



TEC review overview: Animation College of New Zealand Ltd

The TEC invests almost \$3 billion into tertiary education each year – funding about 700 tertiary education organisations (TEOs). It's vital we have a high performing sector that provides excellent outcomes for New Zealanders. We continue to enhance our approach to monitoring to help ensure this happens. Monitoring is a 'business as usual' role for the TEC that contributes to both student success and sound stewardship of public money. We engage with TEOs on how they are delivering against their investment Plans, their financial viability and their operational performance.

Our regular monitoring function includes some or all of the following:

- › Engagement – we are available to offer advice and assist TEOs
- › Audits – designed to ensure that a TEO is meeting its funding conditions
- › Reviews – if we become aware of potential issues or concerns relating to a TEO's activities
- › Investigations – a more in-depth examination of a TEO's activities, likely to be in response to specific concerns identified, or a complaint

You can read more about our monitoring framework [here](#).

Animation College of New Zealand Ltd

Animation College of New Zealand Ltd (Animation College) is a Private Training Establishment (PTE) with two campuses in Auckland and Rotorua. Animation College initially offered two animation courses in 2014. After a merger with AMES IT Academy and Skills4Work in 2015, Animation College began offering IT related courses and a Bachelor programme. It receives Student Achievement Component (SAC) and Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (LN) funding from the TEC.

Rationale for initiating the review

Animation College was identified for review based on routine analysis of the December 2015 [single data return \(SDR\)](#). In August 2016, we engaged Grant Thornton to undertake a review of ACNZ.

The review looked into four programmes offered by Animation College in 2014 and 2015:

- › Diploma in Applied Animation (Level 6)
- › Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation) (Level 6)
- › Bachelor of Animation (Level 7)
- › Diploma in Applied Animation (Rotorua) (Level 6)

Findings of the review and actions taken

Findings	Actions taken
Records <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minor differences between NZQA approvals and information submitted to the TEC in relation to learning hours, and some inaccuracies in SDR submissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We have discussed with Animation College the importance of ensuring its records and data are accurate.

Next Steps

This review has been completed. We are continuing to engage with Animation College through our standard monitoring processes.

We work with the sector in an open and transparent way across this area of our work, to ensure TEOs are clear about our processes and expectations. To improve on this commitment, we intend to publish the reports of all reviews and investigations once complete



We ensure New Zealand's future success.



Grant Thornton

An instinct for growth™

Animation College New Zealand Limited

Report to the Tertiary Education Commission
December 2016

Restrictions and disclaimers

This report has been prepared solely for the Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC) exclusive use specifically focused on the objective and scope as agreed.

The scope of our work has been limited both in terms of the areas of the qualifications which we have reviewed, and the extent to which we have reviewed them. There may be matters, other than those noted in this report, that might be relevant in the context of the Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC) funding and which a wider scope review might uncover.

This report is confidential and has been prepared exclusively for TEC. It should not be used, reproduced or circulated for any other purpose, in whole or in part, without prior written consent, and such consent will only be given after full consideration of the circumstances at the time. Events and circumstances occurring after the date of our report will, in due course, render our report out of date and, accordingly, we will not accept a duty of care nor assume a responsibility for decisions and actions which are based upon such an out of date report. Additionally, we have no responsibility to update this report for events and circumstances occurring after this date.

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Executive summary

Overall observations

- 1 Grant Thornton has been engaged by the Tertiary Education Commission (**TEC**) to conduct a review of the Animation College New Zealand Limited (**ACNZ**) in August 2016.
- 2 The objective of the review is to ensure that:
 - Students have actually enrolled and attended the programmes;
 - Programmes are taught in accordance with and comply with the learning hours and weeks entered into STEO and therefore, meet the TEC funding requirements;
 - Programmes are delivered in accordance with learning hours approved by New Zealand Qualifications Authority (**NZQA**) (if details are available);
 - Students awarded a qualification have been assessed and there is evidence of programme delivery; and
 - ACNZ's internal quality assurance and control processes (in relation to programme delivery are robust and fit for purpose).

Key findings

- 3 Overall, no significant issues in relation to assessed delivery have been identified during the course of our review.
- 4 We summarise our findings in relation to the average assessed delivery (across all sites) below. Further details around assessed delivery for an individual site are presented within the 'Review of programme delivery and funding conditions' section of the report.

