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# Report of External Evaluation and Review

## Mainland Driving School Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 29 September 2016

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*Final Report*

# 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:	Mainland Driving School Limited (MDSL)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	July 2001
Location:	2/55 Epsom Road, Sockburn, Christchurch
Delivery sites:	Above and at employer worksites as required
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate in Commercial Driving Options (Level 3)</li><li>• Forklift Training</li></ul>
Number of students:	All domestic: approximately 2,200 trainees attending mostly short courses. New Zealand European 66 per cent; Māori 8.4 per cent; Pasifika 3.3 per cent; Asian 10.3 per cent; Indian 6.5 per cent; other 4.7 per cent
Number of staff:	Five full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	Domains in: Humanities/English/Sciences/Maths/Service Sector/Commercial Road Transport. Certificate in Commercial Driving Options (Level 3); Forklift Training
Distinctive characteristics:	MDSL engages in commercial transport licensing training and short courses of up to three months for students directed by Work and Income New Zealand to receive training in commercial driving skills to gain employment. Work and Income is a

department of the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

Recent significant changes:	Change of site in Christchurch, from Middleton to Sockburn. However, there have been no significant changes in provision, staff or student numbers since the last external evaluation and review (EER).
Previous quality assurance history:	At the last EER in 2012, MDSL was found to be Highly Confident in both educational performance and capability in self-assessment.
Other:	MDSL provides training for the Canterbury rebuild, through a memorandum of understanding with Christchurch Polytechnic and Institute of Technology (CPIT), now called Ara Institute of Canterbury. While this training arrangement still occurs, it has reduced in volume since the last EER, due to changed needs in the Canterbury region.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus areas selected were the mandatory focus area of governance, management and strategy, and the MSD and Ara programmes.

The MSD programme is four weeks in duration, and during that time trainees can obtain their Class 2 Licence, Dangerous Goods, Forklift and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH). In the eight weeks following the programme, MDSL works with the client to try to obtain employment for them. This is achieved by working with employment agencies and approaching companies that are advertising for drivers. Employers also sometimes contact MDSL when they have a vacancy.

The ARA programme is 28 weeks in duration. For the first four weeks, trainees attend 10 night classes (of three hours in duration) and then once a week after that. All the trainees are in employment and complete work-based activities and assignments as part of the course. A trainer will also visit them on site periodically to observe and train the student in their work environment. MDSL works under Ara accreditation. Ara reports the trainees' credits to NZQA and uses MDSL trainers and resources. The memorandum of understanding outlines the details of the arrangement. (MDSL has had this contract, with variations to delivery patterns, since 2002.) On completion, trainees obtain the National Certificate in Goods Service (Level 3) (56 credits).

### 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.*

A team of two evaluators conducted the evaluation over two days at the Christchurch site. The evaluators met with the owners, managing directors, trainers, trainees and administration staff, including the receptionist and Ara course co-ordinator. The evaluators contacted a variety of stakeholders including Work and Income and Competenz. They also sighted a range of documentation including the MDSL self-assessment, MSD outcomes data and records of trainees' work placements.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Mainland Driving School Limited** for the following reasons:

- Trainees learn how to drive commercial vehicles that have New Zealand Transport Authority licensing requirements. The licences are endorsed to cover trucks, articulated vehicles, passenger vehicles, diggers, loaders, forklifts and dangerous goods vehicles. These licences assist trainees to maintain employment (as part of mandated refresher training) or gain related employment.
- Trainees' administrative needs are well met by the dedicated administration staff who are often the first point of contact for trainees. Experienced trainers with a good understanding of industry requirements ensure that the training is focused, useful, engaging and related to actual workplace contexts. Individual support is offered to assist trainees with learning difficulties, ensuring most trainees are successful. Trainees reported that the training received made them feel more competent and confident in their jobs.
- While most MSD trainees complete their course, the numbers of trainees referred from MSD fell over the years 2013-2016. Finding suitable employment for these trainees has become increasingly difficult as job opportunities in Canterbury decrease. Changes to MSD funding criteria and work placement requirements have also made meeting funder outcomes and finding employment for trainees more difficult.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Mainland Driving School Limited** for the following reasons:

- The directors and owners are knowledgeable about the industry through their extensive experience, professional affiliations and involvement in the day-to-day running of their business. This has led to developing productive associations with local employers and other organisations, including providing public courses. The two owners are committed to increasing safety, workplace expertise and employment opportunities across the sector.
- MDSL has played an important role in the Canterbury rebuild and has shown itself to be responsive to individual and industry needs over many years, as shown by the ongoing Ara and MSD contracts. Ongoing review of these contracts has enabled MDSL to modify delivery and maintain relevance to funders, trainees and potential employers. Improvements and changes in response to stakeholder feedback include updating the MDSL website,

providing uniforms and laptops for staff, installing a new phone system and updating resources for trainees.

- The relationship with MSD and the limitations of the contracted outcomes were in the process of being renegotiated at the time of the EER. The outcome of these discussions may determine whether MDSL continues to accept funding from MSD. Fortunately, MDSL is not financially dependent on either the MSD or Ara contracts.
- While MDSL was able to furnish trainee achievement data, it was not analysed over time or across cohorts as part of a coherent system of ongoing self-assessment and review.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 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 **Adequate**.

Trainees learn how to drive commercial vehicles that have New Zealand Transport Authority licensing requirements. The licences are endorsed to cover trucks, articulated vehicles, passenger vehicles, diggers, loaders, forklifts and dangerous goods vehicles. Trainees reported that the training received made them feel more competent and confident in their jobs.

MSD provides clients to MDSL who are long-term unemployed, require upskilling to be able to re-enter the workplace, or who have lost their licences.

**Table 1. MSD trainee course completions and work outcomes 2013-2016**

Years	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Started course	120 trainees	61 trainees	34 trainees
Completed course	120 trainees	61 trainees	33 trainees
Course completion	100%	100%	97%
Employed	68 trainees	23 trainees	15 trainees
Not employed	52 trainees	38 trainees	19 trainees
Employed %	57%	38%	45%
MSD employment target	65%	65%	65%

While course completions over the years 2013-2016 have been very positive, transition to work has not met the MSD employment target over these years. While some factors affecting employment are outside of MDSL's control, such as the slowdown of the Canterbury rebuild, trainee referrals have also decreased significantly over this time. The relationship with MSD and the limitations of the contracted outcomes were in the process of being renegotiated at the time of the EER. The outcome of these discussions may determine whether MDSL continues to accept funding from MSD. Fortunately, MDSL is not financially dependent on either the MSD or Ara contracts.

The Ara programme course completions for 2014 and 2015 were 72 per cent in 2014, with seven out of 25 trainees not completing, and 62.5 per cent in 2015, with

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

six out of 16 trainees not completing. There are no specific targets for this contract. However, concern about retention and completion rates has been discussed and Ara has employed a new staff member (in 2016) who will have a focus on retention in this programme. There is evidence that retention is due to some trainees losing interest in the whole qualification once they have achieved the driving licences they need. While MDSL was able to furnish trainee achievement data, it was not analysed over time or across cohorts as part of a coherent system of ongoing self-assessment and review.

## 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**.

Trainees mostly complete courses and gain qualifications. MSD trainees are assisted to gain workplace experience which contributes to their employability, while Ara trainees extend their scope of expertise in their workplaces through increased licence endorsements. Trainees reported that the training received made them feel more competent and confident in their jobs.

As a result of the eight-week MSD measure for employment, MDSL is currently reviewing this contract as the training and resourcing required to make trainees 'work-ready' is often much longer. If the contract lapses, potential trainees will be disadvantaged as MDSL has shown itself to be highly effective with this group of learners and genuinely motivated to 'take as long as it needs' to make a difference to people who have been long-term unemployed. The Ara contract person visits MDSL every two months, and they exchange emails and phone conversations fortnightly.

There may be further training opportunities for MDSL with the amalgamation of CPIT and Aoraki polytechnic, with Ara now having to meet the training needs of a wider geographical area. MDSL is well placed to pick up training provision previously delivered at Aoraki polytechnic.

## 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**.

Generic driver training can be provided on-site at workplaces, enabling less disruption to production and allowing trainees to apply skills in context. Stakeholder satisfaction with the trainers and the training provided is very high.

MSD referrals are people at risk of long-term unemployment and people who may have lost their driver's licence. MDSL works with these trainees individually to maximise their training outcomes. This includes reducing barriers to learning by supporting them with 'out of training issues' that affect their ability to learn, such as taking them to a doctor or helping with accommodation.

MSD acknowledged that while MDSL may not meet contracted targets, such as the eight-week criteria for finding employment, many more trainees got jobs in the longer term. MSD also acknowledged that the trainees' experience at MDSL was pivotal to this job success as MDSL provided the skills, encouragement, work-readiness and contacts required to gain work in the industry. The opportunity to more accurately reflect this 'added value' would be beneficial to MDSL and MSD as MDSL considers the ongoing viability of this contract.

#### 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 **Excellent**.

Experienced trainers with a good understanding of industry requirements ensure that the training is focused, useful, engaging and related to actual workplace contexts. Individual support is offered, for example a reader/writer, to assist trainees with learning difficulties, ensuring most trainees are successful. Some trainee materials and assessments are prescribed. Trainers work hard to 'interpret' the language and concepts in the prescribed workbooks to ensure trainees understand requirements. Trainees appreciated the individual attention, small classes (maximum of 10), the use of humour and anecdotes from trainers' experience, and the understanding shown by trainers of the different ways trainees learn. The mix of theoretical learning and practical application is useful to maximise training effectiveness.

Internal moderation is conducted each month through a random selection of trainees' assessments. The moderator completes a moderation report and discusses this with the trainer, and any issues are dealt with promptly. The general manager reviews these moderation reports each month. External moderation by the Motor Industry Training Organisation, Competenz and Connexis indicates that MDSL is meeting requirements regarding the quality of the training materials and that the assessor judgements are valid.

The three part-time trainers are up to date with trainer requirements and showed a good understanding of the principles of effective teaching, including seeking regular feedback from trainees, summarising important concepts, and monitoring trainee interest levels. Trainee evaluations are used to make improvements to programmes, such as providing laptops for use by trainees to practise theory tests.

Trainers also regularly observe each other training as a way to refresh their own training practice.

### 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**.

Guidance and support is appropriate for the training context. Screening of potential trainees, for example MSD clients, is sensitive and appropriate and designed to maximise employment potential. Prior to acceptance, MSD clients referred to MDSL are screened for issues that may affect employability, such as health issues and criminal records. However, MDSL does not refuse people with other difficulties as they are committed to increasing opportunities for people to find work. Classes are small and there is one-to-one support for all trainees.

Trainers work after class to assist trainees taking longer to understand concepts, and trainees can join another class later on if more time is required to successfully complete. The administration staff provide a friendly, informative and efficient first experience for trainees, either by phone or in person.

### 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 two directors/owners are committed to increasing safety, workplace expertise and employment opportunities. MDSL has a strong reputation in the sector and employers rated the training provided highly. This is significant as there are a number of competitors who provide similar training. Stakeholders variously described MDSL as: 'professional, efficient, timely and excellent to deal with'.

The two directors have complementary skill-sets and work effectively together. One has extensive industry knowledge, the other is an experienced educationalist, trained teacher and consultant. They meet formally each month and as required informally. They have employed wisely and have created a small, tight-knit team that communicates well both internally and with external clients. One director is heavily involved in the day-to-day running of the business. He is able to resolve any issues that arise quickly and has easy access to the other director when required.

MDSL has been responsive to contract changes and new targets from MSD. It is not financially dependent on this contract, nor the Ara contract, to continue operating successfully as it has industry support and ongoing training, including

refresher courses, such as forklift training, that form the bulk of its business. However, the MSD work trainees are supported and assisted by these industry contacts for work experience and job options. MDSL also has preferred training provider status to some large local industries and works with local schools on driver education.

Business planning is strategic and informed by a SWOT (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats) analysis. The recent changes to the health and safety legislation provide opportunities to be more proactive with evaluating driver training in industry. While there is no formal advisory panel or governance board, this is appropriate for the size of the organisation. The general manager's level of daily involvement keeps him well informed of current industry issues. This involvement is augmented by keeping up to date through reading truck and driver manuals, and by attending local meetings and forums with the Christchurch-based New Zealand Trucking Association and the nationwide Road Transport Association.

## 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: MSD Programme

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

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

### 2.2 Focus area: Ara Programme

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

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

# Recommendations

NZQA recommends that MDSL:

- Formalise the use and analysis of data to inform decision-making and further support educational achievement
- Explore opportunities to improve employment outcomes for trainees
- Investigate the reasons for the decline in completion rates in the Ara programme and implement an improvement strategy.

# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.*

*Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.*

*In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.*

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

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.*

*The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

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

*External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website ([www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

*The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.*

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E [qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)