



ITP New Zealand

Academic Quality Standards
(2006 Revision)

Assumptions.

There are a number of assumptions which underpin the ITP New Zealand Academic Quality Standards.

- Each institution accepts responsibility for monitoring and reviewing its own effectiveness and improvement against the standards.
- Each institution operates within New Zealand's legislative and regulatory framework.
- Each institution accepts responsibility for version and document control of all its policies, procedures, contracts and agreements and publications.
- Each institution has a set of goals, objectives and performance indicators, approved by its Council, against which its effectiveness can be measured.
- The ITP New Zealand Academic Quality Standards focus on evaluating the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the institution relative to its own objectives and indicators and best national and international practice.
- Evidence of compliance with the ITP New Zealand Academic Quality Standards gives confidence to students, stakeholders and government agencies that the ITP is a quality assured institution.
- Each standard has a list of *Guidance Statements*. These are examples of evidence, which might be used to demonstrate how the institute meets the standards. They should demonstrate effective practice and wherever possible best or exemplary practice. They are informative and not evaluative. Institutions are encouraged to include examples relevant to their Quality Management System. The institution and evaluators should consider these as guidance only, when developing their own policies and undertaking review and audit. The list of statements is not exhaustive. They do not indicate that any specific emphasis will or should be placed on these topics. Evidence may be requested related to topics whether they are in the list or not. Each institution should consider additional evidence they may wish to present under each of the standards and make this clear in their self-evaluation reports and during external audit.

External Audit

Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality), a sub-committee of ITP New Zealand has the delegated authority of NZQA to approve courses¹, accredit providers and carry out audits for ITP members institutes.

ITP Quality will undertake general or limited audits according to its published schedule and as need arises. Where additional audits are required resulting from changes to legislation or government policy or government agency policy, institutions are expected to undertake internal compliance audits and report these to ITP Quality. This does not preclude ITP Quality agreeing to undertake a specific focus audit should the need arise.

¹ Sub-degree, undergraduate degree and related qualifications.

Background to the Standards.

- A. These standards have been developed by an extensive review of the standards approved and used since 1999. The 1999 standards were approved following consultation with polytechnic academic managers in December 1998. They were, in turn, developed from those originally proposed by the APNZ Accreditation Working Group in 1994 for general academic accreditation.
- B. Through further extensive consultation, they have been extended to cover all aspects of quality academic delivery, drawing also on the NZQA "*Quality Assurance Standard One*" and the "*Criteria for the Approval and Accreditation of Courses Leading to Degrees and Related Qualifications*", gazetted by NZQA in December 2002, pursuant to Section 253(3) of the Education Act, 1989.
- C. The standards have been made less prescriptive. Nevertheless, the standards should be recognisable to institutions as congruent with most of their existing academic quality policies and academic quality management systems. The imperative will be to ensure that these systems are operationally effective across the institution.
- D. The 2006 revision extends Academic Quality Standard 1; Institutional Quality Management, to include consideration of the way in which the institution carries out its academic functions in order to meet its commitment to student wellbeing, concern for the public interest and attaining the highest standards of excellence in education training and research.
- E. ITP New Zealand's policy related to "quality", includes the following:
 - o ITP New Zealand takes the view that it is important for each provider to articulate for themselves what quality means within their own context.
 - o The fundamental precept for quality assurance is that each provider is responsible for the quality of its own education provision. Each organisation must therefore develop its own approach to quality management suitable for an educational organisation.
 - o Such quality management processes must be transparent. Each provider must be able to demonstrate that its processes are appropriate and effective.
 - o ITP New Zealand also believes that quality processes within tertiary education should foster and support continuous improvement by providers as they seek, through reflective practice, to develop innovative and effective ways of meeting (and often leading) changing student and societal expectations.
- F. The ITP New Zealand standards are published without guidance statements. Appendix A provides notes for the guidance of users and the guidance statements.

ITP New Zealand Academic Quality Standards (2006 Revision)

1. INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 The institution has documented academic quality systems, policies and evidence of their effective application.
- 1.2 Authorities and responsibilities for academic quality are clearly assigned in accordance with institutional policies.
- 1.3 The institution's commitment to principles of the Treaty of Waitangi² is clearly evident throughout its operations.
- 1.4 The institution's commitment to attaining the highest standards of excellence in education, training and research, with due concern for the public interest and the well being of students attending the institution³, is evident in the way it conducts its academic functions.

2. DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW OF QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

- 2.1 An educationally sound, effective process is used for the development, approval, and review of all qualifications, programmes and courses⁴ associated with the institution.
- 2.2 Stakeholders⁵ have appropriate opportunities to give feedback on programmes and to be involved in the development and review of programme outcomes.

3. FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, HUMAN AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- 3.1 An effective process is used to identify and allocate adequate resources (including physical resources) to achieve the outcomes of qualifications, programmes and courses and to implement, maintain and improve the institute's QMS.
- 3.2 Effective policies and procedures are in place to meet the institute's health and safety requirements.

4. STAFF SELECTION, APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Staff qualifications and experience enable quality delivery of programmes.
- 4.2 Appropriate staff development plans, based on identified needs, are implemented and outcomes monitored to ensure effectiveness.

² The Education Act (1989) [181(b)] states that it is the duty of the Council of an institution, in the performance of its duties and the exercise of its powers to acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

³ The Education Act (1989) {181} assigns these duties to the Council of an institution. The academic functions inherent in fulfilling these obligations are normally delegated to the institution's Academic Board.

⁴ The definitions of qualification, programmes and courses are those used by TEC for funding purposes.

⁵ Stakeholders must include students.

5. STUDENT INFORMATION AND ADMISSION TO PROGRAMMES

- 5.1 Prospective and continuing students receive effective information and guidance to assist with making informed decisions on their programme of study.
- 5.2 Appropriate entry and selection criteria for each programme of study are well publicised and applied consistently.
- 5.3 The institute has effective credit transfer and recognition of prior learning policies and procedures, consistent with NZQA Credit Recognition and Transfer Policy.

6. STUDENT GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

- 6.1 Students are provided with learning and pastoral support, which is timely, effective and appropriate.
- 6.2 Safeguards are in place to protect students' physical and emotional well-being.
- 6.3 The institution has effective policies and procedures, which are accessible, appropriate and fair, for resolving student complaints.

7.0 PROGRAMME DELIVERY

- 7.1 The institution defines and implements effective teaching and learning practices that are educationally sound, and appropriate to the programme of study and mode of delivery.
- 7.2 Programme delivery undertaken in partnership with, on behalf of or by another organisation, meets the standards set in the quality management system⁶.

8.0 OFF-SITE PRACTICAL / WORKPLACE COMPONENTS

- 8.1 Off-site practical/workplace components are effective and integrated into curricula.
- 8.2 Clear criteria are used to select off-site placements, and clearly identified roles and responsibilities for all parties are stated and agreed.

9.0 ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION.

- 9.1 Systems are in place for ensuring the assessment of learning outcomes is fair, valid and consistently applied.
- 9.2 Student learning outcomes are accurately, effectively and fairly assessed.
- 9.3 Students receive accurate and timely advice on their learning progress
- 9.4 Effective and appropriate policies and procedures enable students to appeal assessment outcomes.

10 REPORTING AND CERTIFICATION

- 10.1 Students and appropriate external stakeholders receive accurate and timely advice on students' achievement.

⁶ *Memoranda of agreements and contracts with partners/sub-contracted providers that cover all relevant academic aspects including requirements of relevant external bodies and internal policies and assure the improvement of the quality of learning.*

- 10.2 The appropriate awards are accurately documented and issued, in a timely manner to all students who meet the stated requirements.
- 10.3 Student results are safely stored, with final records accessible for future reference.
- 10.4 Awards issued by the institution are consistent with internal and external requirements and definitions.

11 RESEARCH

- 11.1 The institution has defined research objectives, appropriate to the level and type of qualifications delivered.
- 11.2 The institution ensures adequate resources and support are available to meet the defined research objectives.
- 11.3 The institution systematically evaluates and reports its achievement of research outcomes.

12 INTERNAL AUDIT AND REVIEW

- 12.1 Internal academic audit, and improvements arising from audits, are effectively managed.
- 12.2 The quality management system is reviewed, by senior management, and updated on a regular basis.

Appendix A.

Guidance Notes and Statements for the Use of ITP New Zealand's Academic Quality Standards (2006 Revision).

- A. The Academic Quality Standards have been developed in order to define the expected performance of quality assured tertiary education institutions and other providers which may come under the quality assurance ambit of ITP Quality.
- B. These standards represent the minimum academic quality requirements which ITP New Zealand regards as appropriate and reasonable in order to protect the interests of the sector's students and the reputation of individual institutions and the sector as a whole.
- C. ITP New Zealand takes the view that all activities of a tertiary provider are designed to support its academic function. However, these standards are described as academic standards because their focus reflects government's requirement that accountabilities for academic quality are separate from those for the overall management and governance of the organisation.
- D. The standards are grouped under twelve headings relating to different dimensions of academic activity. Each quality standard is a statement of quality practice. For each standard, this appendix provides guidance statements, which come within the orbit of the standard. Explanatory notes have been added in footnotes. It is expected that institutions will identify their own additional evidence and performance measures against which they and the audit team will consider the effectiveness of the institution in achieving a quality learning environment.
- E. The document as a whole thus seeks to define, in broad functional terms, the standards against which institutions in the ITP sector operate in the interests of their students, stakeholders and in accordance with legislation. They are designed to be enabling rather than prescriptive. Wherever possible, they do not describe processes, but rather identify areas of activity where academic quality must be addressed systematically. Institutions are expected to develop their own quality policies and processes to meet these standards.
- F. The 2004 revision of the standards includes reference to institutions' commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. This commitment is identified in Standard 1. It is important that there is evidence that this commitment is embodied in the quality philosophy of the institution and how this translates into internal quality assurance practices across its activities.
- G. Institutions are required to develop internal academic audit processes that address the standards they adopt. External academic audits will be designed to increasingly focus on the effectiveness of internal audits.
- H. The focus of academic quality audit, against the standards, is to provide appropriate evidence on how the ACTIVITIES arising from the implementation of plans, policies and procedures and the ITP's INTERPRETATION of records and the CONTENT of reports demonstrates the effectiveness of the institution in fulfilling the standard and thereby achieving a quality learning environment.
- I. There is no specific standard related to e-Learning. Institutes, which are using or planning to use e-Learning will be expected to demonstrate their activities and the associated policies, procedures, reports and records which underpin their decisions and activities.

Guidance Statements for ITP New Zealand's Academic Quality Standards (2006 Revision).

Explanation.

Each standard has a list of *Guidance Statements*. These are examples of evidence, which might be used to demonstrate how the institute meets the standards. They should demonstrate effective practice and wherever possible best or exemplary practice. They are intended to be informative and not evaluative. Institutions are encouraged to include examples relevant to their Quality Management System. The institution and evaluators should consider these as guidance only, when developing their own policies and undertaking review and audit. The list of statements is not exhaustive. They do not indicate that any specific emphasis will or should be placed on these topics. Evidence may be requested related to topics whether they are in the list or not. Each institution should consider additional evidence they may wish to present under each of the standards and make this clear in their self-evaluation reports and during external audit.

Because ITPs work in many different ways, guidance statements may appear under more than one standard. There is no obligation to address the guidance statements under the particular standard, or at all.

1. INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 The institution has documented academic quality systems, policies and evidence of their effective application.
- 1.2 Authorities and responsibilities for academic quality are clearly assigned in accordance with institutional policies.
- 1.3 The institution's commitment to principles of the Treaty of Waitangi⁷ is clearly evident throughout its operations.
- 1.4 The institution's commitment to attaining the highest standards of excellence in education, training and research, with due concern for the public interest and the well being of students attending the institution⁸, is evident in the way it conducts its academic functions.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Documented policies with review dates*
- *Clear understanding of the legislative requirements and role of Council and the Academic Board*
- *Clear documented delegations between Council, and Academic Board and staff*
- *Document control procedures and records management*
- *Effectiveness measures*
- *Procedural documents*
- *Participation of M āori in institutional processes*
- *Partnership of M āori in institutional activities and processes*
- *Treaty responsiveness plan*
- *E-learning strategy and policy*
- *Risk management*
- *Documented process for the institution giving consideration to the proper use of public funds*
- *Academic Board Statute and Terms of Reference*
- *Formal minutes of meetings of the relevant committee (Academic Board; Management/Executive Team) capturing the academic decision making process*
- *Documented regular review of the Academic Board Statute*
- *Documented regular review of the Academic Board performance*
- *Recorded consideration of quality monitoring reports*
- *Records of effective and rigorous debate on a broad range of academic issues*
- *Documented criteria for Academic Board programme approval consistent with the New Zealand Gazette⁹*

2. DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW OF QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

- 2.1 An educationally sound, effective process is used for the development, approval, and review of all qualifications, programmes and courses¹⁰ associated with the institution.

