

Report of External Evaluation and Review

AMS Group Training

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 8 May 2013

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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:	AMS Group Training (AMS Group)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Hamilton
Delivery sites:	Hamilton, Auckland, Masterton, Mt Maunganui, Palmerston North
First registered:	29 May 1998
Courses currently delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in Transport (Re-entry) (Level 3)• Short courses based on unit standards
Code of Practice signatory?	No international students
Number of students:	Domestic: 150 (approx.) made up of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45 per cent European• 45 per cent Māori• 8 per cent Pasifika• 2 per cent other
Number of staff:	18 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	Domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Education to level 6• Business to level 5• Health Studies to level 6• Communications to level 5

- Mathematics to level 1
- Road Transport to level 5
- Driver Education to level 3
- Service Sector to level 4
- Stevedoring to level 4
- A large variety of related unit standards.

Distinctive characteristics: Industry-based health and safety and operator training predominantly conducted on company sites. Driving courses held at designated sites in the North Island.

Recent significant changes: The purchase of Start Training PTE.

AMS Group has employed a quality manager and two business development managers and re-designated three area managers' positions.

A number of staff changes at head office, Hamilton.

Previous quality assurance history: NZQA conducted a quality audit of this provider in May 2009. At this audit all conditions of the quality standard were met.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Governance, management and strategy is a mandatory focus area. The other focus areas selected were:

- Certificate in Transport (Re-entry) (Level 3) – 12-week course
- Truck Licensing – three-day course
- Workplace Safety Training

These selected programmes are representative of the different types of programmes currently offered by AMS Group.

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.

An NZQA lead evaluator conducted the evaluation visit with a team evaluator over three days at the provider's principal site in Te Rapa, Hamilton and a secondary site in East Tamaki, Auckland. The evaluators met with the owner and managing director, quality assurance (QA) manager, area managers, office manager, teaching staff and students. Documents sighted by the evaluators during the visit included moderation documents, trainer's handbook, national external moderation reports, the quality management system, student feedback forms, training plans, training handbooks, training matrix, issues register, telemarketing survey reports and other assorted documents.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **AMS Group Training**.

AMS Group measures its educational performance by the rate of course and qualification completions. According to data provided, AMS does well on both fronts, delivering short unit-standards-based courses to employees at the workplace in accordance with employers' needs. The completion rate of these programmes is high at around 95 per cent, mainly due to the short nature of the courses and compulsory attendance, as the courses are part of the students' employment requirements.

AMS Group also delivers driver licence courses at a variety of North Island sites using its own vehicles or hiring those it requires. These licences provide endorsements needed to drive various grades of heavy vehicles and are very popular for people wishing to improve their employment prospects. The third type of programme is the 12-week Certificate in Transport (Re-entry) which is also centred on heavy vehicle driver licences and has the advantage of combining a number of endorsements into one programme, thereby saving the students the time and expense of achieving the endorsements in separate programmes. This longer programme has a creditable completion rate of 86 per cent (the national mean for Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)-funded courses at this level was 81 per cent in 2011), but currently it makes up a comparatively small part of the provider's operation (4 per cent).

Students and teachers told of the 'soft skills' that are being gained as a result of the 12-week programme. The teachers said they inserted the teaching of such skills as confidence-building for job interviews, CV writing and public speaking into the programme informally, as they could see the value of these skills, especially when the students came to AMS Group to seek employment. This is commendable and the provider is awaiting the outcomes of the NZQA-led targeted review of qualifications (TROQ) process, to see these skills integrated as recognised components of the programme.

Teaching staff are selected for their extensive industry experience. This is seen as the key factor for teaching credibility. Many teachers have the necessary teaching skills and qualifications, and AMS Group is prepared to support new teachers to obtain them as soon as possible. New teachers undergo a carefully managed regime of induction and mentoring. Professional development of the teaching staff members is an important priority for AMS Group. It is very important to AMS Group that it puts together a team of appropriate teachers, and that everyone 'fits in'. In December 2012, AMS Group held a seminar for its contracted teachers in Hamilton. The NZQA evaluators heard that this was a worthwhile exchange of ideas. These processes have added effectiveness to the teaching and contributed to the confidence that the students are being well instructed.

