

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Quality Consultants New Zealand Ltd  
trading as QCONZ

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 7 May 2014

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# Purpose of this Report

*The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.*

## Introduction

### 1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	Quality Consultants New Zealand Ltd trading as QCONZ
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Chartwell, Hamilton
Delivery sites:	Delivers training nationally at clients' or temporary premises
First registered:	18 October 2011
Courses currently delivered:	<p>Short courses for New Zealand Milking and Pumping Trade Association (NZMPTA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Milking Machine Testing; Mastitis and Liner Selection including Troubleshooting; Liner Selection; Milking Machine Tester's Refresher; Principles of Mastitis and Milk Quality; Stray Voltage; Milk Quality and Grade Troubleshooting; Principles of Milking Machine Hygiene; Milk Quality and Grade Troubleshooting</li></ul> <p>Short courses for Primary Industry Training Organisation trainees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Milk Quality One; Milk Quality Two; Dealing with Dairy Farm Effluent</li></ul> <p>Short courses for aged care workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health and Safety; Food Hygiene; Food Control; Infection Control; Team Building</li></ul>
Code of Practice:	Not applicable

Number of students:	Domestic: approx. 900 enrol in short courses
Number of staff:	32 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	Competency Certificate for the NZMPTA Milking Machine Test (level 4)
	Domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries/Agriculture/Dairy Farming (level 3)</li> <li>• Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries/Agriculture/Farming Skills (level 3)</li> <li>• Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries/Agriculture/On-farm Milk Quality (level 3)</li> </ul>
Distinctive characteristics:	The training and assessment for the Competency Certificate for the NZMPTA Milking Machine Test (level 4) is carried out over five days at the NZMPTA specialised premises in Palmerston North. Students are then required to submit 10 tests conducted in the workplace to an independent assessor appointed by the association. Students must successfully complete six of these tests in order to achieve the certificate. Registration as an approved milk tester is maintained by submitting a sample of test results to the association each year.
Recent significant changes:	The organisation registered as a PTE in 2011 and in 2012 appointed a general manager to oversee the training functions of the company.
Previous quality assurance history:	QCONZ is required to comply with the external moderation requirements of Primary ITO, which now includes ServiceIQ and New Zealand Industry Training Organisation (NZITO). QCONZ met the 2013 requirements for moderation. This is QCONZ' first external evaluation and review (EER).
Other:	QCONZ has provided advice and training in milk quality, food control and health and safety to the agriculture and aged care sectors for a number of years. The organisation began as an off-shoot of the former Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF). Many of the consultants and trainers used by QCONZ are recognised for their experience and knowledge of the sector.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

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The scope of the EER included the mandatory focus area of governance, management and strategy. The following programme was selected as a focus area because it is delivered to meet one of three major clients' training needs and is the organisation's first accredited programme listed on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF).

- Competency Certificate for the NZMPTA Milking Machine Test (level 4)

The EER team also reviewed the Health and Safety courses, 1 and 2, provided for employees of a national aged care provider. This area was selected to provide an additional range of evidence about the quality of training offered by QCONZ.

There are a significant number of other short courses offered by QCONZ as part of national qualifications for Primary ITO trainees but that are not directly managed by the organisation. However, QCONZ is responsible for monitoring the components of these courses that it delivers.

### 3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.*

Prior to the EER, QCONZ submitted a self-assessment summary, including recent activities and areas for improvement. A pre-scoping conversation was held with the lead evaluator and the training operations manager to determine the scope of the EER.

The evaluation team of two visited the head office in Chartwell, Hamilton over two days. Interviews were conducted with the chief executive officer (who is also a director), one other director, the training operations manager, milking machine test tutor, the tutor for aged care students, other members of the senior management team and the NZITO training operations manager. Phone interviews were held with trainees on the Milking Machine Test course. In addition, phone interviews were carried out with a dairy assessor, a representative from Fonterra, a representative of NZMPTA and the training manager for the aged care client. A range of documentation was reviewed on site, including course evaluations, course development documents and the student management system containing course results and monitoring information. Moderation information from Primary ITO was reviewed following the site visit.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Quality Consultants New Zealand Ltd trading as QCONZ**.

Results of course monitoring show a high completion rate for QCONZ short courses. In particular, the rate of completion for the Milking Machine Test courses in the past six years is around 100 per cent, with only one non-completion. This is good evidence of successful student achievement – those that pass the course achieve the certificate, which is assessed by an independent industry assessor.

