

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Fairview Educational Services Limited

Highly confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 2 December 2011

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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

Location:	Te Rapa Road, Hamilton
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1998
Number of students:	Domestic: 67 equivalent full-time students
Number of staff:	Eight full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Automotive Youth Training• Automotive Training Opportunities programme• Certificate in Automotive Servicing (Technician) (Level 3)• Certificate in Automotive Panelbeating (Level 3)
Sites:	One
Distinctive characteristics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fairview Educational Services Limited (FES) is based at Fairview Motors Limited, a large Ford and Mazda franchise dealership in Hamilton.• FES has delivered targeted training and Student Achievement Component funded training since 1999.• The courses leading to the automotive certificates start in January and run for 40 weeks.

- The targeted training courses run for 44 weeks and learners can start throughout the year.
- Recent significant changes:
- The loss of government funding for a Skill Enhancement programme from 2010 meant a drop in the number of full-time students from 84 to 67.
 - FES has expanded its Gateway services to schools and colleges and is enhancing its distance learning packages for the Australian market.
- Previous quality assurance history:
- At the last quality assurance visit by NZQA, an audit in 2007, FES met all the requirements of the then standard, QA Standard One.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

In accordance with NZQA policy, the mandatory focus area of governance, management, and strategy was included in the scope. The Automotive Youth Training course was selected as a focus area as it is the organisation's largest course, with 28 participants. The third focus area was the course leading to the Certificate in Automotive Servicing as it is one of two Student Achievement Component funded courses run by FES.

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 external evaluation and review was conducted over two days by two NZQA evaluators. The evaluation involved interviews with:

- The training services manager
- The managing director and the general manager of Fairview Motors Limited
- Three tutors
- Eleven ex-students
- Twenty-two current students

- Four members of the industry advisory group via phone
- Three employers from the motor industry via phone.

The EER also involved a review of relevant documentation such as the current business plan, an action plan for 2011-2012, achievement data since 1999, a tutor self-appraisal, a student evaluation form, emails from schools using workbooks, profiles of ex-students, a student interview form, Tertiary Education Commission assessment tool results, a student learning plan, a student end-of-term report, and a work experience feedback form.

Fairview Educational Services Limited has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Fairview Educational Services Limited**.

FES has a very broad view of the outcomes it is hoping to achieve. It takes into account the nature of its students and puts a lot of effort into ensuring the training results in employment or further training. The overall rate for positive labour market outcomes from all its courses in 2010 was 74 per cent, and this has been the average level for the last three years. Eighty-six per cent of the students on the course leading to the Certificate in Automotive Servicing last year gained employment and 64 per cent of them gained employment in the motor industry.

Although FES is justifiably proud of such achievements, it is equally as proud of the students' gains in literacy and life skills because it recognises the importance of these not only to the students but also to the wider community. The students realise that they have become more independent at FES and that their courses have resulted in their acquiring career goals or clarifying ones they already had. These are important outcomes, particularly to those students who left school with a negative experience of the education system and to the community as these students now have a chance to play a meaningful part in it. A number of ex-students told the evaluation team that they now realise what they can achieve, both on a personal level and in their careers.

For the last six years, the average credits achieved by each student on the course leading to the Certificate in Automotive Servicing have been 112, and the average credits achieved for the youth training course have been 28. Such figures reflect the value added by the courses at FES, as 38 per cent of the students on the Automotive Youth Training course in 2010, for example, started at FES with zero credits. The percentages of students who achieved more than 20 credits on the course were 48 per cent in 2009 and 47 per cent in 2010. The comparative nationwide figure in 2009 was 37 per cent¹. The students recognise the value of their course and that this value applies across a range of areas. Similar value is attached to the Student Achievement Component funded courses where the qualification completion rate rose from 58 per cent in 2009 to 63 per cent in 2010, a rate that compares favourably with those of providers of similar courses.

Because all the programmes were developed by an organisation that is part of a major motor dealership, they are grounded in the industry. Programmes are centred on the needs of the individual students assessed in a number of different ways and then fed into individual student learning plans. The student-centred

¹ Calculated from Ministry of Education: *Education Counts: Retention and Achievement: Achievement in targeted training programmes*.

nature of FES means that emphasis is placed on effective teaching. The success of the work of the tutors and the foundation skills tutor, in particular, has resulted in literacy being embedded in the courses. FES leadership is committed to student achievement now and in the future, as exemplified by its development of a mentoring programme for those students identified as at risk of dropping out of courses, and its investigation into the possibility of offering night courses for current apprentices.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Fairview Educational Services Limited**.