Purpose-designed lesson materials are devised for mainstream employers using examples and illustrations from specific employment scenarios that the students will identify with. This adds realism and relevance to the learning. Another competitive advantage is that AMS Group is able to tailor its programmes specifically to suit the requirements of employees and employers. It gains a lot of valuable repeat business from large industry players through these means.

Training in literacy and numeracy skills is not specifically included in the 12-week programme, although the teachers recognised that some of these skills are embedded in the teaching resources and inherent in the learning. AMS Group has identified this in its 'Open Issues Register' as a need to develop and integrate literacy and numeracy diagnostic assessments in the pre-course interview, with action targeted for early 2013. Student progress in these skills is currently not being measured as AMS Group has only just started using this tool, so improvements cannot be ascertained at this time. The true student achievement in the 12-week programme is to be found in the sustained employment of graduates in the types of jobs they trained for. AMS Group does not track all of its graduates past course completion to discover whether there is sustained relevance to the training. To its credit, it does have a system of evaluation for 30 per cent of its graduates using a telemarketing company. The reports from the telemarketing surveys show general student satisfaction with the programmes. The teachers and management interviewed by the evaluation team could see the value in tracking student destinations after graduation and have undertaken to engage in such data collection in the future.

At the time of the evaluation, the number of Māori and Pasifika students involved in the 12-week programme was about 50 per cent of the student body (according to TEC figures), and the class that participated in the evaluation interview from this group was entirely Māori and Pasifika in makeup. Given that Māori and Pasifika are a significant proportion of the students, AMS Group understands that it must develop meaningful liaison with Māori and Pasifika communities to facilitate learning styles and worldviews that will enhance the training provided.

The provider has begun to engage with industry and other educational institutes of a similar nature to provide a forum to moderate and benchmark against the standards of providers who deliver similar programmes. AMS Group is currently engaged with these providers to develop an online learning system. It also engages with its contractors, many of whom work for other TEOs as well, to gain feedback about content, methodology and costs.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **AMS Group Training**.

AMS Group collects useful data on the progress of its students. The NZQA evaluators saw that AMS collects entry information when the student enrolls in the course. This information is organised in an electronic student management system. Student achievement is entered on another database when the students have completed the short training programmes. The results are forwarded by the contracted teachers. Currently this data is not being processed in an 'outcomes-focussed' way to attempt to understand the value of the learning. It appears that figures are collated to meet the requirements of the funding bodies, and this method does not provide a true measure of actual outcomes, such as individual course results over time to see trends, or comparisons across tutors.

The data that was presented to the evaluators was mostly centred on enrolment numbers of students and not completion numbers. There is no apparent collation and analysis of this data, so it is not possible to see how the value of completions is being used to inform course development. This is partially explained by TROQ developments, and the provider is awaiting the developments of this process.

AMS Group collects student feedback from all of its programmes and engages a telemarketing company to collect further exit data from a 30 per cent sample of those students who have completed, and the results of these surveys are collated. This is an innovative step, which shows AMS Group's prompt responsiveness to student concerns about resource provision, for example upgrading trucks and improved training course presentation. The teaching effectiveness is further enhanced by entrenched systems of internal and external moderation of teaching material and assessments. External moderation reports on AMS Group from industry training organisations (ITOs) are favourable, with most areas of assessment requiring improvement being of an administrative nature, and this provides confidence that assessments are valid.

AMS Group gathers feedback from students when they graduate through a telemarketing exercise to find out what could be improved or to help understand why the training is of value to the graduates or their employers.

