

Session 1-2

Quality Assurance of Cross-border Education: New Zealand Initiatives

Eve McMahon

New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), New Zealand

Abstract

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 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.

Introduction

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is working with a small but growing number of New Zealand tertiary education institutions, which are seeking to deliver New Zealand qualifications offshore.

This growth in interest in offshore activity has been encouraged, in part, by the establishment of Education New Zealand, a new government agency responsible for promoting New Zealand education in the international market. As a strategic measure, the New Zealand Government announced, in 2011, the ambitious goal of doubling the value of international education, including offshore delivery, to NZ\$5 billion per annum over the next 15 years. This baseline is modelled on Government commissioned research from 2008, indicating that the economic impact of New Zealand's export education industry was NZ\$2.1 billion per year, implying a four-fold increase since 1999.

Offshore education is an important component of growing the value of the New Zealand's export education sector. As part of the Government's International Education Leadership Statement, the goal is to grow the value of offshore education by half a million per annum. This drive for increased value from offshore education makes the establishment of robust requirements for the quality assurance of offshore programme delivery by New Zealand institutions important. Such requirements will help to support the development of a sustainable offshore programme delivery by New Zealand institutions and protect the reputation of New Zealand as a high-quality education provider.

New Zealand tertiary education

New Zealand offshore education operates across international borders, but retains structural links to the onshore tertiary education system. This system comprises eight universities, 18 institutes of technology and polytechnics, three wānanga (specialist public institutions devoted to indigenous Māori knowledge) and 630 registered private training establishments. The non-university sector may deliver degrees, where they meet NZQA's accreditation rules.

New Zealand is a small country with just under four-and-a-half million people, so tertiary education can be managed as a single integrated system of government policy (including immigration policy levers), government funding, performance monitoring, and educational quality assurance.

NZQA manages the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) by setting quality assurance rules that apply to all tertiary education institutions. NZQA conducts independent quality assurance of institutions and qualifications in the non-university sector, while universities are the statutory responsibility of Universities

New Zealand. External quality assurance reports provide publicly available information, with the purpose of helping students to make better decisions about where and what they will study, and informing government decisions about where it should place its priorities, and which type of provision it should fund. All New Zealand's universities, polytechnics, wānanga and about 50 per cent of the private training establishments, receive some level of government funding.

While New Zealand universities have maintained a small but growing interest in offshore delivery, there are indications that the non-university sector has taken up the challenge for growth. Based on a voluntary survey of the entire tertiary education sector conducted by NZQA during the Offshore Quality Assurance project, institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) currently have the largest number of students offshore. NZQA is aware that the majority of New Zealand ITPs are preparing, or seriously considering, new applications for offshore programme delivery of New Zealand qualifications, while many registered private training establishments have signalled intense interest.

With such increasing numbers of education providers being attracted to offshore delivery it is vital that New Zealand offshore delivery is well received in host countries, it is sensitive to the offshore country's contexts and values, and that it is of the highest educational quality.

Quality assurance of offshore delivery

NZQA has jurisdiction over the offshore delivery of programmes leading to qualifications listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Other less formal education services such as education consulting and informal short course training are not specifically covered, although the whole organisation, as long as it is a public institution or a registered private training establishment, is quality assured.

Offshore delivery of New Zealand qualifications is an integral part of NZQA's evaluative quality assurance framework. This framework comprises four components:

1. initial entry requirements including listing qualifications on the NZQF, programme approval and accreditation and registration of private training establishments
2. the requirement for institutional self-assessment by the institution itself
3. periodic independent external evaluation and review (EER) by NZQA
4. ongoing compliance monitoring and regulatory consequences for poor educational quality.

The integration of offshore delivery into the quality assurance framework was achieved following the completion of the offshore quality assurance project in 2012.

NZQA introduced formal *Offshore Programme Delivery Rules* (the Offshore Rules) as a sub-set of the rules for programme approval and accreditation.

