

INQAAHE Conference April 2013

Quality Offshore Education

Abstract of a paper to be delivered by Tim Fowler, Deputy Chief Executive Quality Assurance, New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)

Conference Theme: Managing Diversity – Sustainable Quality Assurance Processes

Conference Sub-theme One: Quality Assurance of cross-border education: from quality providers to quality assured provision

Delivering New Zealand education programmes in other countries is becoming an increasingly significant activity for many tertiary institutions in New Zealand. New Zealand's government has set ambitious goals for growing the value of the export education sector, including offshore delivery. Growth is underpinned by quality assured provision.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is at the forefront of establishing new measures to provide the international community with confidence in the quality of New Zealand's offshore programme delivery.

In September 2012 NZQA introduced new measures to extend existing quality assurance of New Zealand education programmes. *New Offshore Programme Delivery Rules* apply to all tertiary education institutions, including universities and registered private training establishments.

NZQA is directly responsible for quality assurance of the non-university sector and is currently integrating the *Offshore Programme Delivery Rules* within its wider evaluative quality assurance framework. A sector guidance document was published, along with resources for providers making applications for offshore delivery of New Zealand qualifications.

NZQA's *Offshore Programme Delivery Rules* align to the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for the Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education. The rules also address issues raised by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation economies about offshore education provision within the region, including cross-border e-learning and delivery in collaboration with an offshore partner.

NZQA's new approach to offshore education was developed after examining overseas guidelines, and careful consultation with tertiary education representative bodies and providers. Principles developed by NZQA's Offshore Reference Group in shaping the statutory rules are important. It is crucial that offshore programmes have comparable quality outcomes to programmes delivered in New Zealand. It is equally important to assure that quality in ways that are cost effective and do not duplicate existing requirements.

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