ACNZ - learning hours delivery summary

	STEO	Average assessed delivery	Average delivery percentage
PC9832 - Diploma in Applied Animation			
Teaching hours per week	26.0	25.5	
Self-directed study hours per week	6.0	6.0	
Total learning hours (76 weeks)	2,432	2,355	96.8%
PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation			
Teaching hours per week	28.4	35.0	
Self-directed study hours per week	8.0	6.0	
Total learning hours (apportioned to year 1 - 28 weeks)	1,018	1,134	111.4%
PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)			
Teaching hours per week	26.0	25.5	
Self-directed study hours per week	6.0	7.0	
Total learning hours (38 weeks)	1,216	1,215	99.9%
2803 - Bachelor of Animation			
Teaching hours per week	17.0	28.0	
Work experience hours	3.0	-	
Self-directed study hours per week	17.5	20.0	
Total learning hours (apportioned to year 1 -32 weeks)	1,200	1,508	125.7%

- 5 Average delivery percentages range between 96.8% and 125.7%. For two of the programmes reviewed which were new in 2015, we have apportioned the STEO delivery requirements to 1 year in order to provide an appropriate comparison to STEO.
- 6 In relation to Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Funding, we note one instance where the hours reported included hours for attendance in January 2016. Whilst this was a relatively small portion of the overall delivery, January 2016 attendance should not be included. Apart from this, no other issues were identified in relation to Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Funding.
- 7 During the course of our review, we noted several instances where the SDR return did not appropriately reflect student course withdrawal information. None of the instances identified resulted in ACNZ over-claiming SAC funding. This is similar to other instances where SDR information does not appear to be consistent with how other records are recorded.

- 8 Student interviewed identified a common concern around the delivery of 2016 courses at ACNZ. This mostly relate to the delivery of teaching hours as well as a lack of available space to work at the school following some changes made at ACNZ. As our scope is limited to the years 2014 and 2015 we have not attempted to review or verify those concerns. We have obtained responses from ACNZ in relation to the concerns raised. ACNZ has informed us that it has changed the delivery of certain courses and Type 2 change approvals were obtained. The issue was possibly one of 'communication of such changes' and not an indication of under-delivery of course content.

Introduction

Background

- 9 Animation College New Zealand Limited (ACNZ) receives Student Achievement Component (SAC) Funding and LN Workplace Literacy (LN) Funding from the Tertiary Education Commission.
- 10 As per its investment plan, ACNZ is the ‘most established character animation school in New Zealand’ as well as the ‘only educational institution in the Pacific region that specialises in character animation’.
- 11 Initially ACNZ offered two animation courses which were the Diploma in Applied Animation (DAA) and the Diploma in Digital Media (DDM) in 2014. Subsequent to a merger with AMES IT Academy (AMES IT) and Skills4Work Incorporated (Skills4Work) in 2015, the offering increased to include IT related courses. In addition, ACNZ developed a bachelor programme which was offered to students from 2015. LN funding received relates only to Skills4Work.
- 12 Since the merger ACNZ has undertaken and completed a full organisational restructure.
- 13 ACNZ has two campuses which are located in Auckland and Rotorua. The latter was established in 2015.
- 14 The amount of SAC and LN funding received by ACNZ for 2014 and 2015 is as follows:

ACNZ - TEC funding summary

Qualification	2014 EFTS delivered	2014 funding received	2015 EFTS delivered	2015 funding received
PC9832 - Diploma in Applied Animation	120.1	1,101,183	80.0	734,431
PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)	32.0	292,727	33.0	301,875
2803 - Bachelor of Animation	-	-	31.6	296,769
PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation	-	-	24.4	223,488
	152.1	1,393,910	169.1	1,556,563
Numeracy and literacy funding received*		-		157,174
Total funding received for programmes selected		1,393,910		1,713,737
Total funding received by ACNZ		1,393,910		2,352,360
Percentage of total funding for selected programmes		100.0%		72.9%

* Based on the 2015 funding recovery calculation letter

Definitions

- 15 For the purposes of this report, the terms used are defined as follows based on the guidance provided within the NZQA Qualifications Framework:
- **Direct hours:** direct contact time with teachers and trainers;
 - **Teaching hours:** direct hours plus time spent in assessments or is equal to total learning hours less self-directed hours;
 - **Self-directed hours:** time spent studying and doing assignments and practical tasks; and
 - **Total learning hours:** Direct hours, self-directed hours and time spent in assessment.