The Offshore Quality Assurance project

In April 2011, NZQA commenced the Offshore Quality Assurance project to clarify the quality assurance requirements for offshore provision of tertiary education by New Zealand institutions. The project was prompted by requests from the tertiary education sector for an update of NZQA's policies and guidelines, which had been established in 2006.

NZQA formed two project groups for the Offshore Quality Assurance project. The first was an inter-governmental agency group (Project Working Group) and the second was a reference group of representatives from the tertiary education sector (Sector Reference Group). The Project Working Group was responsible for developing the initial approach for the offshore quality assurance requirements. It comprised representatives from the Ministry of Education (responsible for tertiary education policy), the Tertiary Education Commission (responsible for tertiary education funding and monitoring), and NZQA as the quality assurance agency.

The Sector Reference Group was established to provide advice on the scope, approach, and the quality assurance requirements. It comprised representatives from tertiary education sector, including:

- Universities New Zealand;
- Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics organisations;
- Private Training Establishment organisations;
- Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, a specialist Māori tertiary education provider;
- the Ministry of Education;
- the Tertiary Education Commission; and
- NZQA.

The Project Working Group and Sector Reference Group began the project with a review and examination of good practice for offshore delivery internationally. This involved consideration of high-level international statements such as the *UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for the Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education* and the *UNESCO/Council of Europe Code of good practice in the provision of transnational education* that propose principles for best practice for cross-border delivery of education. From NZQA's perspective, it was important that the offshore quality assurance requirements aligned with international best practice guidelines as this would be important for reinforcing the quality of offshore delivery by New Zealand institutions.

This review and examination considered the scope of offshore delivery for the project. The Project Working Group originally began with a broad definition for cross-border education based on the *UNESCO/OECD Guidelines* to capture all the variations of offshore delivery. This definition proved unworkable for the project as it included a variety of cross-border education activities outside the scope of responsibilities for New Zealand's quality assurance bodies.

As a result, the Project Working Group and Sector Reference Group developed their own definition specific to the New Zealand context. Offshore delivery was defined as occurring when an approved programme leading to a qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) is delivered outside of New Zealand. This aligned the definition of offshore delivery with NZQA's jurisdiction for quality assurance offshore.

The Project Working Group and Sector Reference Group examined the guidelines and requirements for cross-border delivery in a number of other countries. The United Kingdom and Australia, as two of the main participants in cross-border education, were the main focus for this review. This was to ensure that the principles and requirements in New Zealand's main export education competitor countries did not deviate significantly from the requirements placed on New Zealand institutions.

The Project Working Group drew heavily on the United Kingdom's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's *Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee's *Provision of Education to International Students: Code of Practice and Guidelines for Australian Universities* as a guide for areas that should be covered. The Project Working Group and Sector Reference Group agreed that the principles for the requirements should be:

- *Offshore programmes must have comparable quality outcomes to programmes approved for delivery in New Zealand.*
- *Quality assurance of offshore education is cost effective and does not duplicate other requirements.*

From this review of the international guidelines and requirements a draft set of requirements and an approach were developed. The draft requirements were published for consultation with the entire tertiary education sector and other interested parties and stakeholders. Consultation with the tertiary education sector is common practice for new proposals and major changes to NZQA criteria and policies, and now Rules. The public consultation on the proposed requirements was open for six weeks during August-September 2011 and the draft requirements received widespread support from the sector. The feedback from the tertiary education sector was considered carefully and changes to the requirements were incorporated.

During the development of the offshore quality assurance requirements, the New Zealand Government passed the Education Amendment Act 2011. This Act revised NZQA's existing functions and powers to include a Rules framework to replace NZQA's powers to establish policies and criteria. These new powers allowed NZQA to make Rules for essentially all matters within its functions, duties and powers. The changes in legislation required NZQA to convert the draft requirements into the new Rules format which was done following further consultation with the sector. The rules were finalised in July 2012 and approved by the NZQA Board the following month. Final approval was granted by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment in September 2012 and the NZQF Offshore Programme Delivery Rules 2012 took effect on the 28 September 2012.