⁷ The Education Act (1989) [181(b)] states that it is the duty of the Council of an institution, in the performance of its duties and the exercise of its powers to acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

⁸ The Education Act (1989) {181} assigns these duties to the Council of an institution. The academic functions inherent in fulfilling these obligations are normally delegated to the institution's Academic Board.

⁹ Criteria for Approval and Accreditation, New Zealand Gazette No. 178 12 December 2002

¹⁰ The definitions of qualification, programmes and courses are those used by TEC for funding purposes.

- 2.2 Stakeholders¹¹ have appropriate opportunities to give feedback on programmes and to be involved in the development and review of programme outcomes.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Internal and external approval and accreditation records for all courses, irrespective of course length and source of funding*
- *Programme review records*
- *Clearly defined programme specifications including aims and graduate profiles*
- *Consultation records with students, professional bodies, business, industry and relevant community groups*
- *Identification of appropriate stakeholder groups for different types of consultation*
- *Records of stakeholder input aiding effectiveness of programmes*
- *Links to charter and profile*
- *Planned approach to consultation and evidence of consideration of feedback*
- *Systematic student evaluation of teaching, and programme delivery*

¹¹ Stakeholders must include students.

3. FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, HUMAN AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- 3.1 An effective process is used to identify and allocate adequate resources (including physical resources) to achieve the outcomes of qualifications, programmes and courses and to implement, maintain and improve the institute's QMS.
- 3.2 Effective policies and procedures are in place to meet the institute's health and safety requirements.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Effective management of resources for course and programme development, delivery and closure*
- *Libraries, IT Services; e-learning resources etc*
- *Staff and student evaluation*
- *Capital development plan*
- *Planning and reporting documents.*
- *Health and safety records*
- *Risk plans developed as appropriate*
- *Statutory and regulatory requirements*

4. STAFF SELECTION, APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Staff qualifications and experience enable quality delivery of programmes.
- 4.2 Appropriate staff development plans, based on identified needs, are implemented and outcomes monitored to ensure effectiveness.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Staff development plans and records*
- *Staff appraisal records*
- *Staff CVs and other records that include details of relevant qualifications and experience and connections with industry and professions*
- *Student evaluations.*
- *Appraisal of staff performance*
- *Planned programme delivery*

5. STUDENT INFORMATION AND ADMISSION TO PROGRAMMES

- 5.1 Prospective and continuing students receive effective information and guidance to assist with making informed decisions on their programme of study.
- 5.2 Appropriate entry and selection criteria for each programme of study are well publicised and applied consistently.
- 5.3 The institute has effective credit transfer and recognition of prior learning policies and procedures, consistent with NZQA Credit Recognition and Transfer Policy.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Career guidance*
- *Personal education plans*
- *Course guides, brochures and web site*
- *Regulations, calendar*
- *Web-site*
- *Applications records; copies of selection decisions*
- *Records of credit transfer and recognition of prior learning processes and decisions*
- *Complaints and appeal reports and records*

6. STUDENT GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

- 6.1 Students are provided with learning and pastoral support, which is timely, effective and appropriate.
- 6.2 Safeguards are in place to protect students' physical and emotional well-being.
- 6.3 The institution has effective policies and procedures, which are accessible, appropriate and fair, for resolving student complaints.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Procedures for the implementation of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students*
- *Health and safety planning and records*
- *Risk plans developed as appropriate*
- *Complaints records, publicity and support that lead to improvement*
- *Student learning support and pastoral support services*
- *Student satisfaction surveys*
- *Course guides*
- *IT support, helpdesk*
- *Communication strategies for student guidance and support.*

7.0 PROGRAMME DELIVERY

- 7.1 The institution defines and implements effective teaching and learning practices that are educationally sound, and appropriate to the programme of study and mode of delivery.
- 7.2 Programme delivery undertaken in partnership with, on behalf of or by another organisation, meets the standards set in the quality management system¹².

