Qualification Title: New Zealand Diploma in Systems Administration (Level 6)

Qualification number: 2601

Date of review: 25th March 2019

This report refers to graduates awarded this qualification prior to: **31st December 2018**

Final decision on consistency of the qualification: National consistency is confirmed

Threshold:

The threshold to determine sufficiency with the graduate profile was determined as evidence of graduates who are able to:

- Implement a range of technologies for systems and network services to meet organisational requirements.
- Plan and implement automated system and application software deployment to support efficient organisational operations.
- Plan, implement, and manage a directory service to meet organisational requirements.
- Analyse a range of options and implement a solution to meet organisations' data storage requirements.
- Implement a server-based virtualisation infrastructure to support organisational requirements.
- Analyse organisational requirements, implement a solution, and administer infrastructure for remote network access.
- Manage and administer a messaging and collaboration service to meet organisational requirements.
- Write scripts to automate standard system procedures.
- Apply IT service management and change management processes and procedures to comply with organisational requirements.
- Behave with integrity as a responsible Information Technology professional to contribute positively to society.
- Apply communication, information design, personal, and interpersonal skills, clearly and professionally to enhance working effectiveness, efficiency, and quality outcomes in an organisational environment.
- Apply project management tools and techniques to an IT related project to analyse and solve problems.

Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

The following education organisations have been found to have sufficient evidence.

Education Organisation	Final rating
EmployNZ	Sufficient
Techtorium NZ Institute of Info Tech	Sufficient
International College of Auckland	Sufficient
Newtown College of Business and Technology.	Sufficient
Ara Institute of Canterbury	Sufficient
Aspire2 International Business and Technology Ltd.	Sufficient
Manukau Institute of Technology	Sufficient

Introduction

This is a 120 credit qualification. The purpose of this qualification is to prepare people for employment as either a systems administrator, a desktop analyst in a support environment or to proceed to further study especially at degree level. Entry requirements for the qualification are generalist computing skills at level 5 or equivalent experience.

Graduates will be IT professionals using skills that are internationally relevant. They will be capable of carrying out systems administration and providing related advice and support. They will also be able to operate in an organisation with appropriate professional standards and practice, both independently and as part of a team

Providers report a total of 293 graduates (77 in 2017 and 216 in 2018) – both domestic and international. The majority of graduates undertook full-time study for this qualification, but part-time study options are also available.

There are a significant number of students enrolled currently and the education organisations are confident that graduates of this qualification are wanted by industry. Likewise, this qualification is seen as attractive with prospective students.

The qualification is due for review this year.

Evidence

The education organisations provided a range of evidence to demonstrate that their graduates met the graduate profile outcomes.

The criteria used to judge the evaluation question were:

- The nature, quality and integrity of the evidence presented by the education organisation.
- How well the organisation has analysed, interpreted and validated the evidence, and used the understanding gained to achieve actual or improved consistency.
- The extent to which the education organisation can reasonably justify and validate claims and statements relating to the consistency of graduate outcomes, including in relation to other providers of programmes leading to the qualification.

Examples of evidence presented included mapping of course content to graduate profile outcomes, graduate destination data, moderation plans and reports, student support, graduate and (less frequently) employer surveys and feedback, successful completion of professional certification (e.g. Microsoft or Comp TIA A+), general evidence of employer interaction, graduate portfolios, alumni networks, feedback from tutors involved in the next level of study, and, in one case, a whanau survey at graduation.

How well does the evidence provided by the education organisation demonstrate that its graduates match the graduate outcomes at the appropriate threshold?

There was strong evidence of effective course planning from all providers.

However, the quality of evidence from graduates around outcomes became more variable. In many cases, this was due to low numbers of graduates, low graduate response rates, or graduates being too recent to gain meaningful feed-back on how their skills and capabilities are being used effectively in the workplace. Likewise, most of the evidence from employers supporting consistency of outcomes was weak. Again, this was usually because data had yet to be collected.

Some providers had good survey instruments in place ready to be deployed at an appropriate time. However, some providers were already able to demonstrate strong demand by employers for graduates with this qualification.

It was noticeable that some providers have (or are developing) very strong organisational systems to demonstrate consistency of outcomes and that the evidence gained will contribute to the marketing of their programmes. Other providers do not yet seem to be tackling this opportunity at an organisational level and leave it solely to the programme teams.

Overall, the self-reflection and evidence supplied by those organisations found sufficient makes a convincing case to demonstrate that their graduates match the graduate outcomes at the determined threshold.

Special Focus (includes special focus on a strand or outcome)

There was no special focus.

Examples of good practice

Most providers demonstrated that their courses of study mapped comprehensively to the graduate profile outcomes.

Some providers have particularly good relationships with employers, through dedicated personnel helping graduates develop employment opportunities or through engaging employers in seminars and/or voluntary internships outside the programme of study.

Several providers were engaged in benchmarking relationships with other providers and this was clearly helping all participants to develop their thinking.

One provider, in particular, has an alumni system supported by social media that ensures that all graduates are tracked effectively, and contact is maintained.

Some providers have very intensive moderation systems to ensure that assessments are valid, reliable and at the appropriate level.

The nature of the programme, requiring a focus on commercial systems and software ensures that the course of study and assessments are focussed on ‘real world’ skills and problem-solving.

Issues and concerns

The current lack of strong evidence from employers supporting consistency. Questions in the employer survey need to be carefully written in language that is relevant to the employers.

It was also noted that many graduates of this qualification in their first role will not necessarily have the opportunity to use and develop all the skills and knowledge they have gained through this qualification.

Recommendations to Qualification Developer

Feedback indicated that the current qualification has too many graduate profile outcome statements. However, rather than deleting any of the present ones, the education organisations felt that outcomes could be addressed by combining current outcomes into new statements. For example: there are considerable overlaps between outcomes 10-12 and between 9 and 12.

Some providers noted that their students are increasingly gaining casual jobs in the industry while studying, whilst others have formal internships. Exploring inclusion of work-based experiences at the right level might address this trend.