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External Evaluation and Review Report

Responsive Trade Education Ltd

Date of report: 7 July 2022

About Responsive Trade Education Ltd

Responsive Trade Education provides training in a rural setting for people seeking to improve their foundation skills and knowledge, and to enable them to transition to employment. Programme delivery includes Workplace Literacy and Numeracy, Employment Services, and programmes that provide pathways to further study or employment. Most Employment Services students have not experienced success in traditional education environments and have complex needs.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	145 Greenhill Road, Puketaha, Hamilton
International Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students ¹ :	Domestic: 163 Māori: 73 (44 per cent) Pasifika: 12 (4 per cent) Female: 48 (29 per cent)
Number of staff:	Seven full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	Responsive Trade Education Ltd Responsive Trade Education provides youth training (Youth Guarantee) and preparation, placement and support for Employment Services participants. It also provides Workplace Literacy and Numeracy.
Last EER outcome:	In 2018, Responsive Trade Education was found to be Confident in both educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workplace Literacy and Numeracy• Employment Services

¹ Responsive Trade Education refers to Workplace Literacy and Numeracy enrollees as 'learners', Employment Services enrollees as 'participants', and YG as 'students'. NZQA acknowledges the importance of this distinction to Responsive Trade Education Ltd. This report mentions 'students' and 'participants' where applicable, but refers to them collectively as 'students'.

MoE number: 7674
NZQA reference: C48094
Dates of EER online enquiry: 6 and 7 April 2022

Summary of results

Responsive Trade Education is meeting the needs of stakeholders and students in their community through delivery of programmes that enable students to gain relevant skills, knowledge and confidence. Strong connections to employers provide pathways to relevant employment outcomes for the students.

Confident in educational performance

- Effective stakeholder engagement and needs analysis inform the development and delivery of student-focused programmes and activities that mostly meet employer and student needs.
- Responsive Trade Education has shown resilience during the Covid pandemic and has continued to deliver relevant programmes that support students to overcome barriers to learning, increase their confidence, gain relevant skills and knowledge, and experience positive outcomes.
- Achievement is tracked and understood in relation to the expectations of students and stakeholders. Programme reviews provide some evidence of the positive impact of the programmes for individuals, whānau and stakeholders. Further analysis would enhance understanding of achievement and the value of outcomes for students and stakeholders.
- Responsive Trade Education has strong and effective leadership. Quantitative and qualitative data informs collaborative decision-making at all levels of the PTE.
- Self-assessment is embedded throughout the organisation, giving confidence that it will continue to inform, support and further develop educational performance.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students at Responsive Trade Education acquire useful skills and knowledge in a student-focused environment where individual needs are the key focus for staff and management.</p> <p>Achievement is strong for Employment Services, where students gain relevant skills and knowledge, improve their confidence and wellbeing, and complete training that supports pathways into employment. Participation leads to high initial employment outcomes (70 per cent or higher 2019-21) in job roles that closely match individual skills and interests. The percentage of students still in employment at 182 days was negatively affected by Covid and shows a significant drop in the 2021-22 programme. Regionally, Responsive Trade Education continues to show overall outcomes that exceed contract expectations and has resulted in the PTE gaining and retaining additional funded places through 2019-22.</p> <p>Many Workplace Literacy and Numeracy students show positive gains in literacy and numeracy test scores.³ Improvement in student confidence, financial literacy and productivity within teams is also evident. Evidence of achievement in Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (2020-21) is limited due to the significant disruption to delivery resulting from Covid-related lockdowns.</p> <p>Individual progress and achievement are closely monitored using simple and effective methods, and are documented in individualised plans and programme reviews, and discussed in regular staff meetings to ensure appropriate and timely interventions are provided to improve outcomes for students.</p> <p>Clear reporting of achievement is available to demonstrate contractual obligations; however, evidence of other</p>

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ Using the adult literacy and numeracy assessment tool (LNAAT).

