



# ITENZ

Independent Tertiary Education  
New Zealand



Credit: Education New Zealand

## Research shows NZ Private Tertiary Establishments deliver a quality experience for learners

New Zealand's Private Tertiary Establishments (PTEs) are delivering a quality education experience for domestic learners and international students that adds considerable value to learners, the workforce and the economy.

A major new study, commissioned by Independent Tertiary Education New Zealand (ITENZ) found that:

- PTEs perform at a similar level to universities and wānanga on qualification completion rates and better than institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs)
- NZQA's external evaluation and review process (EER) places 95 per cent of PTEs in category 1 or 2, indicating high confidence or confidence in their educational performance
- 91 per cent of PTE international students rate their education experience as positive
- Māori learners at PTEs outperform those in ITPs on qualification completion overall and at all levels except post-graduate
- Pasifika learners at PTEs achieve higher qualification completion than at all other types of tertiary provider.

### Assessing quality in New Zealand's PTE sector

The report, [Describing the PTE sector in 2023](#), was conducted by NielsenIQ, with the support of Education New Zealand.

Researchers found the sector delivered a quality education and learner experience and wellbeing support, and contributed strongly to New Zealand's international education strategy.

New Zealand has 381 registered PTEs, with over 1,300 sites across the country. Just over half are funded to deliver NZQA-approved qualifications. Over 800 different qualifications are offered, from foundation to Master's level.

During 2023, 52,440 learners were enrolled in funded PTEs, with many more studying with unfunded PTEs.

*Smaller class sizes mean PTEs are more learner-centred, tailoring learning to specific needs, and providing individual attention and wrap-around support.*

## Quality of learner experience

Analysis of NZQA EER reports for the 12 months to April 2023 highlighted that 99 per cent of PTEs received a positive rating for learner support and involvement in their learning, with three in four receiving an excellent rating. Over nine out of 10 PTEs reviewed received positive ratings for education performance and learner achievement, and for their processes, systems and resources to support positive learner outcomes.

NZQA reviewers commented on high levels of pastoral care, safe supportive learning environments, structured systems for wellbeing and pastoral care, effective learner engagement and involvement, and effective systems for feedback and intervention.

The Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC) educational performance indicators for 2022 for funded PTEs showed a course completion rate of 78 per cent and qualification completion rate of 67 per cent. Course completion rates were almost identical to ITPs and qualification rates better than ITPs overall.

Analysis of sector size and scope also showed that PTEs provided a lower learner-to-tutor ratio than public sector providers.

Employers and other stakeholders reported that the benefits of smaller class sizes included PTEs being more learner-centred, tailoring learning to specific needs, and providing individual attention and wrap-around support.

ITENZ chief executive Wayne Dyer said the research underscored the high quality of education and pastoral care provided by PTEs to domestic and international students.

"It highlights how the sector is delivering high-quality, learner-centred, quality-assured education, with a good mix of theoretical and applied learning. There is a strong focus on learner wellbeing and pastoral care and very good connections to industry."

## Māori and Pasifika learners

During 2022, Māori learners represented 22 per cent of enrolments at funded PTEs, compared with 21 per cent representation across the whole of the tertiary sector.

TEC indicators for Māori learners for 2022 found that course completion rates are at least on a par with ITPs, while Māori learners at PTEs outperform ITPs on qualification completion overall and at all levels except levels 8-10 (post-degree levels).

The TEC indicators for the year for Pasifika learners found qualification and course completion indicators were positive at PTEs, with higher qualification completion than all other types of tertiary provider.

## International students

During 2023, when international education was beginning to recover after Covid, 6,565 international students were enrolled at PTEs, representing 16 per cent of international students in New Zealand.

EER performance statistics for the 12 months to April 2023 rated 96 per cent of PTEs with international students as category one or two.

The Education New Zealand Manapou ki te Ao International Student Experience survey 2023 found 91 per cent of international students at a PTE were positive about the quality of their education experience and recommendation rates from international PTE students were higher than for similar public sector providers with overseas students.

Mr Dyer said, "A PTE offers the advantages of an environment that provides high-quality learning while being responsive to international student and individual learner needs.

"International students experience welcoming family environments and individualised learning, along with the opportunity for authentic, cultural New Zealand experiences.

"To quote one response to the survey, they are 'Small enough to care when you are in a foreign environment'".