NZQF Offshore Programme Delivery Rules 2012

The NZQF Offshore Programme Delivery Rules 2012 are a subset of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2012. Institutions that submit applications for offshore delivery have their applications evaluated against both sets of Rules. Programme approval is the process used by NZQA to confirm that a programme is based on clear and consistent aims, content, outcomes and assessment practices. Programme accreditation is the process that NZQA uses to confirm that an institution is capable of delivering an approved programme.

The alignment of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2012 and the Offshore Rules was a key component of ensuring that the Offshore Rules adhered to their key principles. Programme approval and accreditation are key processes for ensuring that programmes deliver quality outcomes and alignment with the two sets of Rules ensures that offshore programmes have comparable quality outcomes to programmes approved for delivery in New Zealand.

This alignment also ensures that the quality assurance of offshore programmes is cost effective and does not duplicate other requirements. Where an institution already holds programme approval and accreditation for delivery of the programme in New Zealand, NZQA's evaluation of the application will focus on the Offshore Delivery Rules. Where a programme is new, and/or unique to offshore delivery, applicants need to demonstrate that they meet the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2012 and the Offshore Rules.

The next sections detail the specific criteria for offshore programme delivery within the Offshore Rules.

Criterion 1 Programme Design and Delivery

The institution ensures the design of the offshore programme is suited to delivery in the host country and suited to the needs of the intended and enrolled students.

The institution ensures that the following matters are comparable to New Zealand based programme delivery:

- programme learning outcomes
- content
- acceptability to the qualification developer, relevant academic bodies, employers, industry bodies, professional bodies, and other relevant bodies and communities
- student workload (particularly credit value, level, and duration).

This is the only programme approval criterion within the Offshore Rules. It relates to the type of programme delivered in the offshore environment and ensuring that the programme is comparable to programmes in New Zealand. As part of the review and examination of international best practice, NZQA noted that there needed to be scope for adaptation of the programmes to meet local needs.

Some aspects of a programme approved for delivery in New Zealand may not suit conditions in another country and aspects of curriculum and delivery may need to be adapted to meet the unique needs of offshore providers and learners.

The criterion reflects this by using the term “comparable” as opposed to “equivalence”. This recognises that there will be differences in the offshore context and that teaching and learning resources may not be exactly the same as programmes delivered in New Zealand, but that it is important the outcomes, content, and student workload should be comparable to the criteria for New Zealand programmes.

This criterion also requires that the applicant provides evidence that the programme for delivery offshore has the support from the qualification developer and relevant bodies and communities (academic bodies, employers, industry bodies, and professional bodies) and where a professional education programme is adapted for offshore delivery, the institution must clearly designate whether the programme may lead to professional registration in New Zealand.

Criterion 2 Offshore Relationships

The institution must ensure that any offshore partner organisation being used for offshore programme delivery:

- is recognised as a legal entity in the host country
- has appropriate financial performance and stability

Where the offshore partner organisation is used for delivery of teaching the institution must take reasonable steps to be satisfied that the offshore partner organisation:

- has sufficient and appropriate tertiary education experience and is lawfully allowed to provide tertiary education in the country in which the delivery occurs
- has an ownership and structure (including in management and administration) suitable for the offshore programme delivery
- is a reputable provider of education in its host country and any other country
- is providing teaching facilities, education resources, and student services and support that are appropriate

The selection of an offshore partnership organisation is a crucial component of the overall outcome of an offshore programme. The success and long-term sustainability of an offshore programme in partnership can be dependent on the capacity and reputation of an offshore partner and therefore alignment of strategic objectives and interest between the New Zealand institution and offshore partner is important.

There are two aspects to the offshore relationship criterion in the Offshore Rules. The first aspect is to ensure that a potential offshore partner is a sound, experienced and effective organisation, and the second part is that they establish a successful working relationship. NZQA's expectation around this criterion is that the applicants demonstrate that they have based their decision to enter a partnership on robust evidence and that the risks of programme failures have been accounted for in the long-term.

