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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Responsive Trade Education Ltd

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 10 July 2018

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Final Report

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:	Responsive Trade Education Ltd
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	2004
Location:	145 Greenhill Road, Puketaha, Hamilton
Delivery sites:	As above
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vocational Pathway (NCEA Level 2)• National Certificate in Building Construction and Allied Trade Skills (Level 2)
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 178; 60 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) in 2017; 55 per cent Māori, 10 per cent Pasifika
Number of staff:	10 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	The two currently delivered courses noted above. Sub-field: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication Skills (to level 2)• Core Generic (to level 3)• Mathematics (to level 2) Domain: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic Residential Property Maintenance (to

level 2)

- Building, Construction and Allied Trades Skills (to level 2)
- Elementary Construction Skills (to level 3)
- Occupational Health and Safety Practice (to level 2)
- Pāngarau (to level 2)

For further details see:

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=767459001>

Distinctive characteristics:

Responsive Trade Education provides fees-free foundation-level training to 'help people to gain qualifications, progress into higher education, find employment, build confidence, improve communication and comprehension'. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funds the two above NZQA-approved programmes, as well as literacy and numeracy tuition in the workplace (three EFTS) and a part-time Adult and Community Education English language course (two EFTS).

Previous quality assurance history:

The previous external evaluation and review (EER), conducted in April 2014, concluded that NZQA was Confident in the educational performance and Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Responsive Trade Education.

A TEC audit (February 2017) found errors in the December 2016 submission of the Youth Guarantee course enrolments. These errors inflated the published 2015 and 2016 course completions.

The NZQA external moderation results for Responsive Trade Education were:

Year	Judgments approved (unit standards)
2015	4/4
2016	1/2
2017	3/3

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) approved the judgments of one unit in 2017.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of this EER had two focus areas: ·

- Youth Guarantee (incorporating the National Certificate in Building Construction and Allied Trade Skills (Level 2), and Vocational Pathway NCEA Level 2). These NZQA-approved programmes were funded for 20 equivalent full-time students in 2017. Youth Guarantee initiatives provide opportunities for students to achieve a minimum of NCEA Level 2 or equivalent, to enable progression to higher levels of study, training or employment.¹
- Training for Work. This is a Ministry of Social Development-funded contract that provides training of up to 13 weeks supporting clients to gain work and achieve sustainable employment.² Funding was provided for an estimated 35 equivalent full-time participants in 2017.

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.

Two evaluators conducted the on-site visit at the Hamilton site over two days. The evaluators interviewed students and tutors from both the Youth Guarantee and Training for Work programmes, as well as the director, the manager, senior tutor and administrator. Interviews were also conducted on and off-site with representatives of various external stakeholders: a literacy and numeracy specialist, a Youth Service provider, the regional Ministry of Social Development contract manager, a local polytechnic manager and two employers. A range of documentation was reviewed including a self-assessment summary, various programme reviews, analysis of educational achievement, student evaluations and a soft skills matrix, as well as the PTE's website.

¹ [Tertiary Education Commission](#)

² [Ministry of Social Development](#)

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud³*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

³ NZQA and the TEC comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance and **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Responsive Trade Education Ltd.**

Responsive Trade Education is meeting many of the most important needs of its students and other stakeholders. The contributing processes are mostly effective. The quality of the self-assessment information is generally good, covering nearly all key areas, and is often used to support decision-making. The key points supporting these conclusions are:

- The Training for Work tutors have developed a considerable expertise in providing relevant training and mentoring to participants to achieve their goals. This has enabled over half of them to gain paid work and go off the benefit. These results have exceeded the contracted targets, and consequently the PTE gained additional funded places. A representative of the funder stated '[Responsive Trade Education] is one of their higher performing providers [in the Waikato region]'.
- The Youth Guarantee programme has enabled over 70 per cent of the students to gain their first qualification; this excellent completion rate well exceeds the contracted target and the median rate for similar educational provision. Thirty per cent of the 2017 students also gained NCEA Level 2 and this is a strong result. The students gain important foundation knowledge and skills. However, few students go on to further education and paid work, and the PTE has not tracked students' destinations – a key objective of the PTE, the students and Youth Guarantee initiatives.
- The PTE has a clear purpose to provide foundation training. The leadership has strong relationships with key stakeholders. Student feedback is positive about both the tutors and programmes. The two programmes meet many of the important needs of the students and employers. The organisation has invested in facilities and recruited and retained appropriately qualified and suitable tutors. Responsive Trade Education provides a safe and supportive environment where student well-being improves, enabling many students to learn and complete their studies. The organisation has been mostly effective in managing its important compliance responsibilities; an external audit identified a significant enrolment issue and this matter was resolved in 2017.
- The PTE is committed to improving its performance. It has a range of self-assessment processes that cover nearly all key performance areas (the key exception of destination outcomes has been noted above). It has improved the quality of its achievement information and student feedback. Annual programme reviews have been strengthened. However, there are some

limitations: the programme reviews do not have clear performance measures, actions undertaken are not evaluated in future reviews, and it is not evident how some new self-assessment information supports decision-making.