Student achievement rates for the short health and safety courses are also high, but better analysis of learner needs and identification of trends would enable a clearer understanding of where improvements could be made – in particular, for the Health and Safety 2 course, which has a lower completion rate than the other courses.

The value of the courses is based on their clearly meeting industry needs for niche training as well as basic skills in health and safety practices, whether it is on dairy farms or in aged care environments. The aged care training liaison person spoke of the benefits in raised awareness and reporting. However, more formal analysis would help to better identify the value of training for future planning.

The courses are designed using staff expert knowledge and feedback from students, clients and employers in the industry. The training activities provide opportunities for engagement with students and meaningful learning outcomes, which are supported by the organisation's development of resources that meet the stakeholders' needs. The organisation has planning processes in place to ensure a high quality of resources for the training, including selection of suitable teaching staff and providing upskilling to continue to meet the needs of industry. The organisation provides innovative solutions for the dairy industry through its own research and development activities in the agriculture sector, demonstrating its contribution back to the industry. This shows innovation and a desire to be prepared for future changes in the industry.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Quality Consultants New Zealand Ltd trading as QCONZ**.

QCONZ has developed a framework for assessing course outcomes using student evaluations, tutor reporting and assessment of course results. This system is still being improved to ensure that it has relevant, valid data to produce reports for analysis.

The organisation has identified where its self-assessment activities need to be strengthened, for example in gathering the right information and having the expertise to analyse the data. It is responding well to these identified needs by implementing a programme of staff professional development, including adult education and moderation-specific training, and is embedding the culture of self-assessment and evaluation among its staff, including contractors.

Importantly, the strengths identified through QCONZ' own self-assessment show that course results are consistent and meet the contractual arrangements agreed with its clients. However, improvements to the analysis of results would help determine actions that could be taken to improve outcomes in relation to value and better course results. The system also needs to take into account ways to better capture course review activities and the rationale for any changes in order to monitor whether the course content is aligned to the course purpose and requirements, as well as to the needs of stakeholders.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Adequate**.

The evidence shows that there is a high completion rate for all short courses delivered by QCONZ. The Milking Machine Test course has been a significant success, with all but one of the students achieving the certificate in the past six years. In 2012, 93 per cent of students completed the Health and Safety 1 course and 76 per cent completed the Health and Safety 2 course.

The current student management system provides the senior management team with sufficient data to monitor successful courses and identify any areas for follow-up. Non-completion on courses is monitored, but further analysis for specific courses would help to identify trends for any improvement. The organisation has stepped up its focus in this area with the appointment of a training operations manager to develop the formal training recording and reporting systems required. Before registering as a PTE, the organisation's enrolment and reporting of credit achievement was through the relevant ITO. The organisation has also identified gaps in its achievement analysis and has developed a student management system to capture assessment results and course completion from 2013 onwards. The organisation's move to a new student management system aims to provide reports for better analysis and comparisons from year to year for specific courses.

The organisation collects demographic data on ethnicity, showing that 2 per cent of students identify as Māori, 5 per cent as Pasifika, and 7 per cent Filipino. However, there are still gaps in analysing the data to understand how well all learners are achieving for these groups, particularly with the estimated 75 per cent non-European student cohort enrolled in aged care courses.

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<sup>1</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.



## 1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The majority of training is developed to help employers meet industry compliance requirements and also to meet needs for more specialised skills. The Milking Machine Test course is a good example of a valued course for the dairy industry as it is aimed at training people who can test milking machines to ensure they are safe and are serviced for safe and effective operation. The feedback from students was that they found the course was specific to their needs and that the skills and knowledge required enabled them to maintain and test milking machines in their workplace or as contractors. QCONZ is the only provider of this training for NZMPTA. The ongoing contract with NZMPTA demonstrates the value of the outcomes of the training for the dairy industry as they relate to legislative requirements and improved animal health. NZMPTA registers milking machine testers and monitors the number of testers to meet industry demand.

Feedback from major stakeholders provides evidence that QCONZ is highly regarded in the dairy industry for the quality of its training. An example of this high regard is the extension of the organisation's contract with a large dairy company to provide farm milk quality courses for all of the North Island, whereas QCONZ previously only covered the northern parts of the island.

Across another dimension of QCONZ training, the key feedback for aged care providers is that their staff are showing increased awareness of safety, with higher incident reporting, rather than non-reporting, which may mean unidentified hazards could continue to pose risk.

