



External Evaluation and Review Report

Canterbury Regional Council

Date of report: 13 January 2026

About Canterbury Regional Council

Canterbury Regional Council trading as Emergency Management Training Centre (EMTC) is a very small private training establishment providing specialised training to the civil defence emergency management sector. The organisation's key purpose is to maintain a pool of staff and volunteers with the skills and knowledge needed to support civil defence personnel during an emergency.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment
Location:	Justice & Emergency Services Precinct, 40 Lichfield Street, Christchurch
Eligible to enrol international students:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 17 EFTS (equivalent full-time students) in 2024, and 557 individual course enrolments
Number of staff:	Two full-time staff; 15 part-time staff including three office staff and 12 contracted trainers from the Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.
TEO profile:	<u>Canterbury Regional Council trading as: Emergency Management Training Centre</u> Emergency Management Training Centre (EMTC) is owned by Canterbury Regional Council as the administering authority for the Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEM). The Canterbury CDEM Group comprises local and regional government and other key stakeholders in the Canterbury region. The EMTC leadership team and staff hold dual roles as CDEM personnel and educators or support staff. EMTC has undergone significant management and staffing changes during the EER period, with a new group manager (2023) and other key roles filled in late 2024 and early 2025. The training context is complex and is currently affected by significant legislative

reform and reviews of qualifications and standards. Planning is underway to redevelop the training courses to align with new national standards and to enhance flexibility and student engagement.

Last EER outcome: In 2021, NZQA was Highly Confident in the educational performance and Highly Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Canterbury Regional Council.

Scope of evaluation:

- Emergency Preparedness Course –Training Scheme [ID: 121845-2]
- General Rescue and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) – unit standards: 18516; 20473; 24500 assessed under Consent to Assess.

MoE number: 7355

NZQA reference: C62832

Dates of EER visit: 23-25 September 2025

Summary of results

EMTC training has continued to deliver valued outcomes for CDEM partners during the evaluation period, with students completing short courses that provide them with the skills and knowledge required for deployment in emergencies.

Confident in educational performance

- Students achieve unit standards and gain relevant skills applicable to their roles in civil defence and emergency management. EMTC training delivers valued outcomes for CDEM agencies.
- Programme design and delivery is aligned to current national frameworks and accreditation requirements. EMTC plans to continue to redesign and update courses to align with recently approved skill standards, improve the currency and relevance of training, and better meet the needs of students.
- Governance and management are strategic and responsive, interlinked with regional and national agencies, providing clear direction and effective leadership.
- Compliance accountabilities are currently well managed, with robust systems and proactive review having led to improvement and the resolution of recent quality assurance and compliance issues.
- Self-assessment is embedded and underpinned by an effective evaluative framework. EMTC is a highly reflective organisation, focused on continuous improvement and supported by strong stakeholder relationships and engagement.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students at EMTC consistently achieve the intended outcomes of their training. Most students complete short courses and unit standards that contribute to their accreditation for deployment in civil defence roles. Many students are volunteers and complete the training at different rates depending on their circumstances. The General Rescue and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) courses are taught and assessed over consecutive weekends and have high completion rates. Emergency Preparedness (EMPREP) students attend evening classes over consecutive weeks, and often take longer to complete.</p> <p>EMTC tracks and monitors attendance and has a clear understanding of student progress. Trainers and regional emergency managers report direct evidence of skill application by graduates during real-world deployments and exercises. Observations during training scenarios and civil defence exercises confirm that students demonstrate the required skills and knowledge. Trainers have high expectations for student success, while the students bring strong motivation and purpose to their training.</p> <p>Self-assessment includes regular review of achievement data and trainer feedback. The upcoming review of EMPREP will consider achievement patterns to inform delivery mode redesign and scheduling, with the intention of improving timely completion rates. There is an opportunity to better utilise analysis of achievement data to inform programme design and enhance student engagement.</p>

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

Conclusion:	Students at EMTC achieve well, with high completion rates and clear evidence of skill application in emergency response contexts. Strengthened analysis and use of achievement data in programme review will assist with the redesign of delivery modes and potentially improve achievement outcomes for EMPREP.
-------------	--

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>EMTC training contributes to the accreditation of volunteers for deployment in civil defence roles. Stakeholders report high levels of confidence in EMTC-trained volunteers, with outcomes tested in practice through CDEM deployment and ongoing training exercises.</p> <p>EMTC maintains a long-standing relationship with students and graduates, many of whom progress to volunteer roles or paid employment in emergency management. While formal tracking of graduate destinations is currently limited, staff have a clear knowledge of student progression and the impact of training through involvement with the sector, communities and partner organisations.</p> <p>EMTC has recently introduced a post-programme survey tool to gather feedback on the application of learning and the impact of EMTC courses within the ongoing development of CDEM personnel. Early responses are positive, with students reporting increased confidence and readiness to contribute. A key finding from the survey was students' desire for opportunities to deploy and test the skills learned, reflecting the high motivation and commitment of the student cohort.</p> <p>EMTC produces an EMTC in Action report which provides compelling evidence of graduate impact. Recently introduced evaluation tools will add to existing stakeholder surveys to enhance EMTC's comprehensive understanding of the value of its training.</p>
Conclusion:	EMTC delivers outcomes that are highly valued by students, employers and emergency management stakeholders. Graduates apply their skills in real-world

	contexts, contributing to community resilience and sector capability. The organisation uses multiple mechanisms to understand outcomes and is well positioned to strengthen this through enhanced tracking and storytelling.
--	--

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>EMTC's programme design is closely aligned with the needs of the emergency management sector, particularly in Canterbury. Integration within regional and national CDEM ensures that training remains relevant and responsive and aligned with the expectations of the National Emergency Management Agency. EMTC courses contribute to the ongoing training and development of emergency management personnel. The training offer is seen as essential, particularly in regions with limited emergency management staffing and an apparent uptick in severe weather events.</p> <p>Training is practical and scenario-based, with strong emphasis on the development of teamwork, communication and soft skills. Students work in small groups to simulate deployment conditions, and resources such as a 'rubble pile' and flood pumps are used to enhance realism. Assessment is timely and integrated into the learning experience.</p> <p>Trainers are experienced emergency management practitioners who often hold paid roles in the sector. They bring current experience and relevant practical skills gained on deployment into their learning environments. A range of tools enable regular reflection and review to support continuous improvement of delivery. Feedback loops with stakeholders, including advisory groups and post-programme surveys, inform programme development.</p> <p>While programme review is effective, and delivery is generally responsive to student and stakeholder needs, some courses are considered dated and in need of redesign and updating. Ongoing programme review for</p>

	<p>EMPREP has identified several areas for improvement, including changes to scheduling and better use of flexible learning technologies such as pre-learning videos and online modules.</p> <p>EMTC is planning to redesign the current training scheme and transition to a micro-credential, aligned with new skill standards and national accreditation requirements. Currency of content, including inaccurate unit standards, has been a matter of concern for some students during the EER period.</p> <p>Self-assessment processes are inclusive and include trainer feedback, stakeholder input and student surveys. Ongoing programme review processes could be strengthened to support transparency and assurance.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Programme design and delivery at EMTC are generally responsive and well aligned with sector needs. Course content and delivery require review and updating, and this is planned. Trainers are experienced and committed, and students benefit from practical, scenario-based learning. Strengthening documentation and expanding the use of flexible learning technologies will enhance programme quality and student engagement.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Student support at EMTC is strong and fit for purpose in the context of short course delivery, with a focus on wellbeing, inclusion and responsiveness. Trainers demonstrate high levels of awareness of diverse student needs and adapt their teaching accordingly. Emotional and physical safety are prioritised, particularly given the nature of emergency management training and the potential for students to be exposed to high-risk and distressing scenarios. Health and safety aspects of the training are well managed in line with Environment Canterbury's policy and practice.</p> <p>The Code of Practice is actively socialised with trainers and students. A trainer handbook supports staff in</p>

	<p>understanding their responsibilities, and the Code self-review has been completed with an action plan in place. While some due dates have elapsed, the action plan is actively managed and linked to broader strategic goals, including enhancing Māori participation.</p> <p>Trainers use storytelling and lived experience to engage the students and build confidence. Students feel respected and supported and maintain open and ongoing relationships with EMTC staff during and after their courses through CDEM exercises, deployment and additional training.</p> <p>Support systems include onboarding processes, needs assessment and pastoral care. Trainers are trained in psychosocial basics and respond appropriately to signs of distress. The EMPREP programme includes modules on cultural communication and wellbeing, reinforcing EMTC's commitment to inclusive practice.</p> <p>Students were generally confident to raise issues or concerns with trainers and have the opportunity to provide feedback through student evaluations. The recently implemented evaluation framework will support a stronger student voice and the ability to aggregate and review student feedback trends to provide deeper insights into how effectively students are supported in their learning environments.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>EMTC provides effective and inclusive support for the students. Trainers are responsive and committed to student wellbeing and safety. Strengthening analysis of student feedback will enhance understanding and support continuous improvement.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Governance at EMTC is complex and multilayered², with significant regional and national planning and reporting requirements that include EMTC responsibilities and deliverables. Management of EMTC is strategic, responsive, informed by sector needs and well aligned with CDEM objectives for the region and for New Zealand. Business planning is well developed and closely monitored through established reporting structures.</p> <p>Significant staff changes had an impact on EMTC operations during 2021-24. The group manager resigned in 2021, with a new permanent group manager recruited in 2023. A quality assurance co-ordinator was appointed in 2024 to fill a role that had been being vacant for two years.</p> <p>A recent restructure has strengthened operational capacity and included two additional full-time staff. These changes reflect a thoughtful response to previous resourcing challenges and provide EMTC with the skills and resourcing for effective PTE management. This includes review of current training, stronger oversight of compliance and quality assurance, and future growth.</p> <p>Staff are well supported through professional development, peer mentoring and regular team meetings. Tutors are encouraged to reflect on their practice and contribute to programme development. Resources are sufficient to support delivery, and systems are in place to monitor performance.</p> <p>The organisation demonstrates a realistic and reflective approach to self-assessment, with a focus on continuous improvement. Data is used to inform decision-making, and self-assessment is embedded in business-as-usual processes. EMTC has implemented a blended evaluation plan and is developing tools to more effectively measure</p>

² Governance bodies are: CDEM joint committee; CDEM co-ordinating executive group.

	impact and inform improvement. Stakeholder surveys and advisory groups provide feedback that is used to refine programmes and operations.
Conclusion:	Governance and management at EMTC are strategic, inclusive and focused on the mission: to provide a centre of excellence in emergency management training. The organisation is well led and resourced, with strong stakeholder engagement and a commitment to continuous improvement.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>EMTC has systems in place to manage its compliance accountabilities effectively. Policies and procedures are documented and regularly reviewed, and staff are aware of their responsibilities. The recent restructure has clarified roles and strengthened oversight, with the quality assurance coordinator and acting manager leading compliance activities.</p> <p>Health and safety processes are robust, with clear protocols for training environments, equipment use and incident reporting. Trainers are proactive in managing risks and ensuring student safety, particularly in practical scenarios such as the rubble pile and flood response exercises.</p> <p>The Code of Practice is well understood and actively implemented. The self-review has been completed, and the action plan is being progressed through regular management meetings. Compliance with Tertiary Education Commission funding³ requirements, including student eligibility and reporting, is well managed.</p> <p>NZQA external moderation samples were not submitted for 2024 due to issues with vacant staff roles. The resulting action plan shows significant activity to improve moderation</p>

³ Tertiary Education Funding is managed by the National Emergency Management Agency.

	<p>processes. Trainers confirmed the improvements to their assessment practice and processes resulting from these changes. The redesign of courses provides further opportunities to review and enhance assessment and moderation practice in line with skill standards evidence requirements.</p> <p>Reporting to the National Emergency Management Agency and CDEM is regular and appropriate. External reviews, such as the three-yearly New Zealand Response Teams accreditation cycle⁴ contribute additional assurance and have led to improvements in training delivery.</p> <p>Self-assessment includes reflection on compliance processes and identification of areas for improvement. Planned enhancements include better documentation, improved data systems and more structured review cycles.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>EMTC manages its compliance accountabilities effectively and proactively. Systems are in place to monitor obligations, respond to issues, and implement improvements. The organisation demonstrates a strong commitment to quality and continuous improvement.</p>

⁴ <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/documents/NZRT/1.-NZRT-Capability-Framework-v3.pdf>

Focus areas

2.1 Emergency Preparedness – Training Scheme ID: 121845-2

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students gain relevant skills and knowledge to support their roles in CDEM.</p> <p>The current approach to delivery has seen partial completion of the programme, with some students not finishing all modules. The skills and knowledge achieved on the course are of high value to students and stakeholders. EMTC is currently reviewing the programme to better meet student and stakeholder needs. Skill standards have recently been approved, which means that a micro-credential can now be developed.</p> <p>Some issues relating to assessment and moderation processes have now been addressed.</p>

2.2 General Rescue and USAR Unit standards: 18516; 20473; 24500 (Consent to Assess)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Almost all students complete this short course and gain highly valued skills to support their work as volunteers in CDEM. The existing unit standards have been recently reviewed, with skill standards created to align with sector requirements. EMTC now needs to update its courses to align with the new standards.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Canterbury Regional Council trading as Emergency Management Training Centre:

- Review and redesign training materials and delivery approaches to ensure they:
 - align with new sector requirements
 - provide engaging learning environments that meet student demands for relevance to the CDEM context, and offer more flexible delivery options.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Emergency Preparedness (Training Scheme)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Full completion	-	2	19	25	11	57
Partial completion	10	178	36	29	18	271
Still to complete	-	1	-	-	14	15
Withdrawn	-	18	9	5	8	40
Total	10	199	64	59	51	383

Table 2. General Rescue and USAR

	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
18516					
Completed course successfully	-	33	26	-	59
Did not complete course	-	1	-	-	-1
Early withdrawal	-	9	4	4	17
Still to complete course	-	1	-	20	21
	-	44	30	24	98
20473					
Completed course successfully	-	35	26	-	61
Did not complete course	-	1	-	-	1
Early withdrawal	-	8	4	4	16
Still to complete course	-	-	-	20	20
	-	44	30	24	98
24500					
Completed course successfully	-	33	26	-	59
Did not complete course	-	1	-	-	1
Early withdrawal	-	9	4	4	17
Still to complete course	-	1	-	20	21
	-	44	30	24	98
RES201					
Completed course successfully	11	-	-	-	11
Early withdrawal	3	-	-	-	3
	14	-	-	-	14

Achievement data provided by EMTC.

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud⁵*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

⁵ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

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

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

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz