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External Evaluation and Review Report

Central Otago Rural Education Activities Programme

Date of report: 14 July 2021

About Central Otago Rural Education Activities Programme

Central Otago REAP provides open-entry and accessible learning opportunities to meet the needs of its rural community.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	12-20 Centennial Avenue, Alexandra
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: approximately 850 learners across the organisation in 2020 (27 learners in the Intensive Literacy and Numeracy programme). ¹ 16 per cent Māori, 2 per cent Pasifika International: nil
Number of staff:	Three full-time and 25 part-time staff
TEO profile:	Central Otago Rural Education Activities Programme (NZQA website) Central Otago REAP is part of REAP Aotearoa. ²
Last EER outcome:	In 2017, NZQA was Highly Confident in Central Otago REAP's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	Adult programmes including Adult and Community Education (ACE) and Intensive Literacy and Numeracy, incorporating the Choices Training Scheme.
MoE number:	8292
NZQA reference:	C45336
Dates of EER visit:	26 and 27 May 2021

¹ Reduced hours of learning were delivered in 2020 due to the COVID-19 lockdown.

² <https://www.reapaotearoa.nz/reaps/>

Summary of Results

Central Otago REAP provides lifelong learning opportunities for adults who have been unsuccessful in their learning or, for whatever reason, lack confidence to gain employment. The training is highly valued for meeting community and learner needs.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Programme design is informed by highly effective needs analysis. Ongoing stakeholder engagement ensures the PTE responds appropriately to emerging needs and funding requirements.
- Students are having successful learning experiences. They are acquiring new skills and achieving their personal goals.
- Students are gaining confidence and enhanced wellbeing. Many students progress to further study or employment. The positive impact of the training for individuals and their whānau is well evidenced.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Tutors reflect on programme plans and delivery very regularly, drawing on student evaluations and evidence of progress to refine programme topics and activities.
- Holistic and individualised support and guidance minimises barriers to learning and helps students to pursue their chosen pathways.
- Central Otago REAP is a stable, well-led organisation informed by local knowledge and well connected to key referring agencies and community groups, and the wider ACE sector.
- Management and staff share a learner-centred and reflective philosophy which guides all planning and decision-making. Staff are qualified and experienced, and well supported to work effectively in this learning context.

Key evaluation question findings³

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Student achievement is very strong in the context of Central Otago REAP's informal, non-assessed learning and the educational backgrounds and personal circumstances of its students.</p> <p>Student self-evaluations and tutor verification attest to high rates of achievement of personal goals, with the Choices programme averaging 90 per cent. In addition, individual learning stories attest to the acquisition of skills and enhanced wellbeing, such as increased confidence, communication and social skills, and self-management.</p> <p>Students are achieving certificates for completing courses, such as Workplace First Aid, Personal Development, Budgeting and Self-Defence, or the driver's licence theory test.</p> <p>In the Choices programme, students are enhancing their literacy and numeracy skills, which are regularly measured using the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) progressions tool. Some students also work towards qualifications through other providers and/or are achieving credits towards NCEA.</p> <p>Individual progress and achievement are closely monitored and well documented. Annual summaries and reviews of achievement provide a basis for future planning and meaningful improvements.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Central Otago REAP has effective processes for measuring and understanding achievement in their learning context. Students are gaining useful skills and achieving personal growth and development, which help them to identify new directions and pursue their chosen pathways.</p>

³ 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 students?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students benefit from enhanced opportunities and confidence to participate more fully in social and economic life. Many students on the Choices programme progress to employment or further training.⁴</p> <p>Completing ACE courses and/or gaining certificates is life-changing for some students, providing an opportunity for a fresh start, enhancing family life and promoting greater social engagement. Some students progress through a variety of courses at Central Otago REAP or go to other providers, as their confidence grows and they follow new interests. In other cases, new skills have enhanced students' employment opportunities.</p> <p>Central Otago REAP has ongoing funding contracts with various agencies⁵ to deliver customised programmes to their clients. Meeting minutes, reports and interview feedback confirm the value for these agencies of the training. Recently, Central Otago REAP has offered additional Lifeskills courses to enable Corrections' clients to complete their community service hours.</p> <p>Central Otago REAP has successfully sought to extend its reach into the community and increased participation by Māori.⁶ The PTE has developed a strong partnership with Uruuruwhenua Health, which is delivering significant benefits including enhanced wellbeing for whānau.</p> <p>Central Otago REAP is recognised as a valued contributor to the region and is represented on various local body and interagency groups.</p>
Conclusion:	The value of outcomes for key stakeholders is high. Effective stakeholder engagement and review ensure the PTE's programmes are relevant and meet the community's needs.

⁴ 2020 outcomes for the Choices programme: 42 per cent into employment, 42 per cent into further training, 16 per cent other (including withdrawal, health or personal circumstances).

⁵ Including TEC, MSD, Corrections.

⁶ The percentage of students who are Māori consistently exceeds the regional percentage.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Highly effective needs analysis and a flexible approach to programme design and delivery ensures the needs of students and other stakeholders are well matched.</p> <p>Input from funders and the wider community is gathered through regular informal and formal engagement. Recent initiatives, which demonstrate the success of this approach, include the Drive for Life course, which provides training for unlicensed drivers, including those identified by the Police, and is funded by NZ Transport Agency. A digital course for the elderly has been developed in response to changes in banking services. A learning hub has been established in collaboration with Otago Polytechnic and Alexandra House⁷, to provide drop-in computer facilities and support.</p> <p>Collaborative and comprehensive programme review activities occur daily, weekly, every term and at the end of the year. Central Otago REAP uses tutor reflections, learner evaluations and stories, and stakeholder feedback to update programmes to meet existing and emerging needs.</p> <p>Student interests and needs are noted by tutors and used to develop lesson plans and promote learner engagement. Activities and resources are contextualised, interactive and effective in engaging students with a variety of learning styles and needs. In addition to strengthening literacy and numeracy skills, the Choices programme provides individual and group opportunities to build confidence and gain a variety of skills, such as budgeting, developing a career pathway and achieving NCEA credits. There is no formal assessment; however, self-review and tutorial feedback on activities such as writing and public speaking provide opportunities to measure individual progress and learning.</p>
Conclusion:	Central Otago REAP is providing education that is informed by the principles of lifelong learning and matches the needs of its

⁷ Central Otago REAP is based in Alexandra Community House, along with 16 other community agencies and services.

	external stakeholders and students. The currency and relevance of programmes is regularly reviewed. Findings and actions are documented and monitored.
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1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Central Otago REAP provides an inclusive and welcoming environment. Programmes are open entry, providing accessible learning opportunities for students with varied personal circumstances and educational backgrounds.</p> <p>Tutors meet with prospective students to identify their learning and personal needs, and to establish goals and potential pathways, which are set out in individual learning plans. These plans form the basis for evaluating achievement and wellbeing and are regularly reviewed and discussed. Students complete regular evaluations and receive useful feedback on their progress.</p> <p>Tutors support classes to establish a culture of trust and respect, in which students take responsibility for their own learning. For many students, the social connections are crucial to their learning and ongoing engagement. Some younger learners require a probationary period (up to six months) to transition to the adult learning environment.</p> <p>Attendance and engagement are monitored; students are counselled and referred to wider support networks, including the community and social service agencies in Alexandra House. Opportunities for re-entry are available if required.</p> <p>Success is celebrated, including the awarding of certificates and a graduation event for Choices students, at which students share their personal stories.</p> <p>Central Otago REAP has reviewed its performance against the outcomes of the interim domestic Code⁸, and is developing an action plan for ongoing improvement.</p>

⁸ The Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019

Conclusion:	Central Otago REAP's highly effective guidance and support ensures students have positive learning experiences. All staff share responsibility for student wellbeing and contribute to ongoing reviews and improvements.
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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>Central Otago REAP is a stable and sustainable organisation. An appropriately knowledgeable and skilled board provides effective oversight of strategy and organisational performance.</p> <p>Central Otago REAP has clear strategic priorities and tracks progress towards measurable goals; for example, extending the reach of the organisation across the region and to priority groups. The PTE responds appropriately to changing circumstances, such as changes in contracts and the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown. During 2020, Central Otago REAP invested in information technology resources and capability.</p> <p>Through its extensive local and national networks, Central Otago REAP remains abreast of sector, funder and community developments.⁹ This ensures educational provision is relevant, useful and consistent with best practice in adult and community education.</p> <p>Staff are recruited for educational experience and ability to relate to the PTE's learner cohorts. A collegial team environment, together with regular opportunities to debrief and discuss professional practice and development, supports effective teaching. Central Otago REAP is developing its cultural capability and reflecting on appropriate pedagogies to enhance its leadership and the inclusiveness of the learning environment.</p> <p>Management and communication practices are effective, and all staff contribute to regular meetings and planning and review activities. Comprehensive programme and student-related documentation is gathered and used for self-assessment and to maintain strong educational performance.</p>

⁹ Management participates in REAP Aotearoa annual conferences and three manager meetings per year.

Conclusion:	Leadership at Central Otago REAP is highly effective. The PTE is learner-centred and well connected and is delivering strong outcomes for students and the wider community. Regular monitoring ensures funding requirements are tracked. Authentic and robust self-assessment is leading to worthwhile improvements.
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1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Central Otago REAP has effective processes for managing its compliance accountabilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review and reporting to the board about the requirements of key stakeholders, including the TEC, NZQA, MSD¹⁰ and other funders. As part of REAP Aotearoa, Central Otago REAP is peer reviewed every second year. The PTE responds appropriately to the findings of external monitoring. A review of recent reports confirmed a high standard of compliance with contractual requirements. • An appropriate process for reviewing and developing an action plan to ensure compliance with the interim domestic Code of pastoral care. • Policies and processes to comply with relevant legislation including the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and the Vulnerable Children Act 2014. • Ongoing review of policies and procedures to maintain their currency. Inclusion of key policies in staff handbooks and induction processes ensures staff knowledge of key requirements. • A compliance schedule to ensure reporting requirements of key stakeholders are met.
Conclusion:	Central Otago REAP is managing its compliance responsibilities well. Any non-conformities identified through audit are addressed promptly.

¹⁰ Central Otago REAP is subject to an annual social sector accreditation process by MSD.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Adult programmes including Adult and Community Education (ACE) and Intensive Literacy and Numeracy, incorporating the Choices Training Scheme

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

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.

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

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

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 fraud¹¹*
- *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.*

¹¹ 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/>.

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