	achievement indicators (confidence, wellbeing, application of new skills and knowledge) is not coherently collated or analysed.
Conclusion:	<p>Students are gaining useful knowledge, skills and attributes relevant to employment, although participation and achievement at Responsive Trade Education has been affected by Covid. Achievement is supported by close monitoring of progress, experienced staff and holistic support tailored to the circumstances and needs of the students.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education has effective processes for real-time monitoring and understanding of achievement and outcomes. However, analysis of student achievement would provide a more compelling and useful picture of the skills and knowledge students develop within their programmes.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The PTE's long-term relationships with employers (and repeat business) shows that Responsive Trade Education has credibility in the provision of workplace literacy and numeracy, training for employment, and successful employment placements and post-placement support. Regular stakeholder engagement enables Responsive Trade Education to gain a clear understanding of employer needs. This ensures programmes and activities are relevant and constantly adapted to changing needs.</p> <p>However, Covid has had a negative impact on rollover enrolments for Workplace Literacy and Numeracy programmes in 2021 and 2022 due to limited access to workplaces, and businesses prioritising sustainability over staff training.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education has informal and formal mechanisms for gathering feedback on valued outcomes, including surveys of students, employers and agencies. Regular, ongoing conversations with employers provide detailed feedback to inform timely interventions and support. Feedback is generally positive, confirming improved skills, productivity and confidence from the Workplace Literacy and Numeracy programme, and</p>

	<p>suitability of employee placements from the Employment Services programmes.</p> <p>Further analysis and reflection on this feedback could provide insights on themes and trends, and a more complete picture of the value of outcomes for students and stakeholders.</p> <p>Improved self-confidence and resilience are valued outcomes for Responsive Trade Education students, who have limited experience of success in traditional education settings. These outcomes are achieved largely because of the intensive, ongoing pastoral support and supportive relationships with Responsive Trade Education staff at all levels of the organisation. Employability skills are valued by Employment Services students, and for many students gaining a driver's licence and employment helps them to take steps towards financial independence, enabling them to support their whānau and contribute to their communities.</p> <p>Students continue to engage with Responsive Trade Education for support with job-seeking and other needs after the completion of their programmes. This ongoing interaction is evidence of the value students place on the support provided by Responsive Trade Education.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Responsive Trade Education provides significant value to students, whānau and community. Students are supported to meet and exceed their personal goals. Individuals gain improved self-confidence and a sense of achievement from their successes. Further analysis and reflection on collated data could provide a more complete picture of valued outcomes.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Programme design and delivery is closely matched to stakeholder and student needs, including those with complex social and learning needs. Responsive Trade Education’s programmes are individualised to each context/student.</p> <p>Comprehensive needs assessment balances individual and employer needs in the design and delivery of Workplace Literacy and Numeracy programmes. Delivery to small groups at workplaces ensures learning is relevant and accessible. However, workplace literacy and numeracy training opportunities were seriously impacted by Covid, with reduced access to workplaces which necessitated a shift to online group sessions. The online delivery had unexpected benefits including reduced travel costs for employers and students’ ability to use recorded sessions for revision. A blended model for Workplace Literacy and Numeracy delivery will continue to be used when access to workplaces is restored, staffing levels are less affected by Covid, and employers are ready to re-engage with training.</p> <p>Employment Services is an individualised programme based on student goals and aspirations, which provides relevant sessions on employability and life skills, support and credentialing (driver’s or forklift licences, first aid). Several employers noted that Responsive Trade Education understands their business context and that this enables students to be carefully matched with workplaces. This offers a ‘win-win’ for both employer and worker. It also encourages employers to offer further opportunities to Responsive Trade Education graduates. Student engagement in the programme is closely monitored, with daily/weekly progress monitoring informing a flexible, individualised pathway from enrolment through to support during employment.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education staff are well qualified, knowledgeable, motivating and highly regarded by colleagues and students. Employment Services coordinators have relevant</p>

