

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Wai-Tech Limited trading as Learning
Post

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 15 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:	Wai-Tech Limited trading as Learning Post
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 2, 6-8 Pioneer St, Henderson, Auckland
First registered:	November 1999
Courses currently delivered:	<p>The organisation has accreditation to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diploma in Computing (Level 5)• Certificate in Computing (Programming) (Level 4)• Certificate in Computing Essentials (Level 3)• Certificate in Practical Accounting (Level 4)• Diploma in Whānau Ora (Level 5) <p>The organisation is also currently delivering unit standards-based, stand-alone modules for computer and work skills.</p>
Code of Practice signatory?:	No
Number of students:	Currently Learning Post has two students enrolled in the Certificate in Computing Essentials and 21 enrolled in individual modules. There are 20 students currently enrolled in the Diploma in Whānau Ora.
Number of staff:	Six full-time equivalents

Distinctive characteristics: Learning Post was purchased by Te Whānau O Waipereira in 2008. Te Whānau O Waipereira Trust is an Urban Māori Authority that offers social services to whānau encompassing justice, education and health. As well as offering programmes to students outside the organisation, Learning Post has also developed workforce development programmes within the wider organisation. The work of Learning Post has been integrated into the wider 25-year strategy of Te Whānau O Waipereira.

Learning Post works closely with other Te Whānau O Waipereira education services, including Te Kete Aronui (Kip McGrath education centres) and the Incredible Years parenting programme.

Learning Post also runs an assessment service for schools.

Recent significant changes: The organisation piloted the first module of its Whānau Ora diploma with six Te Whānau O Waipereira staff in 2012.

Previous quality assurance history: At the previous NZQA quality assurance visit in 2008, Learning Post did not meet one requirement of the quality assurance standard then in place. The requirement not met related to governance and management, and concerned financial attestations not being submitted in time. This situation was remedied soon after the visit.

The national external moderation results reported to Learning Post in January 2013 found that Learning Post had met the requirements in the systems moderated, and the report noted an improvement on the 2011 results.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review (EER) consisted of the mandatory focus area of governance, management and strategy. The other focus areas chosen were:

- Certificate in Computing Essentials (Level 3)
- Diploma in Whānau Ora (Level 5)

These blended learning programmes were seen to represent the different training that Learning Post is doing within Te Whānau O Waipereira and outside of the organisation.

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 lead evaluator met with the general manager education, the director of strategy and planning, two programme managers and the quality and human resources manager prior to scoping for the evaluation. Following that visit, the organisation submitted a formal self-assessment summary.

The evaluation team of two and an NZQA-appointed observer visited the Auckland site over two days. Interviews were conducted with the senior management team, practice leaders, a National Urban Māori Authority representative and tutors and students from both focus area programmes. A range of documentation was reviewed, including managers' reports, course evaluations, meeting minutes and student files.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Learning Post**.

In both programme focus areas, learners are achieving knowledge and skills that are of value to them in their lives and at work. Examples included learners gaining essential computing skills that enhance their capability to work, and parents learning skills and knowledge that enable them to better support their children. Across all the unit standards offered in 2012, all but one student achieved their modules and this represents a dramatic improvement on previous years, from a low course completion rate of 42 per cent in 2009 to 69 per cent for students who enrolled in 2010. This lift in the achievement rate can be attributed to a reconfiguration of the programme course material and delivery. For example, programmes were being delivered solely by distance; now there is face-to-face instruction blended with online learning, and course materials have been made more accessible to learners with low literacy.

Learning Post has been through a period of change with a dramatic drop in numbers due to the withdrawal of Tertiary Education Commission funding. This change has resulted in a systematic review of all the courses offered. Coinciding with this review has been the development of the Whānau Ora diploma. There has also been a refocus of activity to the workforce development of staff within Te Whānau O Waipereira. Across these different activities is a common cycle of needs analysis, course design, delivery and review. The piloting of the first module of the Whānau Ora programme on a small number of students (Te Whānau O Waipereira staff) has allowed the programme time to iron out any issues before greater numbers enrol. Workforce development targets specific skills gaps identified by staff and managers, and evaluations show great benefit in training to ongoing work.

Outcomes monitored across all programmes include improvements in learners' specialist work skills including IT and presentation skills, case notes writing and engagement with clients. Harder-to-measure outcomes are being monitored through learners' self-assessments across time, and these show increases in learner self-confidence and time and stress management.

There was good evidence of quality in the processes that support teaching and learning, and early achievement and outcomes data shows value for learners and other stakeholders. These factors lead the evaluation team to be confident in Learning Post's educational performance.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Learning Post**.

Learning Post was able to demonstrate that it had clear processes for review and improvement. The evaluation team saw an in-depth analysis of problems with the organisation's distance learning programme, informed by an analysis of a range of data including feedback from staff, students and other stakeholders. The improvement plan that emerged from this review has been steadily implemented. Achievement and outcomes and feedback from learners currently enrolled are being regularly monitored.

As it is a new programme, the Whānau Ora diploma is undergoing continuous review and improvements, with an ongoing improvement plan guiding activity. Learners, their managers and external stakeholders, including the district health boards and the National Urban Māori Authority, are included in ongoing consultation through the advisory board.

Learning Post has strong processes and systems in place to collect relevant data and to use this to inform organisation-wide and programme developments. An online survey tool is regularly used, and this feedback, along with other data, is brought to team and management meetings and monthly reports to the board.

The current delivery of the modules and certificate programmes is the area where the organisation was able to most clearly demonstrate improvements. The evaluation team noted an improved moderation record, enhanced resources to engage learners and better support systems for learners that together have improved achievement.

As part of the development of a new 25-year strategy, Te Whānau O Waipereira is developing an outcomes framework and an IT tool that will help bring together data from across the wider organisation. The evaluation team expects that an outcomes framework will focus the education team on key outcomes that need to be monitored and will result in more targeted self-assessment activity.

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**.

Achievement is monitored at Learning Post through completion of unit standards and modules and through self-assessment of generic skills, a Mataora (self-assessment) profile with technical competencies mapped against a competency framework. For example, certificate students self-assess on their achievement of generic skills such as time and stress management and self-confidence. Whānau Ora students assess their capability against the Mataora profile, which outlines traditional Māori principles and values that enhance engagement with whānau, and which includes technical competencies that support them in their current roles working to support the well-being of whānau. These self-assessments reflect the achievement of Mataora skills and a deeper understanding of the different core competencies and what they encompass.

All learners who completed the first module of the Diploma in Whānau Ora were successful and achieved their unit standards, and strong moderation processes ensure the validity of these results. From their first module, learners reported achieving a greater understanding of te reo Māori and kawa and tikaanga, and a greater understanding of whakapapa and whanaungatanga. This understanding supported their work with clients. Also noted were improvements in research skills and writing, supported in part by the student's engagement with a key assessed course component, a reflective journal.

For the learners who undertake the modules that make up the certificate programme, all but one learner achieved successfully. The one learner that did not achieve elected to not be assessed. Learners undertaking these modules report achieving improved knowledge and IT skills useful to work and an increase in self-confidence and time-management.

Achievement of unit standards is systematically tracked through the organisation's database. This data can be used to report aggregated achievement data. However, the number of learners studying in the two programme areas is small, and greater numbers achieving well over time are required to convince the evaluation team that the present good achievement will improve.

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 **Adequate**.

There is good evidence of valued outcomes collected by Learning Post through formal student evaluations and feedback collated from learners, managers and practice leaders. These outcomes were corroborated by the evaluation team's interviews with learners. The outcomes are linked to the achievements noted above and include shifts in self-confidence, work skills and knowledge that enable people to work more effectively in their current roles. Examples include improvements in the way learners are equipped to work with clients in the Whānau Ora service, efficiencies in the way staff work following IT skills training, and the impact on children and wider whānau from parents undertaking study.

There is good value in the development of the Whānau Ora diploma which has been developed to support workers already in the field, to build their knowledge and skills and gain a qualification that supports what they have learned through their work with whānau. The diploma fills a gap in the social services sector, providing training for workers across the platforms of health, education, welfare and justice.

While the organisation has good mechanisms for identifying key stakeholders, feedback from external stakeholders, particularly employers, could be more systematically collected.

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 different programmes and activities that have been developed by Learning Post are tailored well to match the needs of learners, both external to the wider organisation and internally. The packaging of the certificate programmes into modules aims to make them more responsive to learners', and some employers', needs. These modules allow learners to study in short blocks and target skills gaps, rather than taking on a whole qualification. The blended learning delivery enables students to work from home at their own pace. A mobile classroom, equipped with laptops and internet, allows the tutors to visit students and provide them with one-to-one support when required.

Another example of Learning Post delivering training that has been well tailored to match needs is in the area of workforce development. This has been delivered in

the past year in response to skills gaps identified by managers and practice leaders. The evaluation team saw good evidence that the training was tailored specifically to the services offered by Te Whānau O Waipereira and to learners' needs. One example included a practice leader identifying that the case notes written by her team were not of a standard expected in the social practice field. A training programme was developed that targeted case note writing skills and a difference was noted immediately following the training, with case notes being more professional and less emotional. Other examples include training in using spreadsheet and email programmes. All the workforce development programmes are evaluated, and the responses viewed by the evaluation team indicate a high level of satisfaction with the training, a finding corroborated by interviews and meeting minutes. This type of workforce development has been an integral part of the strategy of Te Whānau O Waipereira to equip their kaimahi (workforce) with core competency skill sets.

The Whānau Ora diploma has been widely consulted and developed in response to a gap in training identified at senior leadership level. While the Whānau Ora strategy has been implemented across the country, there is an identified need to provide a training pathway for Whānau Ora practitioners. The diploma has been designed to enable workers unfamiliar with formal study to enter into a learning pathway while they are in work. It is also aimed at qualified staff interested in the application of tikanga, social service and hauora content within a Whānau Ora provider. This is enabled through careful needs assessment at the beginning of the programme, a blended model of delivery and the practical application of in-work experience to the content and assessment built into the programme. The programme is designed to ensure that ākonga (learners) are able to share their areas of expertise and learn from one another. The programme includes delivery and reflection sessions offered at noho marae (marae stay) each semester. Early indications are that this programme is matching the needs of learners well. For example, this year has seen the provision of scholarships by district health boards and the National Urban Māori Authority.

While the processes and practices to understand and match needs are excellent, as noted above, it is too soon to draw this conclusion about the application of the Whānau Ora programme as a whole. It is clear that the modules are matching the needs of a small number of learners and it is expected that this number will grow. However, Learning Post is still in a development phase with these programmes.

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**.

Learning Post has had a strong focus on the professional development of its teaching staff. For example, in the past year staff have attended a number of

workshops and training on a range of aspects of teaching, including moderation and working with Māori learners. Understanding of moderation practice and processes has been greatly enhanced and consequently there has been a noticeable improvement in external moderation results. Another noticeable improvement has been in the module workbooks that have been completely revised to be more accessible for learners with low literacy. The workbooks also allow multiple attempts to build skills before the assessment. The feedback from learners indicates that the workbooks are now easy to follow and use.

The tutors are all experienced and have good knowledge and understanding of what they teach. The Whānau Ora diploma teaching team have come to the new programme with strong education backgrounds. Performance reviews are done systematically and a range of information – including their own self-assessment, learner evaluations and other feedback and moderation and assessment results – feed into the reviews.

Learning Post has regular scheduled programme review meetings where processes and practices, feedback and outcomes are considered and improvements monitored. The newness of the programmes being taught and the small numbers of learners currently enrolled in the modules and certificate programmes means that Learning Post has not yet had time to demonstrate continued excellence in teaching.

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**.

Across the training it delivers, Learning Post works through a philosophy of whanaungatanga, ensuring that learners are welcomed into the programme and given the opportunity to share who they are and where they are from. In keeping with the Whānau Ora model, learners are viewed holistically and, with the links with Te Whānau O Waipereira, can be offered a wide range of support to address multiple needs to ensure achievement.

Alongside a formal induction process there are systematic checks on literacy needs, and this is being done most effectively in the diploma programme. While the evaluation team heard that the literacy skills of learners improved during their time studying, data on this is not being systematically collected. However, it is clear that learners that may struggle with the materials are identified early and given extra support to achieve. Learning plans are developed with learners whereby they negotiate goals and milestones with the tutors, and these are recorded in the system. The student management tool is used to track progress and allows pastoral care notes to be recorded. The system then triggers alerts to tutors to ensure learners are staying on track with their milestones.

It is clear that the programmes now being offered by Learning Post are learner-centred and learners are given excellent support and guidance to enable them to achieve their goals. This includes, where necessary, home visits and one-to-one 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**.

There is good evidence that Te Whānau O Waipereira has supported Learning Post through complex change. Resources have been provided to redevelop the certificate programmes into modules, to develop the Whānau Ora diploma and to shift the focus to include workforce development. Learning Post and the other educational services of Te Whānau O Waipereira are now an integrated service component and this is reflected in senior management meetings, reports to the board and the appointment of a general manager for education. Board members take a proactive interest in Learning Post, promote the diploma, follow progress with weekly updates and recommendations and get feedback from external contacts. Learning Post is also a key component in the 25-year strategic plan of Te Whānau O Waipereira, developing its own education strategy to sit underneath the wider plan, and a future-proofing strategy that is set for the next five years.

The big changes that Learning Post has been through have been unsettling for staff and this was reflected in a staff survey conducted early in 2012. Encouragingly, a more recent Learning Post staff survey shows an improvement, with staff having much greater clarity about their roles and feeling valued and listened to by management. Professional development plans are in place for tutors, and a range of information is used to inform these, including self-assessments against the Mataora profile, based on Te Kauhau Ora (a Code of Conduct that outlines core competencies), technical competencies that are specific to staff roles, and the Whare Tapawha model of health and well-being. This self-assessment framework has been implemented for all staff across the organisation, including the senior management team.

As part of the new 25-year strategy, Te Whānau O Waipereira has been working on developing an outcomes framework that will sit alongside Whānau Tahī, a system to ensure that the right data is being collected so that performance towards short, medium and long-term outcomes can be continuously monitored across the different services offered. Learning Post will benefit from the development of this framework as it will help focus self-assessment activity. While a wide range of data is currently being collected, an outcomes framework will help focus the analysis and ensure that outcomes for whānau are being well tracked and monitored. In the meantime there is wide-ranging data to show that in the new programme, and the

newly formatted programmes, the management team is working to ensure learners achieve well and that these achievements are leading to valued outcomes for not only the learners but also their managers, employers and whānau.

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 Computing Essentials (Level 3)

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: Diploma in Whānau Ora (Level 5)

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

NZQA recommends that Learning Post:

- Strengthen links with external employers to ensure valued outcomes and needs are systematically captured.
- Continue to support the development of the outcomes framework and ensure that the self-assessment framework is guided by this.

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/>

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