Approach

- 16 Grant Thornton has been engaged by the TEC to conduct a review of the specific courses offered by ACNZ. The scope and objectives of our review are defined within the executive summary.
- 17 In determining our review approach, we reviewed the information received from TEC and selected four of the programmes offered by ACNZ for review based on the level of funding received in the 2014 and 2015 year and the level of LN funding. This was confirmed with the TEC prior to contacting ACNZ. These programmes were:
- PC9832 - Diploma in Applied Animation (**DAA**)
 - PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation) (**DDM**)
 - 2803 - Bachelor of Animation (**BA**)
 - PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation (**DAA Rotorua**)
- 18 We initially met with Section 9(2)(a) (College Dean) to gain an overall understanding of ACNZ. During our site visit we also met with Mr Adam Berry (Director).
- 19 Based on our discussions with Section 9(2)(a), we understand that both the PC9832 and PC3000 courses are the same (Diploma in Applied Animation) but the different programme codes are used to distinguish which students are enrolled in Auckland or Rotorua.
- 20 We obtained SDR returns for 2014 and 2015 from ACNZ and identified the students enrolled in the four programmes above. For each of the programmes, a random sample of 15 students was selected for review which includes an examination of underlying records and interview where possible. However, given the lower value for LN funding, we selected a sample of 5 students for our review.
- 21 We examined student enrolment, assessment and completion records as well as other information including the QMS and relevant programme material for each of the programmes selected.
- 22 The information around class times are included within the student handbooks provided to students. Self-study guidelines, class times and term dates are all specifically stated. We

further discussed the programme including learning hour requirements with tutors to obtain an overall understanding of the programme.

- 23 In computing total teaching hours for each course, we took total class time per week multiplied by the number of weeks adjusting for holidays. In addition to this, we made a further adjustment based on discussions with students and tutors as to self-directed study hours required. Where there was a difference between the student's recollection and ACNZ's documented expectation of self-directed study (where available) or the tutor's estimates, we have used the most conservative student's estimation.

Limitations

- 24 The terms of this engagement and the scope of the work you have asked us to undertake does not constitute an assurance engagement in accordance with the requirements of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ), and is not designed to provide assurance under International or New Zealand Standards on Auditing or Assurance. Accordingly, no assurance opinion or conclusion has been provided.
- 25 The information contained in this report has been provided by ACNZ, TEC, NZQA, tutors and students. Our review was based on enquiries, analytical review procedures, interviews and exercise of judgement. Our review is also based on a small sample of students for each selected programme. Because of the test nature and other inherent limitations of our review, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements or errors may remain undiscovered.
- 26 Our assessment of learning hours is based on discussions with staff and students and it is inherent in this approach that the view may be biased depending on who was sampled and their recollection of past events.
- 27 Furthermore, our calculations are based on unrounded figures, whereas for presentation purposes, these have been rounded to the nearest 1 decimal place. Therefore, there may be minor variations when computing total learning hours based on information presented. In addition, in computing actual learning hours delivered, we have deducted the hours for any public holidays from teaching weeks.

Principal information relied upon

28 We list the principal information we have relied on in preparing our review below:

- ACNZ Investment plan for 2014 and 2015
- TEC SDR data
- ACNZ's course information for the selected programmes
- Student Handbook for 2014 and 2015 for Auckland and Rotorua campuses
- ACNZ's QMS manual
- Discussions with Mr Adam Berry (Director), Section 9(2)(a) (College Dean), Section 9(2)(a) (Registrar), Section 9(2)(a) (Skills4Work - National Operations Manager), Section 9(2)(a) (Skills4Work – Programme Manager Literacy & Numeracy) and various tutors involved in the courses we have selected for review
- Interviews with various students enrolled in the courses examined
- TEC STEO information
- NZQA approvals and RO482 for the selected programmes

Review of programme delivery and funding conditions

29 We set out below our findings on ACNZ's programme delivery.

Reconciliation of programme approval and funding requirements

30 As part of our review on ACNZ's programme delivery, it is important to ensure that the programme details as approved by NZQA are consistent with those approved by the TEC for funding purposes.

31 For each of the programmes specified, we have compared the NZQA RO482 and TEC's STEO. We summarise our reconciliation below:

Reconciliation of programme approval and funding requirements

Programme	NZQA RO482 information	TEC STEO information
PC9832 - Diploma in Applied Animation		
Time period (teaching weeks)	76 weeks	76 weeks
Credits	243	240
EFTS	2.0*	2.0
Teaching hours (per week)	26.0	26.0
Self-directed hours (per week)	6.0	6.0
Learning hours (total)	2432**	2,432
PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)		
Time period (teaching weeks)	38 weeks	38 weeks
Credits	122	120
EFTS	1.0*	1.0
Teaching hours (per week)	26.0	26.0
Self-directed hours (per week)	6.0	6.0
Learning hours (total)	1216**	1,216
2803 - Bachelor of Animation		
Time period (teaching weeks)	96 weeks	96 weeks
Credits	360	360
EFTS	3.0*	3.0
Teaching hours (per week)	Not specified	17.0
Work experience hours (per week)	Not specified	3.0
Self-directed hours (per week)	Not specified	17.5
Learning hours (total)	3,600	3,600
PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation		
Time period (teaching weeks)	66 weeks	66 weeks
Credits	243	240
EFTS	2.0*	2.0
Teaching hours (per week)	28.8***	28.4
Self-directed hours (per week)	8.0	8.0
Learning hours (total)	2,430	2,400
* Recalculated based on total credits		
** Recalculated based on teaching hours and self-directed hours per week		
*** Recalculated based on total learning hours and self-directed hours per week per Type 2 change approval letter dated 4 May 2015		