One of the reasons FES has been able to maintain its level of achievement over the years is its approach to self-assessment. Records have been kept for each course since 1999, showing credits achieved and percentages of students moving into employment and further training. These records are benchmarked against similar providers throughout the country. FES uses the figures to check how well it is doing and in particular that the students, the motor industry, and the wider community are gaining the maximum possible benefit. Such figures revealed, for example, the significance of ensuring students on the youth courses stay for longer than ten weeks, as this leads to higher completion rates overall. The organisation now needs to take this a stage further and analyse the reasons for some students leaving in the first ten weeks.

FES is closely involved with the motor industry. Its parent organisation is a major player in the industry and frequently employs the students at the end of their courses and also provides work experience. This close contact means that FES is continuously looking at outcomes and receiving direct feedback on the performance of many of its students in the workplace. The feedback is enhanced by that received from other firms taking students on work experience. FES uses this feedback to reflect on the value of its courses and the suitability of the student for the work experience placement. Action is taken when needed and a number of current and ex-students expressed their appreciation to the evaluation team of the way in which FES assigned them to different firms for work experience once it seemed appropriate.

FES uses a range of formal self-assessment methods to provide data and listens carefully to verbal feedback. One of its main formal methods is the student evaluations undertaken at the end of each term which are used to check the performance of the tutors, the value of the workbooks, and the improvements that could be made. As the information gleaned on the first two aspects was very general, it was not as effective a form of self-assessment as it could have been. Although this evaluation data could be collated to allow more systematic analysis, it is used to bring about improvements such as the purchase of a hoist and the provision of additional heating in the workshop. Currently, FES is also using the data to investigate the possibility of extending the teaching period on four days of

the week after feedback from students wanting part-time work instead of formal study on the fifth day.

TEO response

Fairview Educational Services Limited has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

Findings²

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**.

For the last six years the average credits achieved by each student on the course leading to the Certificate in Automotive Servicing were 112 and the average credits achieved for the Automotive Youth Training course were 28. The percentages of students who achieved more than 20 credits on the Automotive Youth Training course were 48 per cent in 2009 and 47 per cent in 2010. The comparative nationwide figure in 2009 was 37 per cent³. The qualification completion rate for the Student Achievement Component funded courses rose from 58 per cent in 2009 to 63 per cent in 2010. Over the same period, the course completion rate fell from 68 per cent to 64 per cent. As these figures are calculated on the basis of a small group of 25 students, they can be affected by the decisions of one student. For example, in the certificate course this year (2011), one student has already left for an apprenticeship and another student has left in order to start training for the police. Both these decisions by the students will have an adverse effect on the completion rate. Nevertheless, these rates of achievement are at the upper end of the rates achieved by comparable organisations used by FES as benchmarks.

The high levels of achievement are reflected in the gains in literacy. For example, over the period from April to August this year, 11 students out of a group of 16 on the Automotive Youth Training course made statistically significant gains in vocabulary according to the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool provided by the Tertiary Education Commission. The 70 per cent of students who stayed on this course in 2010 for more than ten weeks gained over 40 credits per student. The significance of this achievement is clear when it is compared with the fact that 68 per cent of these students started this course with less than 20 credits.

The students and the ex-FES students met by the evaluation team are justifiably proud of their levels of achievement. Such feelings about achievement are shared by the employers spoken to by the team, some of them saying that they preferred to take FES students to those from other training providers. The emphasis on achievement and, in particular, on the importance of literacy and numeracy is based on the philosophy of the managing director, who was instrumental in the establishment of FES.

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

³ Calculated from Ministry of Education: *Education Counts: Retention and Achievement: Achievement in targeted training programmes*.

One of the reasons FES has been able to maintain its level of achievement over the years is its approach to self-assessment. Records have been kept for each course since 1999 showing credits achieved and percentages of students moving into employment and further training. These records are benchmarked against similar providers throughout the country. FES uses the figures to check how well it is doing and in particular that the students, the motor industry, and the wider community are gaining the maximum possible benefit. Such figures revealed, for example, the significance of ensuring students on the youth courses stayed for longer than ten weeks. FES now needs to take this a stage further and analyse why some students leave in the first ten weeks of the course.

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 **Excellent**.

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

FES takes a much wider view of achievement than the purely academic. It takes into account the nature of its students and puts a lot of effort into ensuring that the training results in employment or further training, and that the students gain life skills from which the wider community will benefit. The overall rate for positive labour market outcomes from all FES courses in 2010 was 74 per cent, and this has been the average level for the last three years. Eighty-six per cent of the students on the course leading to the Certificate in Automotive Servicing last year gained employment and 64 per cent of them gained employment in the motor industry. Detailed records were seen by the evaluation team showing the destination of each student on this course since 1999.

These impressive rates are helped by the valuable work experience system in operation. Students spend one day a week at work experience placements and are visited there at least once a fortnight by their tutors. These visits allow the tutors to see how the students are progressing in the work environment and to listen to feedback from the employers which they then pass on to the students. Some of the latter find employment at their work experience placements, and this adds to the value of the experience all students are gaining from exposure to a variety of workplaces.

The tutors emphasised how more mature the students became in their time at FES. The students themselves recognised this and described to the evaluation team how they gained a variety of life skills ranging from time management to knowing how to motivate themselves. They realised that they have become more independent at FES and that their courses have resulted in their acquiring some career goals or clarifying ones they already had. These are important outcomes, particularly to those students who left school without any credits and with a negative experience of the education system.

FES is closely involved with the motor industry because its parent organisation is a major player in the industry and frequently employs the students at the end of their courses and also provides work experience. This close contact means that FES is continuously looking at outcomes and receiving direct feedback on the performance of many of its students in the workplace. This feedback is enhanced by that received from other firms taking students on work experience and by the more general feedback received from a wider group of stakeholders in the motor industry, such as the Motor Industry Training Organisation. FES understands the high value attached to its outcomes and demonstrates this by celebrating those students who have done particularly well, such as the student who gained an apprenticeship as a mechanic after starting at FES with zero credits, and another student who is employed as a vehicle dismantler by a major franchise in Hamilton after also leaving school without any credits.

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 **Excellent**.

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

All the programmes are grounded in the industry as they were developed by an organisation that is part of a major dealership. The facilities and equipment are provided by the dealership, so they are similar to what the students will experience in the workplace. This major stakeholder also has a good understanding of not only the mechanical skills required but also the wider life skills needed to be an effective participant in the workplace.

The programmes are centred on the needs of the individual students. All students are interviewed at the beginning of the course and an initial assessment is made of their needs. They are all given a two-day trial, so they have the opportunity to verify that the course is likely to meet their needs. This is carried further with the use of the Tertiary Education Commission literacy tool to take a more precise measure of needs. All this data feeds into the individual learning plans that are drawn up with the students. These are constantly reviewed and updated so the students can progress at their own pace.

This needs-based approach continues with work experience where every effort is made to match the student with the workplace, taking into account such aspects as the interests of the students and their residential locations. Every effort is also made to build relationships with the students as it is recognised that these are central to a successful learning experience. An example was given of an incident where a student swore at a tutor, who took the time to discover the underlying cause of such behaviour so he could help the student deal with the domestic issue troubling him. The Automotive Youth Training course frequently has two tutors with complementary skills in the room working together so they can help one another deal with students requiring an individual approach.

FES has good systems for checking that it is matching learner and stakeholder needs, and when it sees a gap it takes action. For example, when it realised that the resources were not meeting student needs, FES started developing its own, and the sales of these in New Zealand and Australia have now grown into a profitable activity. When some social needs of the students were not being met, guest speakers were invited to take sessions on such topics as sex issues and the rights of employees. In addition, part of the assistant training manager's role is to meet needs not currently being met, such as the gaps in one tutor's specialist electrical knowledge.

A similar approach is taken to work experience where the tutors check that the matching of the different workplaces with the students is succeeding. If this is not the case, the students are assigned to different firms. FES therefore has a number of ways in which it checks that it is meeting student needs and takes action when required. The system would be more comprehensive if it also took the same approach to identifying each student's objectives and the extent to which they are being achieved.

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 student-centred nature of FES means that emphasis is placed on effective teaching that takes account of student needs. FES recognised from the outset that literacy and numeracy issues would be an integral part of the courses and appointed a foundation skills tutor. This person teaches in a team with another tutor who has the specialist skills required to train mechanics. They complement one another and this was endorsed by the students interviewed by the evaluation team. Literacy is embedded in the Automotive Youth Training course in particular, and in such a subtle way that it was aptly described as "getting literacy in through the back door". Efforts are made to keep the literacy sessions short as the students generally want to concentrate on the specialist skills they need to be a mechanic. The tutor focuses on vocabulary related to the motor industry so that the learning is seen as relevant. This is a very effective teaching model.

The specialist subject matter is communicated through the use of modern technology such as the internet and data show projectors. However, printed material also plays an important part in the form of workbooks produced by FES. These workbooks contain an ideal balance of information related to each section of a unit standard and review questions to check understanding. They also include some literacy resources such as word searches and glossaries of specialist vocabulary. FES has produced over 40 of these workbooks and has sold them to other providers in New Zealand and Australia. The books are also used in high schools, and over 60 emails praising their approach were sighted by the evaluation team. The comments in these emails included, "the packs of units are well

organised and meet not only the school's needs but also those of the students", "they are written in an easy and informative way", and "the revision/quizzes in the workbooks are awesome". The students at FES were similarly impressed with the high quality of the workbook material.

Student evaluations undertaken at the end of each term are used to check the performance of the tutors, the value of the workbooks, and the improvements that could be made. As the information gleaned on the first two aspects was very general, it was not as effective a form of self-assessment as it could have been. The feedback on possible improvements, although more specific and useful, lacked widespread evidence of responses. By contrast, the tutor self-appraisal at the end of the year showed evidence of reflection on performance, progress, professional development, and goal-setting for the next year. Records of regular departmental meetings also showed that FES discusses and takes actions to improve educational performance.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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**.

FES recognises that many of its students face barriers to learning and endeavours to provide comprehensive systems to minimise them. The act of starting a course can be difficult for some of the students, so FES allows them a trial period of two days. Emphasis is placed on building relationships. The tutors encourage regular attendance and provide their cell phone numbers so they can be contacted for assistance. They are proactive in the way they help the students with CVs and bring in speakers to talk about general health and other social issues.

The employment of a foundation skills tutor is appreciated by the students. The caring attitudes of the other tutors enhance her work and allow for the growth of a positive learning atmosphere. Comprehensive learning plans are developed for each student so progress can be easily seen. The tutors enhance this by using a chart on the wall showing the achievement of credits. The students described to the evaluation team the motivation they gained from such a chart. These support mechanisms are strengthened by the verbal progress reports that take place each term between the student, the tutor, and the training manager. Further feedback to the students is provided by the tutors following discussions with the work experience placements.

There are therefore many opportunities used by FES staff to become aware of how and when additional support is required. The close relationships between the students and the tutors lead to a growing awareness of the need to produce additional resource materials for the students to use for most of the unit standards. Many have now been produced and the students told the evaluation team that they found the material to be of value.

A considerable part of the self-assessment is informal. It could be strengthened by using the end-of-term student evaluation form as a way of formalising the process of ensuring that all students are receiving the support they need. FES is currently recognising the possibility of improving its support by using the assistant training manager to establish a form of mentoring. Although this seems to be a positive move, the connection with self-assessment data was not clear.

1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement

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 governance function is undertaken by the directors of FES – and in particular by the managing director – who are also the directors of the parent organisation. The FES training manager reports regularly to the managing director on an informal basis. More formal governance procedures are in the form of a written report by the training manager twice a year along with an annual meeting with the board. The latter provides facilities, equipment, financial resourcing, and ancillary services such as administrative assistance. These facilities and services are well supported by a comprehensive business plan that looks to the future in order to ensure that students' needs will continue to be met. This is taken a step further by an action plan for 2011-2012 specifically targeted at building the students' foundation skills, developing stronger relationships with industry, and preparing for the move to a Youth Guarantee course. FES is investigating the possibility of offering night courses for current apprentices and mentoring those students identified as at risk of dropping out of courses. These measures exemplify the commitment of FES leadership to student achievement now and in the future.

The tutors are well supported in areas such as student attendance and additional specialist knowledge. Their teaching areas are well resourced and there is generous support for staff professional development. The performance management system, entailing self-appraisal followed by the tutor meeting the training manager, works well and departmental meetings are held every four or five weeks. These systems ensure that communication is open, that tutors feel involved, and that every effort is made to keep the staff focussed on student achievement. Management is aware of frustration that some assessments cannot be completed at the most suitable time in the workshops because of a shortage of tools or equipment, but has to balance this against financial reality.

FES uses a range of formal self-assessment methods to provide data and listens carefully to verbal feedback. More could be done to collate the student evaluation data so that it could be analysed more systematically; however, the data is being used to bring about improvements. Examples of these are the purchase of a hoist and the provision of additional heating in the workshop following student feedback. Currently FES is investigating the possibility of extending the teaching period on

four days of the week because of feedback from students who want part-time work instead of formal study on the fifth day. The feedback is also used to check the effectiveness of the workbooks produced by FES for the various unit standards. This feedback is gathered from the high schools using these resources as well as from FES students.

Self-assessment could be extended by using the business plan and associated action plans as a basis for reporting to the directors of FES and other stakeholders and by including the tutors in the appraisal of management. Such steps would encourage more reflection about current performance and future plans which would strengthen the organisation.

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 **Excellent**.

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

2.2 Focus area: Automotive Youth Training

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

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

2.3 Focus area: Certificate in Automotive Servicing

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

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.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.

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 courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses 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 policies and criteria 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-eeer/introduction/>*

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