The feedback was also highly positive about the training for its ability to engage the learners and provide them with opportunities for career progression, as pay scales are related to achievement of the certificates.

Overall, training is valued because of the trainers' credibility based on industry knowledge and experience. In addition, the benefit from the company's consulting activities is evident in the quality and value of the courses targeted specifically for industry needs. However, formalised evidence would help to demonstrate the key value of the training.

### 1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

QCONZ provides programmes and other activities that clearly meet training needs within the dairy industry milk production sector. This is mainly due to its origin within MAF and the ongoing consultancy practice that provides the knowledge and expertise to develop courses. Many staff are active in research and development in the sector, which is used to inform course content and future training to meet industry needs. For example, QCONZ has recently developed a calf rearing course based on needs identified across the sector.

The organisation demonstrates agility and understanding of industry needs by responding to changing needs depending on the season, the state of the economy and new technologies used in agriculture. QCONZ' responsiveness to industry needs is evident in the close relationship it has with employers and other clients. A recent change to the Milking Machine Test course was in response to feedback from NZMPTA and employers. As a result, face-to-face course time was reduced and resources developed for self-study to decrease the time off work. The feedback about the course structure and activities has been positive to date, and QCONZ remains the only recognised provider of this training for NZMPTA.

The health and safety courses are meeting the specific needs of the aged care workplace through tailoring course materials based on occupational health and safety unit standards for assessment. (The Health and Safety 1 course is based on unit standard 497 *Demonstrate knowledge of workplace health and safety requirements*, and Health and Safety 2 is based on unit standard 17459 *Demonstrate and apply knowledge of safe manual handling practices in the workplace*.) The training activities recognise the language requirements of students and the practical, hands-on application they need in their workplace with the use of group work, video resources and case studies to provide a range of learning opportunities to meet the students' needs. Students complete the assessments during the course with practical observation of skills in the workplace following the Health and Safety 2 course, which provides evidence that the industry need for staff conducting their work in a safe way is being met.

QCONZ' self-review of courses is still in the early stages of development and needs a greater range of data for analysis in order to understand whether all programmes are matching the needs of the stakeholders; for example, whether those that achieve the Milking Machine Test course achieve certification with NZMPTA. However, QCONZ does have systems that manage all course information. This includes student, industry and client needs assessment, tutor and student evaluations, and results that tutors can access to help them with lesson planning and delivery and for annual course reviews conducted by the course manager.

## 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**

The PTE employs tutors with the appropriate industry experience and knowledge to deliver training. Tutors are mostly contractors and the course manager is responsible for ensuring courses are delivered effectively. Tutor performance and areas for professional development are identified using course evaluations, tutor reports and course results, which are held on the database. At present, 19 trainers have completed the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Level 4) and two are still completing. This is to provide tutors with technical expertise in adult education. QCONZ has also initiated training of 25 staff towards the National Certificate in Dairy Manufacturing (Level 5) to provide a higher level of awareness of the industry to better service the needs of employers.

Student satisfaction for all courses is high, with a range of 'good' to 'very good' responses to surveys, with no formal complaints. In particular, feedback from students on the Milking Machine Test course was highly complimentary of the teaching, and the students felt that they learnt the skills they needed on the job. The previous course had issues with two of the machines at the NZMPTA training site, and this is being reviewed by NZMPTA, which organises the courses. Assessment is carried out on the course with verbal and written feedback to students. The on-job tests are assessed by an independent assessor (not a QCONZ tutor), who is appointed by NZMPTA to maintain impartiality for assessment. QCONZ has also established an innovative moderation system which has been effective in promoting consistency in assessment judgements by the tutors. This has involved the use of sampling in the field and uploading to the course manager for moderation in a timely way.

Health and Safety tutors are engaging their students using a range of teaching resources, as shown by positive feedback from completed student evaluation forms. Feedback from the training manager for the aged care provider – a major client – is that the training is effective in raising awareness of safe workplace practices.

QCONZ has yet to identify suitable literacy and numeracy training opportunities for its tutors. Doing so could be beneficial, particularly for learners with English as a second language or those who have not previously enrolled in tertiary training, to complement the English language support offered by their employer. This, along with comprehensive analysis of student achievement, could help identify possible improvements to Health and Safety 2 course completions. However, many of the training and assessment resources used for unit standards-based courses are developed by the relevant ITO, and QCONZ does not have the ability to change these without consent from the ITO.