Although not specified within the Rules due to the difficulty of defining it, NZQA's expectation is that the New Zealand institution will have undertaken a thorough investigation of the partner organisation, or what might be more commonly understood in a business context as due diligence. NZQA expects the institution to have taken reasonable steps to satisfy itself with the partner organisations legal status, reputation, quality, other cross-border arrangements, financial stability, and management and administrative capabilities to deliver an approved programme in partnership with the New Zealand institution.

These are very important as, under the Offshore Rules, where an institution is using an offshore partner organisation, it remains responsible for the actions and performance of the offshore partner in relation to the offshore delivery.

Criterion 3 Formal agreement with offshore partner organisation

The institution must have in place a formal agreement with any offshore partner organisation that is executed by their senior officials with formal legal authority to enter the agreement on behalf of both of them.

The agreement must include provisions that:

- define how the institution and offshore partner organisation will continue to comply with these rules and the deemed programme rules
- identify clear channels of authority and accountability for decision-making between the institution and the offshore partner organisation for the offshore programme delivery
- cover compliance with local requirements relating to the offshore programme delivery
- appropriately manage all actual and potential conflicts of interest.

As highlighted with the offshore relationships criterion, the long-term sustainability of a partnership is built around respect and trust between partners and a clear indication of each partner's responsibilities and rights. A written contractual agreement that is legally binding is indispensable for achieving this outcome. The Rules do not prescribe a single format for the development of a contract as it will depend on the needs of the institutions forming the partnership.

However, the Offshore Rules require the written agreement to outline how the partners will comply with the Offshore Rules and NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2012¹, responsibilities for decision-making, compliance with local requirements, and management of actual and perceived conflicts of interest.

NZQA's expectation is that institutions will provide a draft contract or agreement as part of the application process with evidence that the offshore partner is in agreement with the proposed provisions. NZQA will enquire as part of the application process as to the whether the proposed agreement or contract addresses issues to minimise the risk to learners and the institution.

Criterion 4 Resources

The institution ensures it has appropriate resources to enable successful outcomes for overseas students, and that the resources are of comparable quality, type and availability to those used in New Zealand.

The Resources criterion is related directly to the Resources criterion for accreditation in the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2012. This

¹ These are referred to as the deemed programme rules in the above box as under the Education Amendment Act 2011 the Criteria for the Approval and Accreditation of Programme where deemed rules by section 44(1)(a) to be Rules under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 until replaced by the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2012.

requires the institution to have the capability and capacity to support sustained delivery of the programme through appropriate academic staffing, teaching facilities, education and physical resources, and support services. This is also a requirement on the offshore programme delivery, but the institution is required to ensure that resources are comparable. This is in recognition that resources used offshore may be different from those used in New Zealand.

However, any difference should only be in response to learner needs and local conditions. Some resources used in offshore delivery of a programme may not travel well and there is an expectation that contexts or examples used in resources will need to be adapted to suit the living experiences of offshore students. When processing an application, NZQA will be seeking to examine all resources provided for offshore delivery, including those provided by the offshore partner organisation, to ensure that the resources are sufficient to enable successful outcomes for learners.

Criterion 5 Assessment and Moderation

The institution ensures that assessment conducted offshore applies assessment methodology and criteria consistent with approved programmes for New Zealand delivery while allowing for appropriate adaptation for offshore delivery.

The institution undertakes moderation of offshore examinations and assessments.

Assessment is important for maintaining academic standards. It drives learning and is inextricably linked to programme design and delivery. The New Zealand institution is accountable under the Offshore Rules for the quality of assessment for the offshore programme delivery, including where an offshore partner administers the assessments. Unlike the other criterion, the assessment and moderation criterion does not use the word “comparable”.

The Offshore Rules specify that the assessment methods must be consistent while allowing for adaptation. This choice of words was deliberate and places a higher threshold on New Zealand institutions. Assessment tasks and procedures should take account of offshore learners’ cultures and context, while ensuring validity and fairness. Pre- and post-assessment moderation is required to ensure consistency of judgements between programmes delivered in New Zealand and offshore delivery to maintain the integrity of qualifications listed on the NZQF.