- 32 Per discussions with [Section 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) we note that there are no specific RO482 for the PC3000 course and the information presented above is based on the PC9832 DAA programme.
- 33 In relation to the DAA programme (PC9832 and PC3000), we note that the total number of credits in the NZQA programme details applicable to 2014 to 2015 year were 243. This is consistent with the information currently accessible from the NZQA website. Subsequent to discussions with [Section 9\(2\)\(a\)](#) and Mr Berry, we note that the number of credits was updated to 240 via a Type 2 change approval letter dated 29 January 2016 (this Type 2 change is not reflected in the table above). In addition to the change in total credits, total learning hours were changed to 2,400.

- 34 The PC3000 DAA programme detailed in the table above reflects the Type 2 change approved by NZQA in their letter dated 4 May 2015. Effectively, the change is to reduce the total number of weeks in the first year from 38 weeks to 28 weeks.
- 35 For the DDM programme, the credit difference of 2 was subsequently amended in a Type 2 change approval letter dated 28 January 2016 (this is not reflected in the table above).
- 36 We do not have sufficient information on the RO482 to comment on the components of total learning hours for the BA programme.
- 37 It is our understanding that TEC's funding is based on the data entered into STEO. Although the difference in total learning hours between RO482 and STEO is relatively small, our testing is focused on the adherence to the learning hours currently included in STEO.
- 38 Generally, we expect EFTS calculated using total teaching weeks, total credits or total learning hours to equate to the same EFTS. We have recalculated the EFTS value based on FTE teaching weeks and total learning hours and compared this to the stated EFTS value of the programme. However, we have noted a difference when reconciling teaching weeks to EFTS. We detail the variances identified below:

ACNZ - Information based on STEO database

Qualification	EFTS value	Teaching weeks	Total learning hours
PC9832 - Diploma in Applied Animation	2.0	76.0	2,432
PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)	1.0	38.0	1,216
2803 - Bachelor of Animation	3.0	96.0	3,600
PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation	2.0	66.0	2,400
Equivalent EFTS value based on the information above			
PC9832 - Diploma in Applied Animation		2.2	2.0
PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)		1.1	1.0
2803 - Bachelor of Animation		2.8	3.0
PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation		1.9	2.0

Review of learning hours delivery per course

- 39 Our assessment of total learning hours is based on information collated from the following sources:
- Student handbook
 - Discussions with staff and students
- 40 We comment on each programme examined in the subsections below.

PC9832 and PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation

- 41 The DAA programme is a two year programme (or 1.5 years for those in Rotorua) which is a foundation course in animation. Students can choose between a 2D and 3D specialisation.

- 42 The Rotorua site commenced in 2015.
- 43 For the DAA programme (PC9832), the STEO database records 76 teaching weeks. The total number of teaching weeks based on the 2014 and 2015 student handbook was 38 weeks for both years totalling 76 weeks for those who started the DAA programme in 2014. Learning hours per STEO is made up of 26 teaching hours and 6 self-directed study hours. Per the 2014 student handbook, students are required to complete 8 hours of self-directed study per week. This has decreased to 7 hours per week based on the 2015 student handbook. This is higher than the amount recorded within the STEO database.
- 44 The DAA Rotorua programme had the first half of its course delivered in 2015. Total weeks at the Rotorua campus for the DAA Rotorua programme was 28 weeks consistent with the Type 2 change submitted for the DAA programme. Learning hours per STEO is made up of 28.4 teaching hours and 8 self-directed hours. Per the 2015 Rotorua student handbook, the recommended level of self-directed study is at least 5 hours per week. This is lower than the amount recorded within the STEO database.
- 45 Based on our discussions with tutors, we note that all students are provided a copy of the student handbook which shows the class times and expectations for the course.
- 46 In 2014, class times for the DAA course were from 9am to 4:30 pm with a one and a half hour break, Monday to Thursday. We were advised that whilst there are two 15 minute breaks, students do not take the full break (some students don't but some do take full breaks). Responses from two separate tutors were mixed but we have used the most conservative estimate that the two 15 minute breaks are used as self-directed learning hours. This is then added to our estimates received from student responses around self-directed study. This equates to total teaching hours per day of 6.0 hours per day or 24 hours per week. Whilst there are no classes scheduled for Fridays, classrooms are available for students to utilise if they wanted to and tutors were also available if required.
- 47 In 2015, class times in Auckland for the DAA course varied depending on which year and what specialisation (2D or 3D) was being completed. However, overall, all the DAA courses had 5 hours in total each day and they are required to be there from Monday to Fridays equating to 25 hours per week.
- 48 In 2015, for the Rotorua campus, students are required to be in class from Monday to Friday from 9am to 5:00 pm with a one and a half hour break per day. We have taken a similar approach at the Auckland campus in relation to break times. This equates to 6.5 hours per day or 32.5 hours per week.
- 49 Based on our discussions with tutors, we note that course material is shared between the Auckland and Rotorua campuses.
- 50 Student responses in relation to self-directed study varied significantly from no requirement to around 6 hours per week. However, we note that the most conservative estimate of self-directed study received was the same across both sites, and therefore, we applied the most conservative estimate of 6 hours. This is lower than the recommended self-directed study hours within the student handbook which is a guide for students only. The additional half