The organisation has identified inconsistencies in its approach to moderation across the different courses, and is in the process of developing a system that will

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enable them to moderate a more informative sample of teaching resources and assessment activities to monitor the quality of assessment. Pre- and post-assessment moderation has been completed for the current sample of high-use unit standards, and improvements to the materials have been carried out as a result. Tutors also meet together once a year to discuss assessments and share practices, which they reported were useful to maintain consistency and keep up to date. The organisation participated formally in external moderation for the first time in 2013 with Primary ITO, which has the responsibility for monitoring the quality of assessment (previously carried out by NZQA, Service IQ and NZITO). All but one of 14 assessment activities met external moderation requirements after resubmissions were accepted, which indicates that internal moderation processes are effective in ensuring assessment activities are pitched at the correct level and are marked fairly.

### 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

QCONZ is providing the appropriate support for the types of courses offered, which are generally one to five days in duration. Most students are enrolled through the relevant ITO or by the client, and QCONZ is not able to assess learning needs until students are on the course, unless prior information is provided by the employer. Enrolment is managed by tutors who may recommend that students attend a future course if they do not have the sufficient background or experience to complete.

QCONZ receives good feedback about the administration of the course from NZITO and other external stakeholders, which provides an indication that the level of support is appropriate to meet the needs of students. However, post-course follow-up on assessments is carried out by the client or the ITO, and QCONZ does not have the ability to monitor post-course support to assist the completion of assessment in the workplace and has to rely on reporting from the workplace supervisors.

When students enrol directly with QCONZ, the course managers assess the suitability of participants for the training and provide pre-course materials to assist their learning. There are also online materials for the Milking Machine Test students to support the learning, which students said were useful.

QCONZ is using student feedback from courses to monitor the level of support and satisfaction with the courses. However, follow up for non-completions could be conducted to understand why assessments are not submitted, in order to make improvements to the submission of on-job assessments.

## 1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

QCONZ has a strategic focus for providing training that meets industry needs. The information gained from the range of services – including audit and consultancy – that QCONZ offers to the agriculture sector, as well as its involvement in industry advisory groups and associations, helps to identify future need for courses. The courses are then researched and developed with subject experts, and comprehensive planning is conducted to ensure sufficient resources are available, including identification of suitable tutors, to help ensure the ongoing delivery of valued courses with high completions. This process reflects an organisational culture where the directors use deliberate decision-making to provide courses that are relevant and required by industry.

QCONZ has been offering industry training for almost 20 years. The transition to a PTE is the biggest challenge the organisation is currently undergoing, alongside maintaining its consultancy services. In order to manage the transition, the directors have appointed a training operations manager to develop the training side. This role is responsible for developing processes – such as student management systems, moderation and reporting on achievement – to support the educational requirements. The directors are also investing significantly in comprehensive professional development for the trainers.

In addition, in 2012 the governing board introduced a new senior management team structure to separate board from operational matters. This has reportedly enabled the senior management team to focus on their areas of responsibility, such as educational achievement. The directors receive reports to monitor the success of training and repeat business. Senior management reports show a steady growth in business in the past six to eight months. The changes to the organisational governance and management structure also enable the director to focus more on current international projects.

A focus on staff development has occurred in the past two years, particularly around adult education training; however, it is not clear how the success of this is monitored to identify whether the training is relevant and leading to improved outcomes.

The self-assessment of educational activities highlights the organisation's strengths and weaknesses. Better demographic participation data and course completion analysis would help the organisation to review the success of its courses and identify where additional resources and support are required.

The organisation as a whole is innovative and has good research and development skills which contribute to the sector in numerous ways, such as the real-time audit

reporting system and tools for time-saving milk testing on the farm. The organisation has committed itself to achieving ISO accreditation, which reflects the nature of the industry it works with, and it will be interesting to see the impact of ISO accreditation on the educational operation.

## Focus Areas

*This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.*

### 2.1 Focus area: Governance, management and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

### 2.2 Focus area: Competency Certificate for the NZMPTA Milking Machine Test

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

### 2.3 Focus area: Health and Safety 1 and 2 courses

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

# Recommendations

NZQA recommends that QCONZ:

- Implement better gathering of student ethnicity data to understand how well different cohorts are achieving.
- Develop suitable reporting systems to identify trends over time and across programmes.
- Continue to improve moderation processes across all courses.



# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.*

*Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQA Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.*

*In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.*

*NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.*

*The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

*External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.*

*External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website ([www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

*The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.*

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