



## Learner Wellbeing and Safety

## Palmerston North School of Design, trading as The Design School (TDS) is a highly successful specialist provider of foundation and bridging design education.

The school was established in 1993 to provide an opportunity for creative learners to re-engage with education due to unemployment and or underachievement at secondary school and gain the skills and qualifications needed to enter design courses at diploma and degree level and then progress onto sustainable employment. The School now offers learners from all levels of achievement the ability to gain relevant qualifications and progress their career goals quickly towards success.

Entry into top-performing Design Schools and the industry is extremely competitive and successful applicants are required to show evidence of their foundation and design skills at a level exceeding usual outputs from secondary schools. The skills of TDS graduates are valued at higher level providers and learners are accepted into advanced programmes with ease and many graduates have attained prestigious degrees and fulfilling careers.

Pastoral Care is the commitment of our staff to the wellbeing of each learner including their social, emotional, physical and moral wellbeing. The Design School has developed a detailed Pastoral Care plan which covers all areas that affect the retention of learners. This mirrored the needs of the NZQA Pastoral Care of Domestic Learners. Supporting learners can in part be achieved by developing partnerships with other organisations and services within the community. We also acknowledge and respect cultural differences and support The Treaty of Waitangi with particular reference to Article 2. Our aim is to identify any adverse issues that may impact a learner's ability to engage in learning or achieve the required outcomes and implement strategies to address these issues. These are areas apart from the academic, although in some instances it may include them e.g. specialised help with literacy and numeracy. We believe that to be able to fully engage in learning, other influencing factors need to be addressed. These can include mental and physical health, access to food, adequate housing, and support networks. We are reassessing our role in regard to pastoral care constantly and developing additional partnerships with community and support agencies. We also acknowledge that some of these barriers to learning are not within our control, but we endeavour to provide a safe learning environment where matters can be identified, discussed and connections made to appropriate support. Our policy is to take a proactive, preventative approach to pastoral care, as opposed to reactive. Basic food, medical, personal hygiene products etc are provided alongside all course materials at no cost to the learners.

The management team promotes a culture of continual self-improvement. Staff, learners and stakeholders are engaged informally and formally to obtain and provide feedback on an ongoing basis. The learner survey results demonstrate the effectiveness of the continuous improvement of facilities, resources and curriculum with strong results across all areas measured.

Learner feedback via midyear and end of year surveys provide valuable feedback for development of the courses. Learner feedback has been developed to include wellbeing and to match the questions relating to programme outcomes. Learners are also able to provide feedback on an ongoing basis throughout the year through strong relationships with their tutors.

The review data has been consistent for a number of years with common feedback showing the courses, staff and School are well received. General comments have always been positive and include:

- tutors are providing excellent levels of support.
- All would recommend the course to others.
- Students who hadn't achieved everything they had set out to achieve identified that it was their own personal problems.
- No recommendations for additional resources.
- No complaints about equipment, material or resources.
- Students noted the level of support from staff was excellent.
- Courses are well organised.

The student reviews as supported by excellent results from external review processes, including graduate and higher level provider surveys, qualification consistency reviews, external moderation of assessments and endorsements by Workforce Development Councils.

The physical environments at the design school have consistently been praised for the openness and opportunities for equal engagement by all learners. All levels and disciplines are delivered within an open plan studio where learners are exposed to creative and technical processes at and beyond their current levels. The environments enhance learners’ ability to engage with each other as well as staff, to build knowledge and skills as efficiently as possible. The 1:1 delivery model essential for assisting learners in a series of individualised scenarios means they can complete projects and develop their own creative and personal identities. All learners are able to be closely monitored without feeling unduly pressured. Data about attendance, progression and assessment is constantly used by staff to identify potential problems and any matters can be dealt with quickly and efficiently by compassionate staff before mushrooming into a crisis and hindering learner progress.

The physical environment of the design studio has been carefully considered with a view to providing a secure place to study and work. The studio spaces are calm, safe, creative, welcoming spaces where learners have a sense of belonging, are comfortable and wish to be there with others. Many learners will attend outside normal class hours to continue working on projects or use the School’s facilities for personal creative enterprises. Making facilities available beyond regular hours encourages learners to extend themselves, either through applying additional hours to projects or by making available a safe setting where they can relax.

Learner successes are celebrated as they occur, online throughout the year and formally at an annual graduation with an accompanying exhibition of learner work. The event is attended by dignitaries, whanau, professionals, community leaders and peers.

The deliberate design of each overall site including the studio environment, the project based delivery models, high staff to student ratios and use of advanced pedagogy, provide an equal opportunity for success for students with a wide range of abilities and goals. This is reflected in The Design School’s sustained successes since 1993.

## Self-review report October 2024

### TEO information

<b>TEO Name</b>	The Design School			<b>MoE number</b>	9429
<b>Code contact</b>	<b>Name</b>	Mike Saywell		<b>Job title</b>	Director
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<b>Current enrolments</b>	<b>Domestic learners</b>	<b>Total #</b>	161	<b>18 y/o or older</b>	60
				<b>Under 18 y/o</b>	101
<b>Report author(s)</b>	Mike Saywell				

## Stage of implementation for each outcome

Indicate the stage of implementation that most reflects your organisation's current level of understanding and practice for each outcome, based on the continuum provided in Appendix 1.

### Organisational structures to support a whole-of-provider approach to learner wellbeing and safety

	Rating
<b>Outcome 1:</b> A learner wellbeing and safety system	Well implemented
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Learner voice	Implemented

### Wellbeing and safety practices for all tertiary providers

	Rating
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Safe, inclusive, supportive, and accessible physical and digital learning environments	Well implemented
<b>Outcome 4:</b> Learners are safe and well	Well implemented

## Summary of performance under each outcome

### Organisational structures to support a whole-of-provider approach to learner wellbeing and safety

	<b>Summary of performance based on gathered information</b> (i.e. how effectively is your organisation doing what it needs to be doing?)	<b>How do you know?</b> (i.e. note supporting evidence with analysis to make sense of what it means)
<b>Outcome 1:</b> A learner wellbeing and safety system	<p>A comprehensive Pastoral Care Plan has been implemented and reviewed over several years.</p> <p>A wide range of community and professional services have been identified and give priority to The Design School learners to support student wellbeing.</p> <p>Goals and Strategic Plans for wellbeing and safety are communicated well at induction, supported by the Student Handbook, and student individual learning plans reviewed throughout the enrolment.</p>	<p>Learners self-identify as well supported to reach their learning goals and long-term career aspirations.</p> <p>Learners progress to higher education at approximately twice national benchmarks.</p> <p>The learner wellbeing and safety system has been reviewed annually utilising data from across The Design School systems, NZQA EER, Qualification Consistency Reviews and Learner Wellbeing and Safety Self-Review Toolkits.</p> <p>From the 2022 NZQA EER Report, <i>“Success-focused and comprehensive, individualised guidance and support underpins generally strong student achievement.”</i></p>
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Learner voice	<p>An open studio environment and high staff to student ratios collect student voice throughout their enrolments. Student voice is also collected formally through student reviews twice annually.</p> <p>Additionally, graduate reviews are conducted post-graduation to gather student voice relating to ongoing pathway success.</p>	<p>Learner reviews identify strong performance against well-being and meeting the cultural needs of students.</p> <p>Learners also identify programmes and results align strongly to education and employment goals.</p> <p>Evolution of student goals and expectations are reflected in new programme design, existing programme development and enhancements to project activities.</p>

## Wellbeing and safety practices for all tertiary providers

	<b>Summary of performance based on gathered information</b> (i.e. how effectively is your organisation doing what it needs to be doing?)	<b>How do you know?</b> (i.e. note supporting evidence with analysis to make sense of what it means)
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Safe, inclusive, supportive, and accessible physical and digital learning environments</p>	<p>Curriculum and projects are flexible to meet the needs of individual learners. The physical environment is inclusive with both physical and digital environments tested with a wide range of learners over 30 years. Staff and management ensure all areas of the student environment is responsive to individual student needs.</p>	<p>Learners engage and succeed across all programme levels, at or above national benchmarks. This is a significant achievement considering the starting point of most learners. Learners are able to identify and work towards their diverse individual goals supported by a flexible curriculum and environment. From the 2022 NZQA EER Report, <i>“The Design School has effective policies and procedures to minimise barriers to learning, with systems in place to support students and involve them in their learning. There is strong evidence of working closely with stakeholders such as schools and support agencies to transition and retain learners from wide backgrounds.”</i></p>
<p><b>Outcome 4:</b> Learners are safe and well</p>	<p>Barriers to learning are proactively removed before they can impact learner safety and well-being. Systems and processes are embedded from first contact with learners to post graduation.</p>	<p>Learners self-identify as having their well-being and cultural needs met at The Design School. From the 2022 NZQA EER Report, <i>“Māori and Te Whare Tapa Whā indigenous principles and other cultural and community perspectives enable students to extend their learning into cultural spaces and embrace the tikanga which gives greater connections between people in workplaces and the wider community.”</i></p>

## Findings from gap analysis of compliance with key required processes

### Organisational structures to support a whole-of-provider approach to learner wellbeing and safety

	Identified gaps in compliance with key required processes
<b>Outcome 1:</b> A learner wellbeing and safety system	No gaps have been identified in the learner well-being and safety system. Since the previous review, The Design School material and the current Tertiary Education Commission Investment Plan with a comprehensive mission statement and learner wellbeing, has been provided to the public on the School's website. The policies for disciplinary actions have been improved in response to policy testing in 2023. The Student Handbook has been updated with the new policies. The Design School learners can now utilise ITENZ processes to make complaints. Staff are proactive and empowered to respond to wellbeing and safety matters as they deem necessary with support from the management team.
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Learner voice	Current processes are producing good results to capture and implement student voice. The response rate for Graduate Surveys has improved to over 80%. Learner voice has been improved with the embedding of digital communication tools across all programmes. Formal learner voice could be enhanced with engagement of student representation at each site however there continues to be limited appetite from learners for this level of engagement. This demonstrates the systems for learner voice are sufficient for the School's demographics.

### Wellbeing and safety practices for all tertiary providers

	Identified gaps in compliance with key required processes
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Safe, inclusive, supportive, and accessible physical and digital learning environments	No gaps have been identified in the learner well-being and safety system. Opportunities for using te reo in assessments and creative outputs are embedded in the School's systems. Improvements to the use of Te Reo within The Design School will enhance meeting the objectives of Clause 17 (1).
<b>Outcome 4:</b> Learners are safe and well	No gaps have been identified in the learner well-being and safety system.

## Summary of action plan

Include information on how actions will be monitored for implementation and success.

### Organisational structures to support a whole-of-provider approach to learner wellbeing and safety

	Action/s to be taken	Owner	Due date	Plan for monitoring implementation	Measures of success
<b>Outcome 1:</b> A learner wellbeing and safety system	Continue to review and update pastoral care plan as necessary.	Management team.	Ongoing.		The learner wellbeing and safety system is effective.
	Update complaints procedures to include ITENZ options.	Management Team	December 2024.	To be included in annual QMS & Student Handbook review.	Additional option to use ITENZ resources for complaints is communicated to learners.
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Learner voice	Embed new methods for recording student voice.	Management team.	December 2024.	Management meetings to track embedding of digital tools for collecting student voice within all programmes.	The response rate for surveys is improved, especially for graduate surveys.



## Wellbeing and safety practices for all tertiary providers

	Action/s to be taken	Owner	Due date	Plan for monitoring implementation	Measures of success
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Safe, inclusive, supportive, and accessible physical and digital learning environments	Continue to review and update physical and digital environments as necessary.	Management team.	Ongoing.		Physical and digital environments meet the needs of learners.
	Monitor cloud based logins and remote accessibility of digital work.	Management team.	Implementation completed in December 2023. Ongoing monitoring required.	Management meetings include monitoring of usage to identify further improvements.	Learners are able to access digital resources and their digital work outside of the studio environment.
<b>Outcome 4:</b> Learners are safe and well	Continue to review and update physical and digital environments as necessary.	Management team.	Ongoing.		Students are safe and well.
	Continue to review and update programme content to reflect learner aspirations, assessment changes, quality assurance feedback.	Management team.	Ongoing.	Reviews part of weekly staff meetings and management meetings to respond to course reviews, student reviews, external moderation feedback.	Programme content meets the needs of learners, assessments and stakeholders.