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Relevant tutor training and induction outcomes*
- *Appraisal of staff performance*
- *Planned programme delivery*
- *Definition of effective teaching and learning practices as they impact on programme delivery*
- *Systematic student evaluation of teaching, and programme delivery*
- *Appropriate access for staff to relevant delivery materials*
- *Appropriate documented procedures and practices relating to the delivery of mixed mode and e-learning courses and programmes.*
- *Memoranda of agreements and contracts with partners/sub-contracted providers that cover all relevant academic aspects including requirements of relevant external bodies and internal policies and assure the improvement of the quality of learning*
- *Retention and completions strategies*
- *Peer review of content and delivery*
- *Student continuity plan in case of sub-contractor failure*

¹² *Memoranda of agreements and contracts with partners/sub-contracted providers that cover all relevant academic aspects including requirements of relevant external bodies and internal policies and assure the improvement of the quality of learning.*

8.0 OFF-SITE PRACTICAL / WORKPLACE COMPONENTS

8.1 Off-site practical/workplace components are effective and integrated into curricula.

8.2 Clear criteria are used to select off-site placements, and clearly identified roles and responsibilities for all parties are stated and agreed.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Consistency between programme aims, including assessment of off-site practical/workplace components and health and safety issues etc.*
- *Records/agreements with industry stakeholders for development and delivery of off-site practical/workplace components*
- *Contractual arrangements with off-site providers which include responsibility for both academic delivery, and health and safety issues, in the selection of sites/venues for off-site practical/workplace components*
- *Clearly defined responsibilities for staff, students, and off-site practical/workplace provider, relating to off-site practical/workplace components*
- *Information for students*
- *Student and staff evaluation*

9.0 ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION.

- 9.1 Systems are in place for ensuring the assessment of learning outcomes is fair, valid and consistently applied.
- 9.2 Student learning outcomes are accurately, effectively and fairly assessed.
- 9.3 Students receive accurate and timely advice on their learning progress
- 9.4 Effective and appropriate policies and procedures enable students to appeal assessment outcomes.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Clearly defined and documented assessment criteria provided to students at the start of each programme/course*
- *Assessment activities that are consistent with the approved Curriculum Document and appropriate for the programme/course, especially the alignment of assessment with learning outcomes*
- *Records of effective internal and external moderation*
- *Moderation is effective in ensuring consistency of assessment where the same programme/course is offered in more than one occurrence/qualification and, or at more than one site, or where different modes of delivery are employed*
- *Records of timely, accurate, and appropriate feedback to students*
- *Confidentiality safeguards related to assessment and appeals*
- *Records of fair and easily accessible appeals and complaints procedures*
- *Easily accessible student information on appeals procedures*
- *No unreasonable barriers to the use of appeals procedures*
- *Student evaluations and satisfaction surveys*

10 REPORTING AND CERTIFICATION

- 10.1 Students and appropriate external stakeholders receive accurate and timely advice on students' achievement.
- 10.2 The appropriate awards are accurately documented and issued, in a timely manner to all students who meet the stated requirements.
- 10.3 Student results are safely stored, with final records accessible for future reference.
- 10.4 Awards issued by the institution are consistent with internal and external requirements and definitions.

Guidance Statements.

Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.

- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Definitions of institutional awards*
- *Records of fair and equitable application of the appeal procedures*
- *Results records, e.g. transcripts, graduation archives, result notices*
- *Programme regulations*
- *Confidentiality safeguards in place*
- *Archiving and retrieval systems*
- *Processes for checking all awards comply with definitions/criteria*
- *Document retention and disposal policies*

11 RESEARCH

- 11.1 The institution has defined research objectives, appropriate to the level and type of qualifications delivered.
- 11.2 The institution ensures adequate resources and support are available to meet the defined research objectives.
- 11.3 The institution systematically evaluates and reports its achievement of research outcomes.

Guidance Statements.

- *Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.*
- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Records on research objectives and outputs*
- *Information on support disseminated to staff*
- *Staff feedback on support/resources for research*
- *Reports / summaries of research undertaken and completed*
- *Comparisons with 'benchmarks'*
- *Links between teaching and research*
- *Financial and related records*

12 INTERNAL AUDIT AND REVIEW

12.1 Internal academic audit, and improvements arising from audits, are effectively managed.

12.2 The quality management system is reviewed, by senior management, and updated on a regular basis.

Guidance Statements.

- *Examples of evidence for guidance only are listed below. Institutions are encouraged to include other examples relevant to their Quality Management System.*
- *Relevant documented policies and procedural documents*
- *Internal audit plan and reports*
- *Changes resulting from audit reports implemented and monitored for effectiveness.*
- *Review plan and reports*
- *Measurement, analysis and improvement*