	<p>backgrounds which have equipped them with the skills and attributes required to engage effectively with the students.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education provides students with regular feedback on their progress and adapts programmes to support individual success. Reporting to agencies and employers provides real-time updates on student achievement and enables ongoing conversations about the effectiveness of the programme and the match between employer and student needs.</p> <p>Programmes are subject to ongoing review, as part of daily and weekly meetings, and monthly and annual reporting. Comprehensive annual reviews are reflective and analytical, using quantitative and qualitative data to identify programme strengths, areas for improvement and actions. These are informed by tutor reflections and student and stakeholder feedback.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Responsive Trade Education clearly understands the equal importance of meeting student and employer/stakeholder needs. Consultation and ongoing communication ensures that programmes are designed and delivered for specific employers and contexts. Delivery is flexible and adapted to individual students or cohorts. A focus on the student as central, close connections to employers, and ongoing evaluation, review and self-assessment ensures Responsive Trade Education programmes match stakeholder and student needs.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Responsive Trade Education provides an inclusive rural learning environment with a strong emphasis on tikanga Māori and a focus on honest and respectful relationships within a whānau context. Individualised pastoral support is effective for students with varied backgrounds, personal circumstances and complex health and wellbeing needs.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education's core values: 'People, Vision, Upfront, Loyalty' form the foundation of holistic student support that enables students to feel safe in their learning environment,</p>

	<p>and comfortable to engage and communicate with all staff. The establishment of meaningful relationships between students and staff is a priority, to create and support a safe learning environment that will enable students to achieve their goals.</p> <p>Individualised support in the Employment Services programme is focused on retaining students within the programme and helping them to achieve their goals. Support is comprehensive and includes referrals to external agencies for health care, drug and alcohol support, mental health issues and budgeting support.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education’s self-review of pastoral care against the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice submitted to NZQA in early 2021 provided a comprehensive review of support processes and identified areas for improvement. Responsive Trade Education rated themselves as ‘developing implementation’, which underestimates the extent to which student support is integrated into organisational practice.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education maintained its usual high level of individualised support and pastoral care during the Covid lockdowns. Workplace Literacy and Numeracy provision moved online, and Employment Services coordinators continued to work on employment placements by phone and email. Coordinators and tutors maintained regular contact with students to monitor their progress and wellbeing during Covid.</p> <p>Student attendance, engagement and progress are monitored daily, enabling follow-up actions to be initiated promptly, as appropriate, to enable students to keep engaged with their programmes and pathways to success. Records of interventions and referrals are maintained.</p> <p>The wrap-around care and support enable both personal and educational progress to be made. Alongside high levels of support, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learner journey as much as possible. Staff set high expectations for the students who are treated by staff as equals with their own authentic needs.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Wellbeing and learning needs are well supported by all staff at Responsive Trade Education, enabling students to make progress towards achievement of their goals. Student progress is monitored daily, enabling close tracking of outcomes with follow-up actions initiated promptly as appropriate. Students</p>

	respond positively to high expectations and come to feel that they are valued members of the Responsive Trade Education whānau and are encouraged to take responsibility for their success.
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1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Responsive Trade Education is a well-led, values-based organisation with longstanding connections to key agencies, employers and community groups in its region. Tikanga Māori is fundamental to the operation of Responsive Trade Education, with a focus on whānau and community. The clear purpose of Responsive Trade Education – ‘to empower our people into career pathways that will support our community’ – underpins all programmes and activity.</p> <p>The general manager, supported by the directors, is well respected within the wider community, and proactively engages with national and local groups to enhance the performance of Responsive Trade Education. These connections are key to the ongoing recruitment and retention of students and the fostering of valued relationships with employers and industry. The small management team works effectively within the organisation to lead and support staff in daily operations, future planning and continuous improvement. Governance and management have a focus on ensuring funding for sustainability through relationship building and innovation.</p> <p>Effective management and communication practices provide a strong foundation for day-to-day operations and self-assessment activity, and support a collaborative working environment. Staff and management work together to achieve the organisation’s strategic goals and purpose.</p> <p>Staff are recruited for their alignment with the organisation’s values and an ability to meet the needs of the students, and this is evident in educational achievement. A collegial team environment and regular (daily, weekly) opportunities to share information and discuss learner progress support effective programme delivery and design.</p>