hour breaks per day is also added to the student's self-directed learning estimate as explained above where appropriate.

- 51 In determining an appropriate assessment for the Rotorua programme, as this is a 1.5 year course and Rotorua had not been in operation for 1.5 years prior to the end of 2015, we have apportioned the total learning hours to reflect only 28 weeks which is consistent with the Type 2 change approval from NZQA previously mentioned.
- 52 We summarise our assessment of total learning hours relative to STEO in the table below.

Learning hours delivery - PC9832 DAA programme

	STEO - Auckland	Auckland 2014	Auckland 2015	Total	% of STEO hours delivered
Teaching weeks	76	38	38	76	
Teaching hours per week	26.0	24.0	25.0		
Self-directed study hours per week	6.0	8.0	6.0		
Total learning hours per week	32.0	32.0	31.0		
Total learning hours	2,432	1,198	1,158	2,356	96.9%

Actual learning hours delivery calculation takes into account public holidays which reduce teaching hours.

Learning hours delivery - PC3000 DAA - Rotorua

	STEO - Rotorua	Rotorua 2015	% of STEO hours delivered
Teaching weeks	66	28	
Teaching hours per week	28.4	32.5	
Self-directed study hours per week	8.0	8.5	
Total learning hours per week	36.4	41.0	
Total learning hours	2,400	1,135	
Apportioned for first year (based on first year being 28 weeks)	1,018	1,135	111.5%

Actual learning hours delivery calculation takes into account public holidays which reduce teaching hours.

- 53 Delivery percentages assessed for the Diploma in Applied Animation programme across both the Auckland and Rotorua sites are between 96.9% and 111.5%.
- 54 For the Auckland group, based on actual term timetables and assuming that a DAA student commenced their studies in 2014 and completed their two year DAA course in 2015, the student would have had 76 teaching consistent with the amount recorded in STEO. The slight under-delivery of learning hours is due to the class times being less than approved in STEO resulting in an overall delivery percentage of 96.9%.
- 55 For the Rotorua group, the first year's teaching weeks of 28 is consistent with the number of weeks as approved by NZQA in its Type 2 change (dated May 2015). The overall delivery percentage is 111.5%.

PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)

- 56 The DDM programme is a one year programme which is generally considered to be the ‘third’ year of the diploma. It builds on the fundamental skills acquired in the DAA programme. Similar to DAA, students can choose between a 2D and 3D specialisation.
- 57 The DDM course was only available in 2014 and 2015 at the Auckland campus.
- 58 The STEO database shows the qualification is delivered over the course of 38 weeks which is consistent with ACNZ’s prospectus and the total weeks delivered.
- 59 In 2014, class times for the DDM course were from 8:30 to 4pm Monday to Thursday with a one and a half hour break per day. We have taken a similar approach to the DAA programme in relation to break times. This equates to total teaching hours per day of 6.5 hours per day or 24 hours per week. Whilst there are no classes scheduled for Fridays, classrooms are available for students to utilise if they wanted to and tutors are also available if required.
- 60 In 2015, class times in Auckland for the DDM were from 9:30 to 3:30 on Mondays to Fridays with a one hour break per day. This equates to 5 hours of class time per day or 25 hours per week.
- 61 In respect of self-directed study, the majority of student responses confirmed between 4 to 7 hours self-directed study per week. We have applied the most conservative estimate of 7 hours in calculating the percentage of assessed delivery for the DDM programme. In 2014, the additional half hour break per day is also added to the student’s self-directed learning estimate as explained above.
- 62 We summarise our assessment of total learning hours relative to STEO in the table below.