Findings⁴

1.1 How well do students achieve?

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

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

Students achieve well at Responsive Trade Education. Since 2014, 70 per cent or more of the Youth Guarantee students each year (students who have not succeeded in mainstream education) have gained their first qualification – the level 2 building and construction qualification. This result compares strongly with relevant benchmarks. The completion rate well exceeds the contracted TEC target of 40 per cent and the median rates (between 54 and 64 per cent over the same period) of Youth Guarantee students completing level 2 qualifications at PTEs.⁵

Most students⁶ are Māori and the PTE's robust analysis confirms their completion rates at least match the rate for all students. This is an excellent result. Thirty per cent of the 2017 students also gained NCEA Level 2 and this is a strong result. Achievement of this goal was important for numerous students interviewed by the evaluators, and matches wider government funding goals for Vocational Pathways. The PTE monitors the improvement in literacy and numeracy of individual students, but has not analysed the progress of student cohorts, which would strengthen self-assessment.

Training for Work participants have individualised goals where they learn knowledge and skills that best assist them to gain paid work. In some cases, they achieve relevant unit standards (such as *Produce a CV*). In others, they gain certification including gaining a driver's licence, first-aid certificate or Site Safe certification which are valuable outcomes for gaining employment. These achievements could more clearly be tracked and analysed, as could the results of the workplace literacy and numeracy tuition and the English language class.

⁴ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

⁵ This conclusion is accurate for both Tertiary Education Commission methodologies.

⁶ Close to 70 per cent of total students have been Māori each year since 2014.

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

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**.

Responsive Trade Education identifies its key outcomes as students developing foundation skills and knowledge, gaining qualifications, improving well-being, and pathwaying into higher-level education and sustainable employment.⁷ There is generally strong evidence that the PTE is delivering most of these key outcomes for its students.

As shown in 1.1, many students gain a qualification and/or develop relevant foundation skills and knowledge. In addition, Responsive Trade Education has developed a soft skills matrix; preliminary results indicate that students who stay on the course improve these skills. The 2017 student evaluation respondents⁸ stated that the programme met their needs and they were making progress 'most' or 'all of the time'. A representative of the Youth Service provider and a literacy and numeracy specialist who actively work with students are clear that the mauri ora/well-being of the students has been significantly improved. The students the evaluators interviewed expressed similar views. The evaluators conclude that there is clear evidence of enhanced student well-being.

The evidence and performance is mixed for the last key outcome: pathwaying into higher-level education and sustainable employment. Training for Work participants clearly gain paid work and go off the benefit; 69 per cent in the 2015-2016 year and 53 per cent in 2016-2017. These results exceeded the contracted targets for both periods. As a result, each year the PTE has been allocated additional funded places. The regional contract manager rated Responsive Trade Education as 'one of our higher performing providers'. These are excellent outcomes for the participants, around half of whom are Māori. However, the PTE has not systematically tracked and analysed the destination of Youth Guarantee students, even though destinations are a key identified outcome and a primary objective of the Youth Guarantee-funded initiatives.⁹ Students also want to work in the industry or transition to further training. The 2017 programme review recognised that the TEC wants progressions to be tracked, but no evidence was collected for this or

⁷ These student outcomes are also seen to contribute benefits to whānau and the local community.

⁸ The student evaluation response rates (Youth Guarantee 65 per cent, Training for Work 21 per cent) were modest and could be improved.

⁹ [Tertiary Education Commission](#)

earlier years.¹⁰ TEC data that the evaluators sighted show that 5 (2015) and 21 (2016) per cent of the students progressed to higher learning. These results place the PTE as a low-performing Youth Guarantee provider for this performance indicator.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

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

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

Responsive Trade Education programmes and activities match the important needs of students and key stakeholders. The fees-free programmes effectively target those who have not succeeded in the compulsory education sector and/or have not gained paid work.

The Youth Guarantee programme enables most students to gain an entry-level building and construction industry qualification, and some also complete NCEA Level 2. While the NCEA content is a significant challenge for many students, the provision has contributed to a key educational objective of the government.¹¹ The programme provides students with significant hands-on learning in its workshop, with literacy and numeracy embedded in the content. The two tutors in the small classes bring their significant industry experience, cultural tikanga, adult literacy and numeracy training, and personal commitment to improving the lives of the students. Responsive Training Education internally moderates its sound assessment practice, which is validated by generally good external moderation results.

