

External Evaluation and Review Report

Literacy Aotearoa Charitable Trust

Date of report: 8 March 2024

About Literacy Aotearoa Charitable Trust

Literacy Aotearoa Charitable Trust (Literacy Aotearoa) is a national not-forprofit organisation which delivers adult literacy and numeracy education in a wide range of contexts. These include delivery in communities, workplaces, whānau and within other tertiary education programmes.

Type of organisation: Private training establishment (PTE)

Location: 19 Auburn Street, Grafton, Auckland

Eligible to enrol intl students: No

Number of students: Domestic: 8,742 students in 2022; 33 per

cent Māori, 9 per cent Pasifika; 2,786 (32 per cent) of 2022 students identified as

disabled

International: nil

Number of staff: 38 full-time, 96 part-time, 105 casual staff

TEO profile: Literacy Aotearoa Charitable Trust

Last EER outcome: The 2019 external evaluation and review

(EER) of Literacy Aotearoa resulted in summative judgements of Confident in educational performance and Confident in

capability in self-assessment.

Scope of evaluation: The current EER looked at the following

focus areas:

 Community Education – a menu of 12 short courses offered in full or part at

every site and online.

 Workplace Learning – tailored courses developed and delivered to address company business priorities and meet employees' individual literacy, language

and numeracy needs.

 New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching (Level 4) ID:125109/1, Qual Ref 2746 – Literacy Aotearoa's only NZQA-approved programme.

 Tupu Aotearoa – this programme connects Pasifika people with local providers, who support them to access work or learning opportunities on their journey to career employment. The Tupu Aotearoa programme is delivered by Literacy Aotearoa in Christchurch and South Canterbury.

MoE number: 6658

NZQA reference: C53459

Dates of EER visit: 20-24 November 2023

Summary of results

There is evidence that Literacy Aotearoa is providing quality learning leading to positive outcomes for most learners, their families and the community. The PTE has made significant improvements over the past 12 months, although good performance in some areas is still compromised by variability in self-assessment.

Learners are highly engaged in their learning and are well supported to succeed in both gaining confidence and interpersonal skills and achieving formal assessment where appropriate.

Confident in educational performance

- Stakeholders confirm that learners are experiencing positive changes in their lives and careers as a result of the education and learning they receive at Literacy Aotearoa.
- Staff are qualified and experienced in their respective fields and use their experience to ensure the education delivery is relevant and engaging.

Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment

- The organisation is soundly and sustainably managed and has a clear philosophy and purpose that is reflected throughout the organisation.
 Activities are well resourced.
- While core compliance processes around NZQA and Tertiary Education Commission requirements have improved, Literacy Aotearoa has an ad hoc approach to compliance management. This has resulted in a few important obligations not being met.
- Although Literacy Aotearoa has a culture of reflection and continuous improvement, this is often informal, intuitive and individual. The organisation is not systematically using data to inform improvements.
- Over the past two years, Literacy Aotearoa has strengthened its self-assessment, although it is not fully embedded across the organisation. A more systematic and universal approach is required for NZQA to have confidence in Literacy Aotearoa's selfassessment capability.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	The priority for the most of Literacy Aotearoa's learners is to address their immediate literacy and numeracy needs. The PTE does this well through a range of programmes offered in communities and workplaces. Learners interviewed by the evaluators described wide-ranging benefits from participating in the flexible programmes offered by Literacy Aotearoa.
	Māori make up approximately 33 per cent of the student cohort, with Pasifika students representing about 9 per cent. Completion rates for Māori and Pasifika students reflect the cohort as a whole. Approximately 32 per cent of learners identified as disabled. Their completion rates were on a par with the cohort.
	The organisation has a strong focus on student achievement. Staff at Literacy Aotearoa demonstrated a good understanding of the factors that lead to student achievement and regularly analyse and discuss ideas for improving achievement.
	Literacy Aotearoa collects a wealth of learner feedback and data which they could use more effectively to respond to change and inform developments in delivery and direction. The PTE could consider a more formalised consolidation of educational performance data which will provide richer analysis over time.
	Outcomes from the New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching (NZCATT) are marginal. Learner completion was 25 per cent in 2022 and 48 per cent in 2023. ² Given that learners on this programme are new or aspiring tertiary teachers, they will have the capability to study at this level (level 4) and will be likely be highly

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

² Until the time of the EER in November 2023.

	motivated to succeed. Their failure to do so should be of great concern to Literacy Aotearoa.
Conclusion:	Achievement in literacy and numeracy programmes is rich and diverse across a wide range of learners who are seeking to improve their lives. NZCATT completion rates are problematic. The PTE could make better use of achievement data to identify areas of strength and weakness, and use this to make continuous improvements.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	Valued outcomes from the literacy and numeracy programmes include improved work, family and community life. Improvement in literacy and numeracy leads to multiple improvements in work and life. Some learners pathway to better-paying jobs through modules such as Work Readiness, CV writing, Literacy Numeracy or Financial Readiness. The impact for school leavers is that attaining literacy and numeracy credits gives them greater choices in higher education pathways.
	Driver licence modules mean learners are less likely to drive unlawfully. For some, attaining a full licence means they can train in other vehicle types for enhanced employment pathways/options.
	The Tupu Aotearoa programme connects young Pasifika learners to appropriate support services. Forty per cent of Tupu Aotearoa learners have been placed into employment, and all others are still actively engaged in the programme.
	Outcomes often lie outside the scope of traditional educational measures, so Literacy Aotearoa has developed a set of 'value statements' to encourage learners to reflect on the impact of their experience at each stage of their learning journey. ³ The data from the value statements is

 $^{^{\}rm 3}$ Refer Appendix 1 for examples of value statement data.

	analysed locally as part of the evaluation process, and on a yearly basis at the national level, to gauge learner benefits, identify gaps and improve delivery. To date, the analysis at national level is at an embryonic stage and will need to be proven over time.
Conclusion:	Data available to date indicates that learners, their families, workplaces and communities are achieving benefit and growth as a result of the programmes delivered by Literacy Aotearoa.

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:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	Literacy Aotearoa's course design and delivery are meeting the needs of literacy and numeracy learners and stakeholders by providing courses that are relevant to the learners, employers and communities. The organisation is well attuned to the needs of learners through years of experience in the same market, and through constantly receiving feedback from learners, tutors and other stakeholders.
	The aspirations and interests of every learner are identified and documented through a co-created individual learning plan, and staff structure their teaching to align with those aspirations. Students regularly reflect on their learning plan with Literacy Aotearoa staff, which ensures that learner needs are being identified, consistently monitored and well met.
	The Tupu Aotearoa team's connections to Pasifika stakeholders has been pivotal to success. The Ministry of Pacific Peoples, which funds the programme, described the work of the Christchurch-based Tupu Aotearoa navigator and coordinator as 'gold standard'.
	The contextualisation of work-based literacy and numeracy programmes is strong. The EER team saw several examples where Literacy Aotearoa made the effort to understand employers' operations and embed

employers' resources, processes and systems into the training. Literacy Aotearoa's recent development of a menu of 12 short community education courses - which can be contextualised to meet local needs - is an example of good practice in understanding and matching needs. As previously discussed, the NZCATT programme is not meeting the needs of learners and other stakeholders. A significant project is in progress to review all aspects of the PTE's quality management system to ensure that academic standards are clear, understood and maintained. Literacy Aotearoa's internal moderation systems have improved and become more systematic recently. Moderation by NZQA in 2020 and 2021 identified issues in assessment practice in a small number of unit standards. Literacy Aotearoa produced an action plan and has since undertaken work to improve the assessment issues identified, which now meet NZQA expectations. Conclusion: Literacy Aotearoa's regular and ongoing interaction with its learners and stakeholders ensures that programmes and activities meet the existing and emerging needs of learners, families, workplaces and the community. This is a compelling feature of the organisation.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	Learners at Literacy Aotearoa receive active, integrated and ongoing social and academic support from staff at all levels of the organisation. Intending learners are well guided into courses that are appropriate to their aspirations and capabilities. The EER team noted that some enrolment information and forms may be difficult to use, indicating that there is ongoing reflection required and improvements to make in this area. Teachers and learners described numerous activities and initiatives that motivate, engage and encourage learners to

get the full benefit from their time at Literacy Aotearoa. The move towards offering some programmes online is appreciated by students who have work or family commitments that preclude them from regular classroom attendance. Offering language support (e.g. driver licence courses with a Samoan interpreter) has led to successful outcomes.

There was clear evidence of good teaching practice at Literacy Aotearoa, and a robust structure to ensure that good teaching continues. All staff are enthusiastic and passionate about their teaching and are well supported by management. The strong rapport between learners and staff was evident from discussions and evaluation survey outcomes.

Student feedback about the organisation and teaching was generally positive, although the data from students is patchy, characterised by low response rates in some areas.

Staff have a wide range of cultural competency which enables robust educational support for learners and a very inclusive environment. The community development nature of the organisation means that its staff go above and beyond the scope of a traditional education organisation to provide social and community support.

Conclusion:

Learners at Literacy Aotearoa are experiencing a strongly supportive and caring learning environment, which motivates them and minimises barriers to their learning. Feedback from learners is positive, although low responses to surveys limits the reliability of the data.

1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	Literacy Aotearoa is a not-for-profit charitable trust governed by a board of trustees. Board membership is both representative and skill-based, resulting in strong educational, financial and governance expertise within the board. The board is receiving detailed financial reporting but very little formal reporting on educational performance or compliance. This limits their ability to monitor and support educational performance.
	The organisation is responsibly managed and has a transparent philosophy, purpose and values. Recent strategic planning has involved staff and stakeholders and is producing a more cohesive approach to some of the previously disjointed activities of the organisation.
	Literacy Aotearoa uses what resources it has very effectively within a sustainable business model. Staff are valued for their expertise and provided with support and opportunities for professional development to support them in their roles. However, it is not clear if, and how professional development planning is linked to site and individual performance review.
	Academic leadership has been strengthened through recent organisational restructuring, which has resulted in improvements to systems and processes to maintain academic quality. This is still a work in progress, with some significant gaps. For example, the programme committee has overarching responsibility for academic approval and quality, and monitoring of performance. The committee was disbanded in 2021, but two years on is still in the process of being reconstituted. Some areas of the operation, such as the NZCATT, need to be more closely monitored for educational performance.
	The PTE encourages reflection on its role and how to make ongoing improvements to meet the needs of learners and other stakeholders. The PTE collects a lot of learner and stakeholder data and has a good student management

	system to store, process and report on that data. However, much of the self-assessment is still informal, individual and fragmented rather than systematic, strategic and informed by high-quality data across the organisation.
Conclusion:	Literacy Aotearoa has a clear vision and understanding of its enterprise, and a leadership committed to providing effective support for educational achievement. New and improved management practices and systems for monitoring performance are still bedding in. Governance and the executive do not yet have a clear vision of how well the organisation as a whole is doing, where the risks are, and what needs to be done at a whole-of-organisation level to make improvements.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	Responsibility for compliance is distributed across Literacy Aotearoa function teams: Operations (Education), Finance, and Tumuaki office (Governance), and has not been overseen by a single coordinator. ⁴
	Compliance management tends to be reactive and irregular rather than proactive or systematic. There is no formal reporting of compliance activity to the trust board. The PTE would benefit from having an annual workplan or calendar which lists key compliance obligations and is reported on regularly at executive leadership team and trust board meetings.
	Although Literacy Aotearoa meets most of its compliance requirements, this ad hoc approach has led to some important compliance accountabilities being overlooked. For instance:
	A recent Tertiary Education Commission audit expressed concern that internal controls did not identify and remove ineligible learners before submitting

⁴ Literacy Aotearoa intends to appoint a coordinator who will be responsible for overseeing all regulatory, funding and other compliance requirements for the organisation in early 2024.

Intensive Literacy and Numeracy returns. This related to the enrolment of learners – who already held high-level qualifications – into workplace literacy and numeracy courses, which had had occurred over multiple years. The EER team's concern was less about the compliance with funding conditions, which is a matter for the Tertiary Education Commission, but more about the lack of internal controls as another example of Literacy Aotearoa's gaps in compliance management.

 Literacy Aotearoa submitted an attestation to NZQA in November 2023 that it had completed the required annual self-review of the Code of Practice.⁵ Although a self-review was undertaken, it was not documented and made public, as is required under the Code of Practice. This was of further concern because in its 2023 selfreview, Literacy Aotearoa had downgraded its own rating (from its 2022 self-review) on all four Code outcomes.

The explanation given for this at the EER was that the PTE had been more self-critical in 2023. While this may be a good thing, some documented explanation would be useful for the PTE's own internal improvement planning.

- Literacy Aotearoa has a history of late notifications and applications for approval to NZQA, often requiring a reminder. When prompted, Literacy Aotearoa is quick to respond and rectify the situation, but this history confirms the lack of a robust system for proactively managing compliance.
- Completion data for NZCATT provided by Literacy Aotearoa for this EER (refer Appendix), differs significantly from graduate numbers reported to NZQA.⁶

These gaps and weaknesses may not have had a significant impact on learners to date, but they constitute a risk to the organisation and its learners.

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⁵ The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

⁶ Literacy Aotearoa provided data during the EER that 45 students (85 enrolments x 52.9 per cent) successfully completed NZCATT in 2021, and 55 students completed in 2022. Qualification outcomes reporting to NZQA for the same period was 11 graduates in 2021 and nine in 2022.

Conclusion:	Improvements to Literacy Aotearoa's compliance
	management are needed to produce a more coherent and
	effective approach to understanding and managing its
	important compliance accountabilities.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Community Education

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	Literacy Aotearoa has developed a unified portfolio of programmes which can be contextualised to meet local stakeholder needs. The menu of 12 short courses is offered in full or part at every site as well as in some online programmes. Most programmes run over 10 weeks during four terms, but can be adapted for community groups and businesses. The PTE has developed good teaching resources available centrally. Learners are achieving well, as measured by satisfaction data and value statements. Regional staff are monitoring progress effectively Monitoring across all sites would be useful to provide an organisational view that identified strengths and weaknesses and informed improvements.

2.2 New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching (Level 4) ID:125109/1, Qual Ref 2746

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	NZCATT is the entry-level programme for adult and tertiary educators starting out on their career. Literacy Aotearoa's programme is contextualised specifically for those wanting to gain greater insight into effective literacy and numeracy learning and teaching strategies.
	Successful qualification completion was 25 per cent in 2022, and 48 per cent in 2023 (until mid-November). Given that learners in this programme will generally be capable of study at level 4, and will be highly motivated to attain the qualification, the completion rates are concerning. The failing will most likely lie in the programme design and/or delivery, but Literacy Aotearoa has not yet sought to deepen its understanding of the issues and rectify them.

There has been no monitoring of performance through the programme committee.

The qualification that this programme leads to⁷ expired on 31 December 2023. Literacy Aotearoa will need to have a new or amended programme leading to version 2 of the qualification, approved by NZQA prior to 2024 delivery.

2.3 Tupu Aotearoa

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	The Tupu Aotearoa programme is offered by Literacy Aotearoa in Christchurch and Timaru. Tupu Aotearoa is funded through the Ministry for Pacific Peoples. The programme is for Tagata Pasifika who are not in employment, education or training, to support them to access work or learning opportunities on their journey to career employment. Literacy Aotearoa has contextualised their programme into a culturally dynamic and holistic style of delivery that is producing transformative experiences for learners, their families and communities. Learners are achieving relevant milestones as measured by contractual metrics and narratives of value from graduates and stakeholders. Regional staff are highly respected in the wider communities, including social service agencies and by the funder. Although the regional leadership is monitoring progress effectively, the cultural effectiveness and contextualisation of outcomes delivered are not well conveyed at national level.

Final

⁷ New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching (Level 4) Ref 2746, version 1

2.4 Workplace Learning

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	These are tailored courses developed and delivered to address company business priorities and meet employees' individual literacy, language and numeracy needs.
	Improving literacy and numeracy skills helps those already in the workforce to gain further qualifications and improve their career prospects which can lead to more productive, better paid and sustainable employment. The programmes are making positive contributions to people's lives.
	Literacy Aotearoa's workplace learning programmes have strong industry support as attested by employers and learners. Agile development and tailored delivery are meeting context, need and demand. As identified in 2.1, monitoring across all sites to provide an organisational view that identified strengths and weaknesses and informed improvements would be useful.

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 Literacy Aotearoa Charitable Trust:

- Strengthen programme monitoring and review processes.
- Continue to develop the collection and analysis of data for selfassessment to enable better understanding of learner achievement and the value of training to stakeholders and graduates.
- Maintain stronger processes to monitor, review and respond to important compliance requirements.

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.

NZQA requires Literacy Aotearoa Charitable Trust to:

 Produce a Code of Practice self-review report for 2023, and make it available in an accessible format to learners, staff and the general public, on the organisation's website.⁸

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⁸ This is a requirement under the Code of Practice Clauses 8 and 9 (Part 3).

Appendix 1

Table 1. Learner completions⁹

A III I		T			
All learners					
2021 completions	4816	1045	1078	247	12
	94.2%	93.0%	94.1%	80.5%	70.6%
2022 completions	5763	1024	818	166	104
	95.6%	91.8%	93.2%	91.7%	96.3%
2023 completions to date	5243	1161	994	472	135
	96.9%	96.9%	96.8%	94.0%	100.0%
Māori learners					
2021 completions	1628	325	236	75	0
	94.3%	92.6%	94.4%	88.2%	0.0%
	2139	320	174	31	0
2022 completions	95.7%	91.7%	90.2%	77.5%	0.0%
2023 completions to	1976	344	243	83	0
date	98.3%	97.2%	98.4%	83.0%	0.0%
Pasifika learners					
	414	92	140	16	12
2021 completions	94.7%	92.9%	91.5%	94.1%	70.6%
	444	81	127	7	104
2022 completions	95.5%	96.4%	90.7%	87.5%	95.1%
2023 completions to	534	86	145	6	135
date	97.3%	97.7%	95.4%	100.0%	100.0%
Youth learners					
	1221	217	172	68	4
2021 completions	94.9%	87.9%	92.0%	70.1%	80.0%
	1465	280	92	18	48
2022 completions	95.6%	87.8%	94.8%	78.3%	100.0%
0000	1246	201	131	95	65
2023 completions to date	97.1%	94.8%	94.9%	90.5%	100.0%
Disabled learners	37.170	04.070	34.370	30.370	100.070
	1769	464	252	95	2
2021 completions	94.5%	93.4%	91.3%	86.4%	100.0%
	1				
2022 completions	1958	455	205	29	4
	96.0%	90.6%	96.2%	74.4%	100.0%
2023 completions to	1630	592	237	56	4
date	97.1%	97.2%	95.6%	88.9%	100.0%

⁹ Data provided by Literacy Aotearoa

Table 2. NZCATT learner enrolments and completion

	Learner enrolments	Qualification completion rate
2021	85	52.9%
2022	228	24.3%
2023 to date	99	47.5%

Table 3. Value statements by year

All learners	2021	2022	2023 to date
I have developed new skills	92	90	81
I am more confident	73	71	79
I am interested in furthering my education	64	66	59
I have improved my chances of getting work	60	55	48
I have a better work/life balance	12	78	51
I am more hopeful about my future pathway	70	84	65

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 fraud¹⁰
- 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.

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¹⁰ 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 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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 excluding universities, and
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials 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 2022. 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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