has been postponed, with a tentative new date of late-May. This is yet to be confirmed.

We will continue to plan for an October EER visit.

Communication with NZQA is likely to be slower for a while. We will continue to work with NZQA and our Lead Evaluator on confirmation of our proposed focus areas.

### **Attachments**

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Academic Quality Action Plan Overview December 2019

Full Academic Quality Action Plan Project Plan Updated December 2019

NZQA email to Tertiary Education Organisations 27 March 2020 (below)

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**From:** Team Mailbox QA Admin <[qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Friday, 27 March 2020 2:58 PM

**Subject:** COVID-19 - Ongoing quality assurance for tertiary education organisations

Tena koutou katoa

NZQA is committed to supporting TEOs to maintain services to students during this challenging time. We will be continuing our quality assurance activities, but in a fit-for-purpose way to reduce risk to learners.

We will be maintaining contact with individual TEOs during this period to provide support and assistance, and to understand and address potential issues early.

Until further notice, NZQA's approach to external quality assurance (QA) is set out below. NZQA will review these arrangements towards the end of the four-week COVID-19 Level 4 period and advise all TEOs of next steps.

If individual TEOs would like to request a variation to approach set out below, please contact us.

QA activities	NZQA approach until further notice
Approval and Accreditation and Te Hono o Te Kahurangi approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NZQA will continue to process current and new applications from TEOs</li> <li>TEOs may request a hold on the application process until such time as it can reasonably respond to any requests for further information</li> <li>No fieldwork for Degree applications will be undertaken</li> <li>New PTE registration evaluation will continue but may go on hold if further information/site visit is needed</li> </ul>
Codes of Practice for Pastoral Care of Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance and support to schools and TEOs continues</li> <li>Non-compliance follow-up will be postponed until further notice except in cases of serious risk to international student safety</li> </ul> <p>The following activities are on hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Code monitoring activities</li> <li>Domestic Code capability building workshops</li> </ul>
Programme monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be no new programme monitoring activities</li> <li>NZQA will continue working on any programme monitoring and moderation submissions already underway</li> <li>NZQA will not issue any draft or final programme monitoring reports</li> <li>Degree monitoring requirements are on hold</li> </ul>
National external moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NZQA will continue to issue annual summaries for NZQA-managed standards</li> <li>Where NZQA requests an action plan, we will provide additional time for the TEO to respond</li> <li>NZQA will continue to finalise TEO moderation plans for 2020</li> </ul>
EERs and Assuring Consistency Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-assessment reports for both Assuring Consistency Reviews and External Evaluation and Reviews (EERs) already submitted will be reviewed as normal practice</li> </ul> <p>The following activities are on hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All EERs and Consistency Reviews.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All deadlines for TEO submissions to NZQA (e.g. of self-assessment documentation)</li> <li>• Distribution of first and later drafts of EER and Consistency Review reports</li> <li>• Publication of finalised EER and Consistency Review reports</li> <li>• Fieldwork or any other direct engagement with TEOs</li> </ul>
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-compliance follow up will be postponed until further notice except in cases where there is serious risk to student safety or fees</li> <li>• Reports on visits which occurred prior to 23 March will be issued to providers with extended compliance due dates.</li> <li>• Draft investigation reports issued before 23 March will continue to be worked on. Extensions will be given where needed and compliance deadlines will be extended.</li> <li>• Statutory action already in progress will continue in accordance with standard process, however we will delay the publication of any statutory notice.</li> <li>• Student complaints and queries will be handled as usual, however in some situations, complaints will be put on hold where it would not be possible for the provider to supply relevant information.</li> <li>• Information will be prepared for TEOs regarding key statutory requirements (Student Fee Protection, student refunds, etc) during this period including extensions to annual return timeframes.</li> <li>• In the unlikely event a closure is required, it will be managed remotely without on-site visits and meetings with students. All necessary information will be provided to affected parties in writing.</li> </ul>

## Online and alternative delivery

I know many of you are shifting to online delivery to continue educational delivery to learners during this time. Please contact us to let us know your plans.

You might also like to consider extending your programmes so learners can have a four-week break, or to continue delivery through alternative means such as pre-recording lectures, providing reading material or assignments to learners during this time.

We will provide further advice on offshore delivery of programmes to international students. This requires careful consideration to ensure TEOs can provide quality education, additional learning support and pastoral care to students who are not in New Zealand. There are also overseas jurisdiction requirements that need to be considered. Some countries may not recognise qualifications delivered online.

## Student fee protection

PTES must inform their students of their student fee refund policies as part of the physical closure. More detailed information on drawn downs and refunds will be available on our web page.

## Expiring English language proficiency test results

A number of international students may have to delay starting their studies in New Zealand as a result of the COVID-19 travel restrictions. If you have made an offer of a place to an international student, and that student's English language proficiency result was valid at the time the offer of a place was made, that student does not need to sit another English language proficiency test if their result expires before their deferred start date, providing the deferment is within twelve months of their original offer of a place.

Please continue to look after yourself, your staff and students.

If you have any questions and enquiries relating NZQA's quality assurance activities or the pastoral care of students during this time, please contact us.

For other information and advice please refer to the [Ministry of Education website](#).

Naku na

Eve McMahon

Deputy Chief Executive Quality Assurance  
NZQA

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