Learning hours delivery - PC9833 DDM

	STEO	2014	2015
Teaching weeks	38	38	38
Teaching hours per week	26.0	24.0	25.0
Self-directed study hours per week	6.0	9.0	7.0
Total learning hours per week	32.0	33.0	32.0
Total learning hours	1,216	1,236	1,196
Assessed delivery percentage		101.6%	98.4%

Actual learning hours delivery calculation takes into account public holidays which reduce teaching hours.

- 63 The assessed delivery percentages for 2014 and 2015 are 101.6% and 98.4% respectively. Total learning hours actually delivered are less than STEO due to public holidays being deducted from teaching days.

2803 - Bachelor of Animation

- 64 The BA programme is a 3 year course with an option to continue into an Honours year. There are three majors including Character and Story, World-Building and Visual Effects and Interactive Media and Games.
- 65 Students who have previously completed or are completing the diploma courses can take bridging courses into the Bachelors programme.
- 66 The STEO database records total learning hours of 37.5 hours per week made up of 17 teaching hours, 3 work experience hours and 17.5 self-directed study hours.
- 67 A number of students who were enrolled in the Diploma programme in 2015 were also concurrently taking bridging courses for the Bachelors programme. For these students, the bridging courses were held after their diploma courses for 2 hours each day, 5 days a week for 10 weeks. This equates to a total of 100 teaching hours per course. Bridging students were required to take two bridging papers in 2015.
- 68 The bridging courses are 15 credits each and should equate to a total of 150 hours of learning. Self-directed hours based on student responses suggest that students have to invest a significant amount of time for self-directed study and therefore, based on responses received, bridging courses meet the 150 learning hours requirement. This estimation is based on the response from a student who was not enrolled in a diploma at the same time and hence reflects the appropriate level of self-study required without any overlap with the diploma course requirements (in total, only 2 students completed the bridging papers without studying the diploma concurrently in 2015).
- 69 For newly admitted students, the first year of the degree is delivered over 32 weeks Monday to Thursday from 8:30 to 5pm with two and a half hour of breaks per day. Whilst there were two half hour breaks, we understand that not all students took the full half hour breaks especially when there are upcoming deadlines. Using the same approach as the diploma programmes, the 2 half hour breaks are added to self-directed study. This equates to total learning hours of 6.0 hours per day or 24 hours per week. These students complete a total of six courses over the year.
- 70 Self-directed study hour estimates by students vary significantly between 2 hours per week to around 20 hours per week. We have grouped all students taking the Bachelor's programme together (i.e. first years and those taking the bridging courses) rather than separating them. We have used the most conservative estimate provided by a student of approximately 20 hours per week in calculating the assessed delivery percentage for the programme. In addition, we also added the 2 half hour breaks per day as self-directed study consistent with our approach used for the DAA programme.
- 71 We have also reviewed the accreditation document 'Application for the Approval and Accreditation of: Bachelor of Animation (Hon.) Level 8, 480 credits' provided by ACNZ. We reviewed courses BAR01 to BAR06 which are the year 1 courses for students who are not doing the bridging courses and calculated the teaching weeks and self-directed study hours per week for students in year 1 of the BA programme. Based on the accreditation document, the teaching hours per week is higher than the average over the whole

programme and has less self-directed study. Total learning hours over the course of year 1 were unchanged at 1,200 hours.

72 We summarise our assessment of total learning hours relatively to STEO in the table below.

Learning hours delivery - 2803 - Bachelor of Animation

	Accreditation document (year		2015
	STEO	1)	
Teaching weeks	96	32	32
Teaching hours per week	17.0	24.0	24.0
Work experience hours	3.0	-	-
Self-directed study hours per week	17.5	13.5	24.0
Total learning hours per week	37.5	37.5	48.0
Total learning hours	3,600	1,200	1,512
Apportioned to 1 year			1,200
Assessed delivery percentage		126.0%	126.0%

Actual learning hours delivery calculation takes into account public holidays which reduce teaching hours.

73 Overall, our assessed delivery percentage for the BA programme is 126.0%. Whilst the students interviewed did not confirm any work experience hours, total teaching hours and self-directed study hours were more than recorded in STEO resulting in the high delivery percentage. Subsequent discussion with **Section 9(2)(a)** and Mr Berry confirmed that there should be no work experience hours and that these were not included within the accreditation documents. Accordingly STEO should be updated for this.