Criterion 6 Academic and other staff

The institution ensures that the qualifications, experience, teaching skills, management, and oversight of offshore teaching staff are suitable and effective for the offshore programme delivery.

The institution's staff selection, management, and oversight are appropriately adapted to offshore delivery.

Under the Offshore Rules, the New Zealand institution awarding the qualification is accountable for the quality of academic and administrative staff delivering its programmes. NZQA's expectation is that the institution's policies and procedures must take into account the differences for staff operating in New Zealand and offshore. When teaching offshore, academic staff may have to contend with complex professional challenges and demands, irrespective of whether they are recruited offshore or travel offshore from their normal teaching role.

Offshore teaching assignments demand awareness of the cultural context and sensitivities of the overseas country. There can be special pressures on academic and administrative staff that are recruited offshore, including differences in employment practices and norms between New Zealand and the host country. NZQA requires during the application processes that institutions provide evidence of their recruitment and selection plan for staff for the offshore delivery along with the curriculum vitae or position descriptions of the offshore teaching staff who will be delivering the programme. The application also needs to be accompanied by evidence of the systems in place for the management of offshore staff.

Criterion 7 Student Support and Complaints

The institution ensures that students and academic support services, and the procedures to manage student complaints, are effective for offshore delivery.

NZQA's expects institutions to provide support for offshore students that are consistent with their cultural context and modes of learning, and to have considered the issues and difficulties that they may be expected in an offshore environment. This could include additional learning material and activities, mentoring and a range of teaching-learning methodologies may be needed to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes of the offshore programme.

The institution needs to have established well-functioning procedures for student complaints, academic grievances, refunds and general student rights. These procedures must be clearly explained to students and staff. Student rights may differ from those that apply in New Zealand and there may be appropriate procedures that may not be so obvious to that of which are needed for offshore students, for example, cultural norms may influence approaches to complaints about the programme or teaching staff.

NZQA will assess as part of an application the student support and complaints procedures, how the New Zealand practices have been adapted, and how student support and complaints procedures will be communicated to staff and students.

Criterion 8 Student information

The institution ensures that relevant and accurate information relating to the programme is provided to intending and enrolled students, including information on the language for programme delivery and assessment, and information on available student support and guidance.

This criterion is to ensure that the institution presents a realistic picture of the likely student experience, including the expected academic workload, language expectations, assessment approaches, and the nature of the qualifications awarded as part of the programme. This includes student recruitment and marketing material of which NZQA requires an outline of the content and style of the recruitment and marketing information and how it has been adapted for offshore delivery during the application process. Once students have been enrolled, they need to have easily accessible information about the policies and procedures of the institution as they relate to student experience.

Criterion 9 Fee refunds and closures

The institution ensures that fee refunds provisions are clear, and will not undermine the educational reputation of New Zealand.

In event of programme closure for any reason, the institution ensures there is appropriate alternative provision of education available to offshore students enrolled at the time.

Offshore programme fee refund provisions are important for protecting students. New Zealand institutions may not be the responsible partner for the development of fee refund provisions but they should ensure that partnerships through formal contracts include fee refund provision that would be comparable to provisions required for programme delivery in New Zealand.

The Offshore Rules require New Zealand institutions to take precautionary measures to ensure that partnerships have procedures and systems in place that protect the reputation of New Zealand's export education reputation and protect learners from unfair outcomes. Applications for offshore delivery are required to contain a description of the proposed procedures in the event of programme closure, including student fee protection and arrangements for appropriate alternative programme provision.

Criterion 10 Quality Assurance and Management

The institution ensures that the special considerations for offshore programme delivery are incorporated within its quality assurance and management systems, and that all applicable quality assurance requirements in the host country are identified and met.

