

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Kauri Academy (NZ) International Ltd
trading as Kauri Academy

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 18 September 2013

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MoE Number: 7127
NZQA Reference: C11607
Dates of EER visit: 27 and 28 June 2013

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:	Kauri Academy (NZ) International Ltd trading as Kauri Academy
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Symonds Street, Auckland
Delivery sites:	As above
First registered:	23 November 2011
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General English programme:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Intermediate- Upper intermediate• Certificate in Diversional Therapy with Healthcare Core Competencies (Level 4)
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: nil International: 24
Number of staff:	Five full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	As above, as well as approval for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in Healthcare Team Management (Level 5)• General English programme (levels 1-4)

- Academic English programme (level 5)

Distinctive characteristics:

Kauri Academy was originally registered to provide Diversional Therapy courses to meet the government's projected need for more trained aged care and home support workers. The General English courses were developed to provide additional language upskilling for students enrolled in the Diversional Therapy programme to help them with higher study and employment. However, while the Diversional Therapy programme is in the early stages of establishing student numbers, the English language courses comprise most of the organisation's educational activity.

Recent significant changes:

Kauri Academy began offering General English courses to students for free trial in April 2012, and to fee-paying students from January 2013. The first intake for the Diversional Therapy programme began in February 2013.

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses began delivery in January 2013, following a trial with four students in July 2012.

Previous quality assurance history:

This is the organisation's first external evaluation and review (EER) since it was registered with NZQA in November 2011.

Kauri Academy has met the moderation requirements of Careerforce (Community Support Services Industry Training Organisation), but has yet to undergo external moderation with NZQA.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER included the mandatory focus areas:

- International students
- Governance, management and strategy.

In addition, the following focus area was selected because the majority of students are enrolled in study on this programme.

- General English courses.

The Diversional Therapy course has only been delivered to three students since the beginning of 2013, and so was not considered as a focus area.

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.

The EER team conducted the EER over two days at Kauri Academy's site in Auckland. The team consisted of two evaluators and an observer from NZQA. The team held evaluative interviews on site with the director, principal, tutors, student support staff, students, graduates and advisory group members. The team reviewed a selection of supporting documents, including analysis of students' results, student files, programme development and review reports, stakeholder feedback and business plans.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Kauri Academy (NZ) International Ltd trading as Kauri Academy**.

Kauri Academy's results for the first two intakes on the English language courses show a significant improvement in students' English language skills. The initial testing shows that the average rate of improvement in individual test scores for intermediate English language students is 31 per cent, and 13 per cent for the upper intermediate students. Feedback from graduates supports that the increase in language skills is sustainable. The value of these courses is shown by the graduate outcomes, with many of them increasing their confidence in speaking and writing to help them into employment or further education.

The majority of Kauri Academy students are enrolled in English language courses. The General English course was initially set up based on marketing information that indicated a high demand in the area for intermediate and upper intermediate-level English language classes. The courses have also been useful for students enrolled in the Diversional Therapy programme to improve their English language skills to achieve the required 5.5 IELTS (International English Language Testing System) to study at a higher level. At this stage, only three students have enrolled in this programme. The Diversional Therapy programme was developed with industry input and has been reviewed by Careerforce to ensure the training activities and assessments meet the qualification requirements. The students have a mix of classroom-based activities and workplace practicums to assist them towards the achievement of the qualification, and so far all have passed their unit standard assessments.

The organisation has employed highly experienced staff who are effective in providing support to the students and engaging them in their learning. The students receive a range of programme activities, which help with their learning. This is supported by the outcomes for the students who have not withdrawn.

International student support is comprehensive from enrolment throughout, with ongoing social activities and opportunities for feedback. The students like the family environment created by the open-door policy, where students feel safe to talk to staff about any issues.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Kauri Academy (NZ) International Ltd trading as Kauri Academy**.

Kauri Academy has implemented a self-assessment structure that is well documented and provides useful information. The initial piloting of programmes led to changes that were needed to improve the programme outcomes, such as better placement tests and assessment timetabling.

Programme planning and development is conducted with the programme team, which reports to management. This provides the director with good information for resource planning and ensuring staff have the support they need to deliver the programmes. The principal is also active in monitoring learner achievement for each course to identify any areas for improvement.

The management team uses feedback from a number of sources to regularly monitor achievement towards the PTE's objectives. The information comes from regular weekly staff meetings, programme review reports and staff surveys as well as monitoring of learner results. Student feedback is also gathered throughout the course to identify where improvements can be made.

The organisation demonstrated a culture of clear planning and ongoing assessment of needs to ensure that the programmes it provides are meeting the needs of students and employers.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Student achievement was supported by conversations with the graduates interviewed during the EER visit, showing that the English levels they achieved the previous year (2012) had been sustained and had helped them with their career or personal goals. The main area of improvement reported by both current students and graduates was the gaining of greater confidence in speaking and writing English. The results confirm the improvements for students in these areas.

The organisation's analysis shows that the students who complete the course made large improvements in language skills between their first test results and the second test results, with an average 82 per cent pass rate for all skill areas tested. The initial testing shows that the average rate of improvement in individual test scores for intermediate English language students is 31 per cent, and 13 per cent for the upper intermediate students. A few learners have completed the 15-week programme in 10 weeks, with two of these students (one from the intermediate and the other from the upper intermediate course) achieving IELTS 6.0 and 7.0 scores respectively following their graduation. This indicates that the teaching standard is to a recognised level of international testing standards. There have been no graduates from the Diversional Therapy programme to date, but all three students have successfully achieved the unit standard assessments so far, with the results checked by Careerforce for validity.

Student achievement is tested every four weeks and the reports on achievement are discussed at management team meetings. The ongoing reporting and monitoring of the data makes it easy for the staff to identify areas of student weakness and where students are achieving. However, there needs to be further cohort data for comparing results and to identify areas for improvement and whether actions taken to address areas of weakness have led to better student achievement.

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

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

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

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

The English language courses have only been going for a short while, but already the graduate destination data is showing value from the training, with graduates now in employment (18 per cent) or engaging in further study (30 per cent) because of their improvement in English language skills. This was supported by the feedback from graduates who reported that the greatest value was their increased confidence in speaking and writing, which has helped them find employment and sit IELTS to meet entry requirements for higher education. The organisation intends to offer IELTS preparation courses for the next cohort of students. However, the value to graduates is limited by the lack of data from previous cohorts, although the organisation intends to keep in touch and already engages with around 60 per cent of its graduates through Facebook and graduate surveys.

By offering only intermediate and upper intermediate English classes, the organisation is meeting the needs of students who have some English skills but who need to focus on developing better spoken and written communication for academic study and living in New Zealand. Many students refer friends to the programme because of the supportive environment and the focus on the intermediate levels. This is another indicator of the value the training offers to students. Kauri Academy enrolled four students in IELTS preparation classes at the start of 2013 and has already had success, with one student achieving 7.0 IELTS, enabling enrolment in higher education.

The Diversional Therapy programme was developed for people wanting to work in aged care or home support roles. There is an identified employment need over the next 10 years with New Zealand's ageing population. Although there have been no employment outcomes, the feedback gathered by the PTE from work experience employers is that the students receive good skills and communication training suitable for working in the New Zealand context. With two of the students from overseas, and one a New Zealand resident, Kauri Academy offers English courses for these students to help them if they wish to do further study or find work here or overseas.

The organisation is still in its early stages of delivery and therefore there is no data to show the benefit of the Diversional Therapy programme for graduates' outcomes or for the overall value of the programme and the supporting English language courses.

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

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

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

The English language courses are focused on improving intermediate and upper intermediate language skills, with a balance of learning opportunities across the different language skills. The English language courses have been offered to a range of international students wanting to improve their English for employment or personal reasons. The tutors use the Headway English language learning resources to form the programme delivery, as well as their own resources. Students' classroom-based activities are complemented by self-directed learning activities which are recorded in log books and encourage reflection on language skill development. Students were positive about the range of activities used by the tutors to teach them English, including debates, puzzles and presentations. Students learn about New Zealand culture, a recent activity being learning about Matariki while extending their language skills. Guest speakers provide students with additional opportunities to practise their speaking skills. Kauri Academy has also set up a relationship with a local volunteer service for students to gain further language experience.

The initial results from the pilot programme have shown that students have been successful in improving their language skills, particularly speaking and writing. The pilot has also enabled the organisation to identify where improvements to the programme are required, such as revising the placement test to ensure students are enrolled in the appropriate level, and adjusting the frequency of assessment for better monitoring of progress.

Kauri Academy is the only PTE that has approval to deliver the Diversional Therapy programme, as most people complete the qualification in the workplace. The students attend classes and have three practicums of three to five weeks to gain the skills and knowledge required to complete the Careerforce workbooks to achieve unit standards. Kauri Academy initially involved industry in the programme development to ensure it aligned to workplace needs as well as the qualification criteria. The programme has been reviewed by Careerforce to ensure the delivery times and activities involved are suitable. Ongoing review of the programme is still underway, and a formal programme review involving industry representatives is planned on completion of the pilot programme.

The staff are involved in thorough and systematic programme reviews, which are reported to management by the heads of each department at the end of each course. The review reports are used to identify improvements to meet students' needs. In addition, the organisation identified a demand for academic English, which led to the introduction of the IELTS preparation classes early in 2013 and the intermediate classes mid-year. The review of programmes has also identified the

need to only enrol students who are committed to completing the programme of study, and is checking this through its revised enrolment process.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Kauri Academy employs experienced tutors who are effective at engaging the students, as demonstrated by the performance of the Diversional Therapy students as well as the language improvements of General English students.

The organisation is supportive of staff professional development and maintaining professional currency. Tutors develop their own resources and use their own experience to deliver learning activities to help students learn the relevant knowledge and skills. Student feedback shows that they like the tutors' teaching styles and the classroom environment. Student feedback also says that the tutors provide clear instruction and challenging learning tasks that help them build their skills and confidence, as well as good assessment feedback to help them identify areas for improvement. Tutors also assist with additional language tuition outside of class hours.

English language assessments are formally assessed after four weeks of teaching towards the topic. This provides evidence of improvement in language skills. Students receive a summary of their results showing their progress or areas for improvement.

No formal tutor observations have been conducted at this early stage, but these will be carried out by the principal once the first round of training has been completed. Currently, performance observation is informal and ongoing throughout the programme at staff weekly meetings, programme review meetings and management team meetings. The organisation uses student achievement results as well as student feedback on the course to monitor teaching effectiveness. The student feedback is received mid-course and at the end of each course, and asks students about tutor availability, the helpfulness of staff and satisfaction with the organisation overall, as well as about classroom activities and the level of difficulty of the learning content.

The organisation has used students' formative and final test results to identify where some assessment required moderation because some tasks were too difficult and others needed more clarification. The organisation has engaged with another staff member from an English language school nearby to moderate the English language assessments.

Moderation of the Diversional Therapy assessment is carried out externally by Careerforce with the one tutor. Moderation shows that all the assessments

conducted so far for this course have met the national standard. The tutor attends the moderation meetings held by Careerforce to help maintain assessment quality. Employment of a second tutor for Diversional Therapy will provide an opportunity for internal moderation activities.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

The organisation provides comprehensive support and guidance for its students throughout their enrolment. All students are interviewed to determine their study goals and, once accepted, they are assessed on their English language skills using an interview and a written test. This enables students to be placed into the appropriate class. The need to improve the placement test was identified from the performance of the initial cohorts and aims to more accurately assess language ability and to ensure that students are committed to studying.

The accuracy of the placement test is important, especially for Diversional Therapy students because they are required to be at an intermediate level or above. They also need to have a tertiary qualification in health or a minimum of three years' relevant work experience.

The international student support staff member gives students study advice and help with accommodation. The organisation has also developed an orientation programme to help students adjust to living in New Zealand and to communicate the organisation's expectations for attendance and assessment. Students complete a questionnaire after their first week. This enables follow-up if students are having any difficulties settling in, and to get feedback on their level of comfort with the learning environment. This information is shared among staff to ensure appropriate support is provided. Additional feedback is used from the mid-course and end-of-course evaluations to identify where improvements need to be made to improve student support. For example, the Diversional Therapy students requested better orientation support at enrolment, and a new orientation programme was developed. In addition, the tutor visits the students each day while on practicums to provide support in the workplace.

Student facilities are modest at this stage, but the building is modern and spacious, with student internet access and a selection of resources held in the library for students to use. Social activities are arranged throughout the year, with visits to the art gallery and public library, together with shared lunches to encourage interaction between staff and students. This has created a family-like atmosphere where students feel comfortable and graduates often visit.

Attendance is strictly monitored using an electronic warning system which provides reports to management when students' attendance falls below 90 per cent. Then a

Final report

warning letter is sent, and if attendance falls below 85 per cent, the student is withdrawn.

All staff provide support as required, with the director available 24/7 for students who have any problems. The feedback from students shows the organisation is providing a very satisfactory level of support.

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

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

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

Overall, management support for educational achievement is demonstrated by good resource planning and by the employment of well-qualified, dedicated and experienced staff who relate well to students. The open management style enables students to approach staff with issues such as accommodation or teaching, and management responds appropriately.

The organisation monitors the achievement of objectives regularly to identify where improvements can be made. The parent company, based in the Philippines, uses the monthly management reports covering staff hours, marketing updates, student numbers and programme changes and developments, as well as student achievement, to monitor the sustainability of the organisation. Weekly monitoring of the organisation's objectives is carried out by the management team to monitor learner progress and identify where additional resources are required.

Staff reported that they felt supported in their professional development and that, while still being able to self-manage their classes, there was a team approach to resolving issues.

Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students is highly important to the organisation. Evidence for this is the close electronic monitoring of students' visas and student fee protection systems. The close adherence to the Code of Practice demonstrates the ethical approach the organisation takes in providing training to international students, and its long-term vision of providing quality education. However, during the EER visit a small issue with the system was identified where some students' medical insurance expiration dates had been overlooked. The organisation immediately amended the situation and an automatic reminder system was put in place.

Kauri Academy has an agent on site who liaises with other agents. This has been effective in enrolling students from Europe and South America, and the organisation is looking to increase enrolments from other countries, including China.

The organisation has a well-organised system for reviewing programmes and students' achievements. Self-assessment activities include students' feedback, staff surveys and input from industry, which is captured in programme review reports. The organisation has responded to many needs, such as more resources for the Diversional Therapy programme, in a timely way and has demonstrated good course planning and development for ensuring it has sufficient resources to deliver programmes.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management and strategy

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

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

2.2 Focus area: International students

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

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

2.3 Focus area: General English programme (levels 1-4)

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

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

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review other than those that are embedded in the body of the report.

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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