AMS Group understands the benefits of benchmarking and has identified this for action in its Open Issues Register. As yet there is no formal analysis of completion rates against those of its competitors, other than that provided by the TEC. It is anticipated that, in time, the newly established liaison with other educational institutes and industry sources will allow programme development to occur to provide assurance of the relevance and consistency of delivery.

This provider would benefit from establishing and maintaining a consolidated student management database. Currently, different systems are being used for enrolments and course completions and it has been identified that in the long term it is beneficial for effective self-assessment to have all the information in one system.

AMS Group monitors teacher performance well, with a good system of induction involving mentoring and a series of observations and peer review to fine-tune teaching skills. Teachers engage in periodic performance reviews with their area managers, and occasionally meetings are held with the managing director. A system of performance agreements is being put in place but is not fully engaged at this time. The use of a training matrix is a good way of comparing the formal skills of the teachers and acts as a prompt for professional development activities.

The Open Issues Register is a book in which all educational issues that arise are tracked until they are resolved. The register is a good initiative which shows prompt responsiveness to student concerns identified by the telemarketing surveys, and areas to address such as literacy and numeracy needs, differing learning styles and benchmarking processes and practices. The register shows that issues are recognised and systematically dealt with until practical solutions are found, enabling improved educational practice.

The evaluation team saw examples of AMS Group's responsiveness to tutors' needs regarding teaching resources, which the QA manager incorporated through protected teaching resource flash drives. These flash drives contain the complete teaching package and assessments for a teaching module ready for the instructor to print and use. This initiative helps make the teaching consistent throughout the delivery sites and ensures that the students are receiving relevant and appropriate material.

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**.

AMS Group generally has a high rate of course completions, with the short courses reporting better results than the 12-week certificate programme. TEC figures show a significant leap in qualifications completions in 2011 for the 12-week programme. In 2010, 26 per cent of students completed qualifications (the national average at this time was 71 per cent), and this rose to 100 per cent in 2011 (when the national average was 76 per cent). It appears that this rise was due to the student rollover into the next calendar year. The entry criteria were tightened up at the time and this was offered as a possible explanation for the improved qualifications completion rate. This ambiguity indicates that self-assessment procedures in the area of qualification completions could be more robust.

Learner achievement data is collected, usually after courses have finished, and this data is used to generate a report on educational performance indicators. Short courses have better results (90-95 per cent completion rate) as they are often paid for by employers and are of short duration (one to three days), so have a 'captive audience'. The 12-week Certificate in Transport (Re-entry) programme has a completion rate of approximately 86 per cent (the national average at this level was 81 per cent); some students withdraw for personal reasons. The training enables students to attain driving licence endorsements, meet legal requirements, enhance employment possibilities or gain promotions and pay rises. The students on the 12-week programme also show signs of personal development as a result of attending the programme. They attain soft skills such as enhanced confidence in job interviews, CV writing and public speaking. Literacy and numeracy skills training is not specifically targeted in the programmes by AMS Group as an area of focus; however, some of these skills are currently embedded in the ITO training resources and inherent in the learning. This is especially true of the 12-week programme. The online TEC literacy and numeracy testing tools are not being used by AMS Group currently. AMS Group has realised its responsibility in this area and there are plans to incorporate a focus on literacy and numeracy in the near future. The ITO workbooks that are used in some of the programmes have embedded literacy and numeracy teaching strategies.

Achievement data is being collected but mostly for recording and reporting purposes after a course has been completed. The data is not currently being extensively analysed or used to inform improvements in learner outcomes.

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

Enrolment data is being compiled in a separate data system and is gathered to provide commercial information for the organisation. The organisation would benefit from having a consolidated student management system database that tracks the progress of the student throughout their time with AMS Group and at any subsequent enrolment, to aid completion. The current systems will also benefit from adopting a more student-centric approach to understand individual achievement. The inclusion of a specific literacy and numeracy focus, especially in the longer programmes where it will have more effect, is in the planning stages and is not yet being implemented.

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**.