Other observations on the BA programme

74 Discussions with a tutor who taught the bridging programmes suggested that they try to link/connect the BA and DDM qualifications together by getting students to use the Diploma projects as a base and build upon this for their bridging work. It would appear based on discussions with a tutor and students that the DDM course workload allowed students attending the bridging courses (who typically were high achievers) to be able to spend a portion of their time during the DDM course towards the bridging course. Based on our analysis above, direct hours for the programme accounts for 100 of 150 hours (based on a credit value of 15 credits each). Therefore, the potential area of concern is around the 50 hours of self-directed study. From the responses received, the most conservative estimate provided by a student who is studying the Diploma and bridging papers concurrently, reported 2 self-directed study hours for bridging and 5-7 self-study hours for the DDM course. This would account for a further 20 learning hours delivered under the bridging courses (based on each paper being 10 weeks) instead of the required 50 hours. However, whilst this does not meet the total expected learning hours, it is not material to the overall delivery of the Bachelors course as a whole. There were around 13 students doing the bridging courses in 2015. When combined, all bridging papers account for 3.25 out of 31.625 EFTS funded for the Bachelor course and the under-delivery of the self-directed hours accounts for only 0.65 EFTS.

Review of student records

General

75 We present below a summary of our findings in relation to verifying the existence, eligibility and programme completion details for our sample of students.

ACNZ - student data verification summary

Programme	Appropriate enrolment and support records	Appropriate completion & assessment records
PC9832 - Diploma in Applied Animation	Yes	Minor issue
PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)	Yes	Minor issue
2803 - Bachelor of Animation	Minor issue	Yes
PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation	Yes	Minor issue

76 Based on work performed, there were no significant issues identified with enrolment records or completion records (where applicable) for all of the students examined. Some minor issues were identified and these are commented on in each of the subsections below.

77 We note that within each student file, enrolment information including verification details is adequately filed. However, assessment records and completion records were not necessarily included within these files. Historically, such records were filed within student files, but we understand that these are now held by the tutors.

78 During 2014 and 2015, each student received a term report which provided a summary of their performance and what they had achieved. This is sometimes filed within student files.

79 Transcripts were not always filed within student files and certificates were not kept on file. We also note that depending on how the programme dates were entered into Wisenet (ACNZ's SMS system), it would affect how the transcript was generated (for example, where the transcript was entered in as two years, then the transcript generated would be for both years together, but you would not be able to generate a transcript at the end of year 1). Whilst this is not within the scope of our review, we recommend that ACNZ to standardise the way data is entered into Wisenet.

PC9832 and PC3000 - Diploma in Applied Animation

80 We identified one instance where a student's withdrawal information was not retained within student files. In addition, for one withdrawn student, their withdrawal date was only noted

for one of the courses they had taken that year. All other courses taken by this student did not note a withdrawal date on the SDR return. As the student has withdrawn after the 8 day withdrawal period, there is no refund applicable and therefore, this remains a valid domestic student for SAC funding purposes as per SAC3+/016.

- 81 Another student had a withdrawal date entered as the course end date (with one day difference) for one of the courses but not the rest of the courses, rather than including the withdrawal date within the appropriate withdrawal date column on the SDR return.
- 82 We identified an inconsistency in relation to the completion dates in the SDR data. Generally, we note for the majority of students reviewed, course end dates on the SDR are the same as assessment completion dates per the assessment sheet, except where a student has withdrawn. Though there were some differences in dates, they were generally within the same month and therefore, would not affect SAC funding claimed. However, for some of the courses for one particular student, course end dates per the SDR is the same as the actual term end date rather than the date the student was assessed as per the student's assessment records. Another student had a course end date per the SDR which was one and a half months prior to the date noted on the student's assessment sheet. One course for another student had an end date which was one month prior to the date on the assessment sheet.

PC9833 - Diploma in Digital Media (Character Animation)

- 83 Similar to the issues identified in the DAA programme above, one withdrawn student's withdrawal date was entered in as a course end date rather than within the appropriate withdrawal date column on the SDR return.

2803 - Bachelor of Animation

- 84 For one of the students reviewed, no enrolment form was on file in relation to the bridging courses the student attended in 2015. Section 9(2)(a)
[REDACTED] This was a returning student and therefore, verification records were already on file.
- 85 Apart from the matter above, no other issues were noted in relation to enrolment and verification records.
- 86 We note that the assessment records are different to those under the diploma courses as it is on a grading system rather than whether it was completed or not. We have sighted the master assessment sheet for a course which includes the grades achieved for each student for each assessment.
- 87 A transcript is not always available on Wisenet as discussed in the general section above. As this is a new programme offered from 2015, none of the students have completed their BA programmes.

Attendance

- 88 Attendance is actively monitored at ACNZ. Warning letters for non-attendance are issued and retained in student files. Attendance requirements are also specifically noted within the student handbook. We have sighted withdrawal letters in student files informing students

that they have been terminated from the course due to lack of academic progress and attendance.