The Training for Work delivery is strongly based on robust individual needs assessment; in the tutors' own words, the programme 'was built from [those] who came in'. The tutors have developed a considerable expertise in coaching and mentoring participants to identify, set and achieve their individual goals. As noted above, over half of the Work and Income clients assisted have been successfully matched with local employers. Ongoing review of individual plans is business as usual for the tutors and participants. The tutors use a 'dashboard' to actively and effectively monitor the progress of each participant towards gaining work and support those employed to remain employed. Local employers that were

¹⁰ The director did supply, on request, evidence that a few students had moved into work with Responsive Maintenance Limited.

¹¹ <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/bps-boosting-skills-employment#result5>

interviewed valued the tutors assessing and selecting job applicants who were, for the most part, well suited to the role.

Responsive Trade Education has in place a number of processes to self-review programme delivery. The PTE appraises and observes the tutors and supports appropriate professional development. The PTE introduced more comprehensive student evaluations of the tutors and programme in 2017; it is unclear to what extent this information was used to make improvements. Responsive Trade Education has improved its annual programme reviews so that they cover many key areas. The reviews would be strengthened by:

- identifying and reviewing the key measures of performance for each programme
- developing clearer action points with timeframes, which the subsequent review would evaluate.

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

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

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

Responsive Trade Education has been clearly effective in supporting most students to stay involved and complete their learning. Over time the PTE has developed a rich understanding of the students and their world. The organisation has created a physically and emotionally safe and supportive environment, where culture and particularly Māori tikanga is recognised and included. The provider uses industry-recognised health and safety procedures to identify and minimise risks. The PTE identifies the physical and emotional needs of the students, and monitors these in a systematic way while respecting the privacy of the students. At the same time, the staff also look to build up resilience in the students. A Youth Service representative was clear that staff effectively support and enhance the well-being of the Youth Guarantee students. Student feedback and those students that the evaluators interviewed confirm that they are treated fairly and respected by the PTE staff.

There are areas for further development: increasing survey response rates, better using the student feedback to reflect on performance and responding to the growing and complex mental health needs of the students who are enrolling. However, overall, the consistent high retention and completion rates, along with the positive feedback, confirm that pastoral care processes have been effective.

1.5 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**.

The leadership has been effective over time in supporting educational achievement. The PTE has a clear and established purpose: to provide foundation-level training to empower individuals in their lives and careers. This purpose is evident through the leadership, its staff, the programmes and other key activities. The leadership has invested in buying and further developing its training facilities and uses transparent budgeting practices for managing the PTE. Funding has been mostly retained or in some cases expanded since the last EER. The training centre manager has plans and various systems in place to support high performance. Key external stakeholders respect the manager and how the organisation effectively meets their needs. The leadership has recruited and/or retained staff who have a clear commitment to assisting students who have complex needs. Professional development has been funded and tutors given scheduled non-contact time to prepare lessons and mark assessments.

The PTE has strengthened its self-assessment processes since the last EER. The annual programme reviews are more robust and sometimes lead to actions, which in turn should be reviewed at a future review. The PTE also gathers and analyses achievement results and student feedback. These more clearly demonstrate performance, but it was not evident how the results are used to review performance and inform decision-making. These are areas to improve that build on the current sound management practice.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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**.

Responsive Trade Education has been generally effective in managing its important compliance accountabilities. In 2017, a TEC audit identified significant errors in the course enrolment process (see Previous Quality Assurance History in the Introduction to this report). The evaluators concluded these errors were unintentional and the changes made in 2017 have effectively addressed this issue. The PTE now more systematically records and monitors unit standard and qualification results, which gives an increased level of confidence in the results. Achievement results have been reported to NZQA in a timely manner. A programme schedule and clear attendance expectations and tracking are used to ensure the required programme hours are delivered.

The PTE uses an a range of processes to ensure key regulatory requirements are being met. The assessment and moderation processes the evaluators sighted were sound and the external moderation results have been generally favourable. The staff are appropriately qualified and suitable for their roles, and professional development is being provided to a recently employed tutor.

Management stays current with changing regulatory requirements through reviewing updates and attending relevant forums. As an illustration, in response to NZQA clarifying its expectations in 2014 for evaluating Māori and Pasifika educational performance¹², the PTE now robustly monitors and reports the achievement of its Māori and Pasifika students, although the outcomes for these groups are not systematically track.

¹² [How NZQA evaluates educational performance in external evaluation and review](#)

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Youth Guarantee programmes

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: Training for Work

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

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

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Responsive Trade Education:

- Monitor and evaluate the literacy and numeracy gains made by the Youth Guarantee individual students and cohorts.
- Collect and analyse the achievement results for students from all programmes.
- Explore how to better use the data collected (such as unit standard and qualification completion data or student feedback) to improve performance.
- Collect and analyse the destinalional information of Youth Guarantee students and trial different approaches to improve these outcomes.
- In the annual programme review:
 - Identify and evaluate the key measures of performance for each of the programmes offered
 - Develop clear action points with specific timeframes. The impact of these actions should be evaluated at the subsequent programme review.
- Improve the response rates for student evaluation surveys.

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 NZQF 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).

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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