Offshore delivery may present a number of quality assurance and management challenges for institutions. The institution's own requirements must be satisfied while local offshore requirements are also met. This may present challenges as the host country may have substantially different regulatory requirements and offshore staff may be accustomed to different quality assurance models. The New Zealand institution needs to ensure that its quality assurance requirements for offshore delivery are blended with the offshore partner's established quality assurance systems.

However, it is important that the quality of the NZQF qualifications is not compromised in the process of blending the requirements. Offshore delivery must be also be integrated within the New Zealand institution's organisational self-assessment and quality management system and applications for offshore delivery are required to provide a description of how this will be achieved.

Other requirements

Institutions must also meet a number of requirements to maintain approval for offshore programme delivery. Institution must continue to comply with the deemed programme rules and the criteria for offshore programme delivery. They must also ensure that they keep permanent and accurate records of student enrolment and achievement. The institution as part of its participation in in self-assessment and external evaluation and review, ensure that there are regular reviews of the programme and its delivery offshore, including reviews of any delivery by an offshore partner organisations. There is the potential that the offshore programme delivery could be selected as part of the scoping for an institution's external evaluation and review.

Applications for Offshore Programme Delivery

NZQA is responsible for the quality assurance of the non-university tertiary education sector and Universities New Zealand is responsible for the quality assurance of the university sector. Therefore, NZQA is responsible for applications from institutes of technology and polytechnics, wānanga, and private training establishments.

Institutions, other than universities, are categorised under the External Evaluation and Review Rules 2012 into a provider category based on the statements of confidence following their most recent external evaluation and review.

Category 1 and 2 providers are those institutions, other than universities, that have achieved statements of confidence of Highly Confident or Confident for both their educational performance and capability in self-assessment. NZQA will only consider application for offshore delivery from Category 1 and 2 providers. This ensures that only institutions that NZQA believes are of a high quality are able to deliver programmes offshore.

In the application process, NZQA will also consider any potential risks associated with the proposal for offshore delivery. In general, where there are higher levels of potential risk, NZQA may require more detailed information for applications. As part of the assessment of the potential risks, NZQA considers factors such as the providers experience and capability in offshore delivery, the scale of the proposed provision, degree of *direct* influence the New Zealand institution has over the key processes for the offshore programme delivery, regulatory status of an offshore partner, and NZQA's relationship with quality assurance bodies in the host country.

If NZQA is confident that an offshore quality assurance body has addressed NZQA's requirements, the level of risk will be lower. Normally, proposals for offshore delivery will be evaluated onshore. NZQA may request further information, including from the host country quality assurance body. In exceptional cases, such as where there are specialised resources that NZQA cannot confirm at a distance, an offshore evaluation visit may be required.

Applications for offshore delivery from universities will be considered by Universities New Zealand under the provisions within the Education Act for procedures set up for inter-university course approval and moderation.

The Offshore Rules contain transitional measures for all current offshore delivery by institutions other than universities NZQA has sought to ensure that the quality of all current offshore delivery is high and has required all non-university tertiary education institutions that had previously obtained approval of offshore delivery and all non-university tertiary education institutions currently delivering offshore to seek approval for their offshore programmes by 31 December 2013.

Those non-university tertiary education institutions that have not sought approval by 30 June 2014 for current delivery will be deemed non-compliant with the Offshore Rules and may be subjected to regulatory consequences.

Conclusions

Throughout the development of the Offshore Rules, NZQA strove to work in partnership with the tertiary education sector to enable them to carry out their business and ensure that there are high standards for education provision by New Zealand institutions offshore. The Offshore Quality Assurance project was a good example of the ‘co-development’ of rules between the tertiary education sector and NZQA and alignment of strategic objectives.

The final product, the Offshore Rules, enables NZQA to have confidence in the quality of offshore programme delivery by New Zealand institutions and to protect New Zealand’s reputation as a high quality education service provider.

At the same time, the Offshore Rules assist New Zealand institutions operating in an offshore environment by providing host countries with confidence that the New Zealand institutions have approval from NZQA for the delivery of programmes leading to qualifications on the NZQF and that the Offshore Rules align with international best practice for cross-border delivery.