LN Workplace Literacy Funding

Workplace Literacy (LN) Funding

- 89 LN funding relates to programmes delivered by Skills4Work. We met with Section 9(2)(a) as part of our review to gain an overall understanding of the workplace literacy programmes delivered.
- 90 The programmes do not have set times and are customised for each company based on discussions with employers. Learners also set their own goals and individual learning plans. Hours attended by students are tracked based on attendance sheets. One of the main challenges is to accommodate employers' and learners' needs and work around those when delivering the required amount of hours. In addition, Skills4Work provides a number of catch up sessions whereby learners who have missed a session can catch up on their learning. Learners may also attend catch up sessions even if they have not missed a class. Therefore, some learners have more than 40 learning hours delivered.
- 91 We reviewed student files which included appropriate documentation of enrolment as well as verification. Attendance records were checked for our sample of students and total hours recalculated and compared with the information returned to the TEC.
- 92 For one of the students selected, we note that the last date of their attendance per the attendance record was the 21 January 2016. Total hours attended by this student up until this date match total hours as recorded in the LN reporting schedule to the TEC. However, the end date recorded for this student was on the 17 December 2015 which is the last day attended in 2015.
- 93 Apart from the issue noted above, there were no other issues identified during our review of student records for LN funding. All students checked meet the low literacy criteria and appropriate pre- and exit assessments were either filed within the student file or accessible online. A copy of the completion certificates were also filed within the student files.

Other matters

Student concerns

- 94 Based on the interviews we have conducted with students, we identified common concerns shared by a few students around the delivery of the programmes in 2016 which are outside the period of our review but we consider would be appropriate to include within our report. This section of the report is collated from comments from students and does not reflect any further analysis or interpretation by Grant Thornton.
- 95 There have been significant changes in the delivery of courses in 2016. Students noted that class times were comparatively shorter than before and it would appear that current facility arrangements do not adequately suit their needs.
- 96 The reduction in class times has meant that students had less access to tutors to obtain feedback as the tutors also had relatively busy schedules. Previously, given the number of hours students were in class, they had comparatively more access to tutors. In addition to the shortened class time, some students also felt that the current class times were not long enough or that they are not learning enough or that they were left to their own devices.
- 97 Students at the Auckland campus noted that there were insufficient classrooms and computers for them to work on outside of class time which was different to the arrangement before and that sometimes, when they were able to find a free lab to work, they could not stay there for long as another class would commence. One particular student noted that there were more students than there is space.
- 98 ACNZ has provided the following response to provide context in relation the reduced hours in response to the feedback from students above:

“In 2015, ACNZ commenced a process of programme harmonisation and alignment that accentuates, fosters and enables interdisciplinary opportunities across the Academic Groups of the College. This process has included a review of current programme offerings that allow for future growth into the creativity and technology sectors through innovative programme offerings and delivery models.

This process included a full review of programme offerings, assessment of contact versus non-contact teaching methodologies and alignment of teacher-led versus student-led teaching styles. Current staff and students as well as external industry and community stakeholders were consulted through this process, which resulted in a Category 2 change being successfully completed between November 2015 and February 2016. 2015 delivery was benchmarked against local and international delivery models and proposed changes were aligned with best educational practice.

The main areas of focus for this review and programme change included:

- *significant pedagogical shift from teacher- to student-led delivery;*
- *a shift away from 1 teacher = 1 classroom to flexible classrooms, multiple teachers per group and group and team-based learning;*
- *introduction of Moodle and flipped learning methodology to assist with new delivery paradigm;*
- *face-to-face delivery ratio to structured self-directed learning;*
- *effective staffing, allocation of workload, content development and programme review; and*
- *timetabling.*

The new model was introduced to students through the Orientation phase of the new academic year in February 2016 and in 1:1 conversations with students prior to the first week of teaching. Staff underwent workshop training on developing briefs to teaching within a new teaching paradigm and linking to assessment and moderation. The College was cognizant of the legacy associated with students moving from a high contact / teacher focussed delivery model to self-managing, staff moderated, student-led model. This was exacerbated at times due to the legacy of staff working in a classroom model for a number of years.

Aligned with this, was the introduction of the Bachelor of Creative Software in 2016 which delivers programme and project content through the updated delivery model. Delivery in each year of the programme is identical to that of the Bachelor of Animation with extraordinarily high levels of student engagement, outcome and satisfaction. The management team are aware of the legacy and historical context within which the AD students operates and provides students with opportunities to provide feedback on delivery, staffing and resources through the student representation and feedback cycle and the appointment of student members to the ACNZ Academic Board Committee.”



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