Employers value the training as it enables compliance with industrial health and safety or employment regulations. The benefits to the employer and the employees are clear in these circumstances, and job requirements are being satisfied. The longer 12-week courses attract a variety of people from 18 to 55 years of age to gain employment, change vocations or return to employment after illness, disability or incarceration. These students are sometimes referred to AMS Group by Work and Income New Zealand, or the students decide to fund themselves through the course. The 12-week course has valuable outcomes for the types of people who enrol because of its success rate, with about 86 per cent of the students completing the course and gaining a qualification.

The short industry-based courses offer customised training and are made up of unit standards in accordance with employers' requirements. To show their success on completing the programme, the student receives an AMS Group certificate of attendance which has the completed unit standards listed on it.

AMS Group is able to adapt the location and timing of the delivery to suit the various needs of the employer. The integrated nature of the AMS Group licensing programme enables its students to gain a number of licences and endorsements within a single programme. This keeps the cost down and speeds up the process of a student getting the licences they want without having to do numerous small courses, as is commonly the case. Several of the students that were interviewed said they needed the licences to gain employment in Australia; however, they chose to do the course and gain the licences in New Zealand, where it is cheaper to do so. The telephone interviews that the NZQA evaluators conducted with employers and people who have completed the training showed that they were generally satisfied with the standard of the course and its outcomes.

AMS Group collects data on course completions but does not track where the graduates of the 12-week programme gain employment. Management recognises

that there is value in tracking the graduates after they leave to gauge the sustained value of the training, and there are plans to initiate this process in the future. Apart from the results of the telemarketing survey, AMS Group staff members keep in touch with some graduates of the 12-week programme, but this is on an informal basis and a more structured, formal system is needed to determine that there is lasting value in the training. AMS Group supplements its own student evaluation by engaging a telemarketing firm to survey a 30 per cent sample of its short course students and analyse the results and report the findings back, incorporating them in programme planning and decision-making.

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**.

AMS Group generally meets employers' needs through the flexibility of the timing and delivery locations of the programmes. This enables the trainees to attend with a minimum of disruption to the normal working day. Student evaluations are implemented at the end of every course and the results are collated into a summary. It is not clear that feedback and course completion results are used to inform course development. The students' immediate needs are met in that they achieve the licences and endorsements they require to obtain employment or promotion. The evaluators were told that the students did not always receive the advance course reading material in a timely fashion. There was some confusion among staff members as to whether the students were supposed to receive advance course material at all. Exit interviews are planned for students completing the 12-week programme. AMS Group encourages students to enhance their skills by gaining further licence endorsements, and some take up the opportunity. The evaluators talked with a few students who were returning to take up extra licence endorsements. The class sizes are kept small so that the students can be given closer attention and one-to-one tuition where required.

The teachers of the 12-week programme support students' employment opportunities through giving advice on future employment options and by building confidence in generic subject areas such as CV writing, interviewing and public speaking. Teaching staff said they would like to incorporate more of this type of subject matter as the students find it beneficial. Awareness of organisational educational performance comes primarily from the results of student evaluations and the telemarketing surveys. The evaluators conducted telephone interviews with former students who have completed the training, and their impressions of the training were all positive. The use of student exit data could be improved, to understand whether activities are relevant to industry needs. It was evident to the NZQA evaluators during the visit that analysis of the data from course completions was not being fully conducted to inform future course development at this time. In

terms of the 12-week programme, it is not clear that analysis takes place to determine that the students gain and keep relevant employment. AMS Group states that it sees the value of analysing such information and intends to collect data in this area in the future. The recruitment of a quality manager recently is intended to strengthen these systems and drive these improvements. Changes to the entry criteria of the 12-week programme have been made in response to self-assessment, and qualification and course completion results are improving as a result.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

The teachers at AMS Group all come from the industries that the training is specific to, and their industry knowledge is a valuable resource. Not all AMS Group teachers have formal teaching qualifications, although all those interviewed at the time of the evaluation visit had previous teaching experience. AMS Group is actively assisting the teachers to achieve their teaching and assessing qualifications as part of their professional development. A recent development has been the implementation of a training matrix which shows the teachers' individual progress towards achieving the desired teaching training. This enables trainers' progress with their own training to be monitored.

AMS Group is maintaining a good standard of assessment procedure and this is endorsed by the external moderation of the TEO's unit standard assessments by the ITOs. The evaluators saw that the issues that were raised in some reports from ITOs were mainly of an administrative nature, and most had been rectified. AMS Group has three designated internal moderators based in Hamilton to ensure that this area is operating effectively. Two of the staff members have experience as external ITO moderators, which assists the management of assessments at AMS Group. Students are given the opportunity to re-sit the parts of a unit standard they did not at first complete, and assistance is given to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students, with a translator provided if required.

AMS Group has an effective policy of 'contextualising the lessons' for the short courses, which involves designing workbooks specifically for major clients' training. These workbooks will include scenarios and photographs sourced specifically from the client's own business to enhance the relevance and accessibility of the lessons. These 'contextualised' materials are moderated by industry expert consultants and the client itself to ensure they are fit for the purpose required. All resources, teaching and assessment materials are provided to tutors from head office to better ensure consistency of delivery and assessment.

Discussions with management revealed that, when engaging a teacher, the key attributes that are sought are industry experience and relevant qualifications; the

prospective staff member should also have the potential to be a good teacher. The candidate will be a self-starter, be passionate, engaged in industry, resourceful and be aware of cost management. AMS Group ensures that the teachers meet NZQA's consent and moderation requirements to assess against the unit standards, and that they undergo a 90-day trial before they are permanently employed. Teachers are allocated a mentor to assist with the transition to AMS Group, and are able to observe experienced teachers in class, and be observed by experienced teachers to help them develop their teaching methodology.

Class size for the three-day licensing programme is kept at six students, and it is estimated that 1200 students enrol in the programme annually, of whom about 95 per cent successfully complete. These are very good results. AMS Group employs contractors who are experts in their field to do the teaching, augmented by a core of full-time employees.

The development of teaching skills is important at AMS Group because many of the key education roles are filled by people primarily selected for their industry experience. To facilitate improved teaching skills in the tutors, a number of initiatives are in place. Professional development of staff is an ongoing area of development and was discussed at a staff seminar held in Hamilton in December 2012, with some ideas emerging from this meeting. Employment contracts are in the process of being upgraded to align with job descriptions, although the evaluators were told that performance agreements were not yet in place for some teachers. Staff reviews take place six-monthly by the area managers and by the managing director after one year of the staff member joining. The managing director negotiates the performance review conditions with the teacher. The evaluators were told of a couple of teachers who 'didn't fit' at AMS, and consequently their contracts were not renewed. One sign that teaching outcomes are improving course quality can be seen in the number of repeat enrolments. The evaluators were told that many students came back to enrol in further programmes.

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 short, work-based, corporate-based courses that AMS Group provides to students for one to three days do not involve a lot of pastoral care. The longer 12-week programmes, where students attend at one of AMS Group's campuses, involve more in the way of student support. The student handbook provided to the evaluation team contains the academic rules and regulations. The contact numbers of external support agencies are kept on a list at the Auckland branch, but were not evident in the student handbook.

Student learning is supported in a number of ways. For instance, students who have not completed can continue for a short time after their programme has

finished, tidying up any unfinished unit standard assessments. The school supports students with learning difficulties by allowing the use of reader-writers in assessments when necessary. The New Zealand Transport Authority allows the theory part of the licensing test to be done in various languages to assist migrants.

AMS Group is not obliged to be involved in the TEC literacy and numeracy programme, but accepts its value and intends to systematically incorporate this material in its longer programmes, which is shown by the incorporation of literacy and numeracy testing to measure improvement.