	<p>Staff are provided with the necessary support and resources required to meet and manage complex student needs. For many students, Responsive Trade Education provides their first experience of positive outcomes in a learning context. Staff feel valued and are well supported in a work environment that is often challenging, with high demands on staff.</p> <p>Responsive Trade Education has strengthened and embedded its use of data systems and processes to monitor student achievement and organisational performance. This ensures staff, management and governance have a clear understanding of how well the organisation is doing, and what improvement is required to achieve their strategic goals and purpose. Self-assessment is in place to support ongoing improvement in performance and educational achievement.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Responsive Trade Education maintains an organisational culture with tikanga Māori at its heart, to support a whānau and community-focused purpose 'to empower our people into career pathways that will support our community'. Strong, thoughtful and proactive governance and management leads the organisation with a clear vision and appropriate resourcing to ensure business continuity and to support meaningful educational achievement.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Responsive Trade Education is effectively monitoring, reviewing and meeting its important compliance accountabilities.</p> <p>Compliance requirements are reviewed monthly in management meetings to ensure ongoing awareness and understanding of organisational compliance, including health and safety.</p> <p>Annual strategic plan review focuses on the compliance requirements of NZQA, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), and Ministry of Social Development (MSD), to ensure all reporting is completed and requirements are met.</p>

	<p>A coherent set of policies and procedures within the PTE's quality management system provides the framework for compliance with legislation, rules and regulations.</p> <p>Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of policy and compliance requirements (e.g. entry requirements for Workplace Literacy and Numeracy) and have been involved in TEC reporting and audits. Programme reviews by staff include commentary on compliance matters.</p> <p>A self-review undertaken against the Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2021 was thorough and identified their own performance as 'developing implementation' with areas for improvement.</p> <p>Excellent relationships between management and key people in government agencies, including the Ministry of Social Development, the TEC and NZQA, support understanding and management of compliance.</p> <p>A 2022 TEC desktop audit report met requirements with minor amendments⁴ relating to a single student file and a financial accounting issue. These were resolved to TEC's satisfaction within a short timeframe.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Responsive Trade Education has clear processes in place and is effectively managing key areas of compliance. All staff are aware of compliance obligations and support the management team to meet and manage important compliance accountabilities.</p>

⁴ '2 matters, 1. Student file was missing a note to confirm student's domestic status. Evidence was provided. 2. Financial accounting issue related to debt ratio not meeting standard. Resolved by converting shareholder current account to equity.'

Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Workplace Literacy and Numeracy

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: Employment Services

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Responsive Trade Education Limited:

- Review self-assessment information on student achievement to better analyse and demonstrate trends and themes related to the value of outcomes for stakeholders and students.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Workplace Literacy and Numeracy 2018-22, TEC contract

Year	Funded places	Funded hours	Delivered places/hours	Percentage of funded hours delivered
2018	70	2803	54/2160	77%
2019	70	2803	53/2960	106%
2020	70	2796	70/1571	56%
2021	70	2796	64/2592	93%
2022	0/70	0/2794	0	0

NB: Covid restrictions in 2022 prevented Responsive Trade Education's access to workplaces. Delivery of hours in 2020 was also significantly impacted by Covid. TEC funded places continue as before. There have been no training outcomes to report in 2022 to date.

Table 2. Training for Work (TFW) and Employment Services (ES), 2018-22, MSD contract

Year	Occupancy	Initial outcomes	182 day outcomes	365 days
2018-2019 (TFW)	103/100 (103%)	59/50 (118%)	35 (59%)	32 (54%)
2019-2020 (TFW)	108/150 (72%)	54/75 (72%)	40 (74%)	34 (63%)
2020-2021 (ES)	173/170 (102)	99/85 (116%)	65 (66%)	N/A
2021-2022 (ES)*	109/150 (73%)	59/75 (79%)	11/75 (15%)	N/A

NB: When the TFW programme changed to ES in July 2020, 365-day outcomes were not requirements of contracts so are not applicable for 2020-21 or 2021- 22 students.

* Results are YTD as at 7 April 2022.

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. 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.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. 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 fraud⁵*
- *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.*

⁵ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (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.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes and consents to assess and 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 Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. 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). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz