

Qual IT success story

Graduate Programme

Need: Border restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has prevented skilled IT professionals from overseas coming to NZ, creating a workforce shortage.

Solution: An innovative new programme that brings recent graduates into full-time employment and supports them to fill roles previously done by skilled overseas workers.

Outcome: Supporting the future of the industry by training more local IT professionals to bolster the workforce.



Innovative new graduate programme launched to combat tech skills shortage

New Zealand owned and operated IT quality assurance company Qual IT has a proud history of supporting and investing in people and the IT industry, and is excited to have welcomed six new full-time employees with the launch of their inaugural graduate programme.

The programme has been set up to bolster their workforce and give talented future Quality Assurance (QA) professionals a chance to put their education to use and kickstart their career with full-time employment from day one.

With the market for QA professionals showing unprecedented demand and New Zealand's borders likely to be closed for the foreseeable future, it is the perfect time to launch this initiative.

A recent report from IT Professionals New Zealand/ Te Pou Hangarau Ngaio and NZTech on behalf of the New Zealand Government is described as a sector wake-up call, citing an over-reliance on immigration and lack of investment in developing domestic talent as resulting in a significant mismatch in skill supply and demand.

Prior to the border closure more than 50 per cent of new IT jobs were filled via immigration.

Finding a local solution

Qual IT has found a pro-active, long-term solution to this problem by investing in upskilling and training people locally.

"IT is an area with exceptional employment outcomes and Qual IT's grad programme is a big opportunity for students," says Qual IT's Head of Practice & Capability Jill Thorburn.

"We offer our graduates all the benefits of full-time employment throughout the 14-week training programme. The trainees aren't all recent graduates, some have worked in other areas but decided they want to pursue a career in software testing."

Upskilling the next wave of IT professionals

Qual IT's graduate programme offers people new to QA exposure to the most exciting, cutting-edge technology developments in the industry with some of New Zealand's biggest organisations, with oversight and support from experienced staff and a structured learning programme.

"Whether it's ground-breaking e-commerce initiatives to systems supporting high profile new product launches through to large and complex government projects, our graduates have the opportunity to learn in a fully supported environment," says Jill.

Graduates have just completed four weeks of foundation training, followed by two weeks of further technical training and they have now embarked on an eight week learning placement on a client assignment. This learning placement is fully supported by Qual IT.

"We are very grateful to Transpower, the New Zealand Police, Waka Kotahi, the Ministry for Primary Industries, and the Central Region Technical Advisory Services for supporting our programme and allowing our graduates to gain valuable real-life work experience in their businesses alongside our experts," says Jill.

Jill was blown away by the calibre of the graduates and says they've made an immediate impact on the organisation.

"They're very much a part of the Qual IT family and we look forward to helping them develop and enjoy successful careers in the IT sector."

Working collaboratively with tertiary education providers

An established relationship with Wellington vocational education provider Whitireia and WelTec through their IT training programme has paid dividends for both Qual IT and the polytechnic as well. Professional analysts from Qual IT lent their expertise to guest lectures and Whitireia and WelTec provided useful advice that helped develop the graduate programme.

Dalvir Singh is a Whitireia graduate grateful to be starting his career with Qual IT. Being a part of the graduate programme has alleviated the stress of job-hunting and allowed him to start his career as a tester straight away.

"It really is a privilege to be able to transition straight into the industry like that," says Dalvir. "The job security is so reassuring. My studies were great, but this is the real thing now and I'm learning so much."

Covid-19 restrictions have meant that new employees like Dalvir haven't been able to come into the office much, but Qual IT's training manager

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Dalvir Singh
Whitireia Graduate
Part of the Qual IT Graduate Programme

adapted to alert level changes and training modules for the programme have been carried out online, allowing the new employees to still get a taste of the office culture.

“I really love the environment and the way staff are managed,” says Dalvir. “Even the most senior staff feel like friends which gives me so much confidence. It’s like one big family.”

Dalvir is currently working on test techniques and studying small business requirements, and he hopes

to be dealing with his first client engagement in the coming weeks. He encourages other aspiring testers to apply for future Qual IT graduate programmes.

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Mary-Claire Proctor, Head of School for IT and Business at Whitireia and WelTec, is pleased to see the graduate programme providing pathways to employment for students.

“Creating positive ākonga and employer outcomes by collaborating with industry is a key objective of Whitireia and WelTec, and this is a great example” says Mary-Claire.

Next steps

After the success of the inaugural programme, Jill is looking forward to running the graduate programme again next year in Wellington, and is already planning to launch another graduate programme at their Auckland office. Qual IT believes that the graduate programme will build more depth and longevity into the Quality Assurance industry as it adjusts to closed borders.

About Qual IT

Qual IT is New Zealand’s largest provider of quality assurance services for information technology, working with some of the country’s largest and most successful organisations, including Transpower, NZ Police, IAG and New Zealand Transport Agency through offices in Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton and Christchurch. Formed in 2004 we have in excess of 230 senior permanent and contract quality assurance and test professionals.

Integrated QA solutions



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