The students interviewed by the NZQA evaluators were all Māori or Pasifika, and they said their cultural requirements were recognised and students were able to attend external gatherings such as tangi, as their culture dictates. The TEC figures show that around 50 per cent of the students who attended the funded courses are Māori and Pasifika. There is no indication that representatives of these communities have a part in the planning or in advising student support processes for the programmes.

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**.

Governance and management at AMS Group has a clear vision for the school in that they 'want to be the best' and a 'one-stop-shop' in the marketplace. The school is in a process of diversifying and growing and currently has eight branches and is looking to gain a national presence. The head office is in Hamilton where AMS Group has a core of management and administration staff. The area managers are also engaged in teaching, and the remainder of the teaching staff are mainly contractors who are hired on the basis of the subject and their industry knowledge. This is a useful strategy as it allows AMS Group to get the most experienced people to teach for as long as they are needed without binding them to full-time positions when there may be little work at times.

AMS Group has good relations with the ITOs and industry. This was evident by the industry lobby group that has been formed to encourage the relevant ITO to drop the price of assessment resources. While this relationship is exploring some educational projects, it is not yet engaging in other activities that could be educationally useful, such as moderation or providing learning pathways. This is an educational opportunity that could be utilised for the benefit of all involved.

Governance and management of AMS Group would be more outcomes-focussed if it adopted a more student-centric approach to the running of the school. There is currently no designated academic manager, with these responsibilities taken up by the QA manager.

AMS Group collects some useful student data, mainly in the area of student enrolments. Course completion figures are listed when the programmes are complete, but this data could be more usefully analysed and used to inform programme development. Destination data is also not gathered at present; such data would be very useful in determining the long-term effectiveness of the programmes. AMS Group has no educational advisory groups to inform course change and relies on its numerous links with ITOs and industry to inform its practice, but it holds membership in industry associations and professional bodies which provide guidance and benchmarking against industry practice. AMS Group courses are based mainly on unit standards which cannot be adapted by the provider.

The school has recently undergone some significant commercial and personnel changes. The acquisition of some smaller PTEs has led to a deliberate diversification of teaching areas. Recently, key staff members departed from AMS Group head office, and this has led to a staff shuffle which has caused a little confusion and a backlog of work in the short term. AMS Group is in the process of retraining its personnel and has hired a number of temporary staff members to make up the shortfall. Currently, AMS uses different data systems to capture enrolment and course results. These could be adapted so that all data for a student is kept in one place, which would make for more efficiency.

AMS Group has a strong senior management team with a lot of experience in their individual fields of expertise and also in business, with several of them having owned their own businesses, and others having worked for ITOs in the past. This business expertise is evident in the way AMS Group is developing and expanding into new areas. Senior management are in touch with each other easily by telephone and conduct formal meetings by Skype every couple of months. Issues are identified and entered in the Open Issues Register by the QA manager for tracking and resolution. The strategic plan is updated quarterly to take into account recent developments.

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: Certificate in Transport (Re-entry) (Level 3) – 12-week course.

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

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

2.3 Focus area: Truck Licensing – three-day course

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

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

2.4 Focus area: Workplace Safety Training

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

To assist this provider to add further value to its programmes, the evaluators recommend that AMS Group:

- Implement a policy of analysis of completion and destination data to form conclusions that will assist in the development and review of programmes.
- Consider the role of Māori and Pasifika kaupapa and tikanga to assist in the facilitation of learning to students from these groups.
- Consider how literacy and numeracy learning can be further integrated in the programmes and how improvements in these fields can be measured.
- Revisit the advisory system by which course development is informed by industry and educational sources to develop a system that formalises the processes.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of programme approval and accreditation (under sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the Criteria for Approval and Accreditation of Programmes established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act and published in the Gazette of 28 July 2011 at page 3207. These policies and criteria are deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under the new section 253.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual programmes they own or provide. These criteria and policies are also deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under section 253. Section 233B(1) of the Act requires registered PTEs to comply with these rules.

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 EER process approved by the NZQA Board.

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).

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz