

## Aide-Memoire: Summary Report on Student Accommodation Monitoring

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<b>To:</b>	Hon Penny Simmonds, Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills
<b>From:</b>	Dr Grant Klinkum, Chief Executive
<b>Date:</b>	26 July 2024
<b>Reference:</b>	OC00998

### Purpose

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1. This aide memoire is to advise you that NZQA intends to publish a Summary Report on Student Accommodation Monitoring, and the key findings contained in the report.
2. NZQA proposes to proactively release this briefing as part of the next publication of documents, as the Summary Report will already have been released publicly through NZQA's website.

### Background

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3. NZQA is administrator of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (the Code). The Code sets required outcomes around wellbeing and safety. All tertiary education providers and all schools which enrol international students must meet the relevant outcomes of the Code.
4. The Code is structured into outcomes, three of which (Outcomes 5-7) establish requirements and processes for resident wellbeing and safety in tertiary student accommodation. Processes required in:
  - Outcome 5 work to ensure student accommodation residents are well supported through information provided, accommodation staff, and their community
  - Outcome 6 aim to ensure residents are clear on the nature of the accommodation and the support structure within it. It also ensures student accommodation is connected to the wider organisation, and the whole-of-organisation approach required in Outcome 1 of the Code.
  - Outcome 7 work to ensure that providers support student accommodation residents by considering, and responding, to their needs both in physical spaces and through the provision of services.
5. As Code Administrator, NZQA provides advice and guidance to providers and learners, and monitors providers' compliance with the Code.

6. NZQA delegates responsibility for some Code monitoring to Universities New Zealand (UNZ). All eight universities in New Zealand provide student accommodation and have been verified as compliant with Outcomes 5-7 of the Code by UNZ. There is a link to the UNZ report in the Summary Report on Student Accommodation Monitoring and on NZQA’s website.

## Discussion

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7. NZQA is publishing a high-level summary of student accommodation monitoring undertaken between 2021 and 2023. This is intended to support providers and others in understanding the range of student accommodation offerings in New Zealand, and how providers are approaching their student accommodation obligations under the Code.
8. The monitoring included 24 tertiary education providers (excluding universities) with student accommodation (a total of around 3,000 beds). The tertiary education providers comprised nine Te Pūkenga business divisions and fifteen private training establishments (PTEs). The monitoring included three steps: desk evaluation, engagement meetings with staff, and site visits including meeting with residents.
9. The report notes a wide range of ownership and operating structures in use across student accommodation:

<b>Most accommodation facilities</b>	are owned and operated by providers themselves
	have single bedrooms
	offer accommodation to international students
<b>Many accommodation facilities</b>	have live-in staff or residential assistants at their student accommodation sites
	provide full and/or partial catering
<b>Some accommodation facilities</b>	are owned by providers but operated by third parties
	are owned by third parties but operated by providers
	do not have live-in accommodation staff but have emergency plans and 24-hour support in place
	have twin-share bedrooms
	admit learners under 18 years old
	provide single-sex arrangements
	offer alcohol-free areas
offer accommodation to married students	
<b>Few accommodation facilities</b>	are neither owned nor operated by providers themselves but have contracts with third parties
	have staff living on site who are not student accommodation staff
	provide accommodation to the public during summer holidays/breaks

10. Overall, no significant concerns were found during the monitoring of student accommodation. Areas of good practice and improvement were identified and are summarised below.

Good practice:

- **Pre-arrival and transition information:** good strategies and processes to provide as much information as possible to learners before they sign accommodation contracts and various activities offered to support learners during their transition phase.
- **Supporting a communal, cross-cultural living environment:** policies and processes in place to promote diverse cultures and support resident-led events at accommodation facilities.
- **Accommodation staff oversight:** good policies and procedures to manage accommodation staff and staff clearly know their responsibilities and reporting processes.
- **Resident welfare checks:** policies and processes in place, with closer check-ups for learners who are under 18 years old.
- **Crisis response and emergency management:** emergency processes/practices and important contact lists are detailed in the providers student handbooks and/or an accommodation information noticeboard.

Areas for improvement:

- **Information and promotional activities:** some providers did not have enough information available about complaints processes in their house rules and guidelines. This includes information on making a complaint to NZQA as the Code Administrator and the Dispute Resolution Scheme (DRS).
- **Accommodation staff training and support:** at some providers more policies and processes are needed to support ongoing accommodation staff training, especially mental health training.
- **Student accommodation contracts:** some providers do not have a process to consider learners' views when the contract is reviewed and updated.
- **Promotional information:** some providers do not have any information on the ownership structure of student accommodation and operator details, or the wellbeing and safety practices offered at student accommodation facilities.

11. Under the Code, providers are required to regularly complete a self-review to identify how well their learner wellbeing and safety goals, plans and practices deliver the outcomes required by the Code. Providers must regularly attest that they have completed a self-review of their performance against the Code requirements. Attestation results show that most student accommodation providers consider they meet the requirements of the Code.
12. The proportion of providers who self-identify as being at the "Early stage" and "Developing" stages of implementation decreased (from 8.6% in 2022 to 5.6% in 2023). Providers who self-identified as "Well-implemented" increased (from 59.1% in 2022 to 62.5% in 2023). These ratings aligned with our monitoring where we found effective practices were in place at student accommodation.

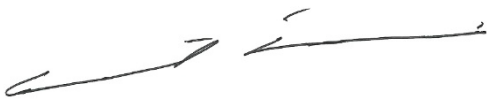
## Next steps

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13. As Code Administrator, NZQA is responsible for working with providers so that learners living in student accommodation are safe and well. Based on our monitoring, we are satisfied with how the accommodation sections of the Code are being implemented. Our future activities will include:

- monitoring tertiary education providers' student accommodation through self-review and/or attestation.
- continuing to include learner voice in any future student accommodation monitoring (to understand the perspective of diverse learners).
- working with providers whose monitoring was postponed.
- working with providers to ensure any new student accommodation arrangements are fit for purpose.

14. A copy of the Summary Report on Student Accommodation Monitoring has been emailed to providers who were part of the monitoring and will be published on NZQA's website.



**Dr Grant Klinkum**

Chief Executive, NZQA

26 July 2024

**Hon Penny Simmonds**

Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills

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