

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Community Colleges New Zealand
Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 19 December 2012

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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:	Community Colleges New Zealand Limited (Comcol)
Type:	Private training establishment
Location:	140 East Belt, Rangiora
Delivery sites:	65 Scott Street, Blenheim 140 East Belt, Rangiora 20 Elizabeth Street, Timaru 23 Dowling Street, Dunedin 3 Esk Street, Invercargill
First registered:	October 2001
Courses currently delivered	Youth Programmes, Job Connection, and Specialist Training centred on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hospitality/Barista• Cookery• Hairdressing• Adventure-based learning• Applied Sport• Equestrian• Youth Service• Computing

- Community Support
- Employment Skills
- Caregiving

Code of Practice signatory?	No international students
Number of students:	Domestic: 270
Number of staff:	74
Scope of active accreditation:	This provider has a very large scope of accreditations, including subfields and domains of unit standards mostly up to level 5 and covering a wide variety of vocational and generic skills.
Distinctive characteristics:	Comcol is a charitable educational organisation with five delivery sites (colleges) over the South Island and a central service centre in Rangiora. It was established in 1982 and has operated with the aim of getting young people into education, training, or work-based learning. The organisation's contracted services are primarily with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), and Ministry of Education; however, it also provides education and training to other organisations, businesses, and schools*. *Source: http://www.comcol.ac.nz
Recent significant changes:	Comcol is affected by the various changes that the funding agencies make to their course requirements.
Previous quality assurance history:	Comcol was last quality assured by NZQA by audit in 2008. At this audit, Comcol met all requirements of the standard in force at the time. NZQA has moderated a sample of unit standard assessments annually and there were a few problems in 2010, but these have since been rectified. Relevant industry training organisations (ITOs) also moderate samples of unit standards on an annual basis.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Governance, management, and strategy is a mandatory focus area. Other focus areas selected are:

- Youth Guarantee programme – Hospitality (Rangiora)
- Job Connect (Dunedin)
- Youth Guarantee programme – Springboard (Invercargill)

The selected programmes provide an appropriate cross-section of the programmes offered by Comcol. These selections allowed the evaluators to see how well the funded programmes are managed and facilitated. Three of the five delivery sites are covered by this selection.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

An NZQA lead evaluator conducted the evaluation visit with an external lead evaluator over three days at the nominated sites. The evaluators met with the founding director, council members, general manager, area managers, support managers, tutorial staff, and students. Some employers, ITO representatives, and graduates were interviewed by telephone.

A large number of documents were sighted by the evaluators during the visit. These included financial forecasts, the strategic plan, reports collating stakeholder feedback, council meeting minutes, stakeholder surveys, literacy and numeracy reports, ITO moderation reports, student evaluations, monthly activity reports, student achievement plans, programme outlines, student handbook, timetables, tutor induction manual, online student progress tracker, and other items of substantiating evidence.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Community Colleges New Zealand Limited**.

Comcol has a deep conviction in the value of foundation education and has made this its core business for many years. As an organisation it is very active in lobbying funding bodies to maintain a programme format that will enhance the outcomes for its learners. The educational performance of Comcol is generally very good. Comcol expects to meet the requirements of most of the funding bodies. It is on track to meet the requirements of the TEC-funded courses. There is some concern that Comcol may not meet the MSD requirements for all the courses it funds, in particular the Job Connect programme at the Dunedin site. The evaluators recognise that this is largely due to low student numbers following funding changes, which have distorted the outcome figures.

On other fronts, Comcol does well to maintain a high level of educational performance. Students who complete the programmes acquire valuable skills and attributes that enable them to secure employment and higher skills, and engage in further education resulting in the acquisition of higher qualifications. Student feedback is gathered twice annually and is overwhelmingly positive, indicating that the students' expectations are largely being met. The gathering of employers' feedback is not quite as effective or structured and it is not as clear how employers rate the skills learned. Employers contacted by the evaluators during the visit were positive about the value of the training.

Comcol places a great emphasis on the furthering of the numeracy and literacy skills of its students. It is very also proactive in furthering the teaching skills of its tutors in these areas. Literacy and numeracy are integrated with the mainstream content of the programmes and the students' level of competence is measured at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the programme. This system of measurement allows the level of improvement to be measured, and enables adjustments to be made part-way through the programme if progress is limited. Most students meet the expected rate of improvement required by the funding agencies.

There is a heavy emphasis in the programmes on the development of students' life skills and skills required for employment. The Job Connect programme is a good example of this as most of the programme is intended to fulfil these requirements. Increased confidence, writing skills, budgeting skills, interview skills, communication skills, and teamwork are among the attributes and skills that are gained by the students as a result of attending the programme. Tutors meet weekly and the students also have an opportunity to discuss their progress with their tutors on a weekly basis.

There has been a shift in recent times to monitoring the progress of Māori students as a distinct group at Comcol. It has been found that Māori students, who make up about 45 per cent of the student body at the Invercargill site, have the same completion rates as the general student body.

Work experience is a valuable part of the programmes to consolidate the learning, and it has the advantage that sometimes the students gain a job offer through participating in this activity. With the enhanced emphasis of some programmes on employment outcomes (particularly Job Connect) one of the colleges has appointed one of its tutorial staff to spend time fostering employer contacts that may lead to improved work experience possibilities.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Community Colleges New Zealand Limited**.

Comcol has a committed philosophy to provide quality education that assists disaffected and second-chance students. In order to monitor and ensure continued success in this endeavour, Comcol has developed an effective and extensive system of self-assessment at different levels of its operations.

At the governance and management level, Comcol has an outward-looking system of educational research in the area of second-chance education. It commissions researchers to investigate educational issues in the area and writes reports which are made available to management and staff to inform future practice. Governance has also produced a strategic plan based largely on industry input, and also produces financial plans to guide the budgeting of the programmes.

There is much effective monitoring of student progress and outcomes at Comcol, mostly done at individual college level. A record of student achievement is kept by each college and recorded on the centralised electronic student tracking system. Data from the system is processed at the service centre in Rangiora to give trends and comparisons which are useful in further programme planning. Reports on these areas have been furnished to the tutors and college management.

Feedback on the effectiveness of the learning and teaching is gathered from the students twice annually and collated centrally into a report which is supplied to the tutor and the college management. Feedback from external stakeholders such as funding bodies and ITOs is of central importance in the running of the programmes. Comcol generally meets funding body targets, and consistently meets ITO moderation requirements. The reports from these agencies inform policies and procedures for programme development. As the TEC and MSD frequently modify their funding criteria, the programmes are adapted accordingly. There are programme review policies in the Comcol quality management system, but the review cycle is often interrupted by programme changes forced by funding requirement changes. Feedback from employers is often informal and is not

gathered in a systematic way, but that which is gathered is utilised for programme development.

Educational practice is monitored by scheduled classroom observations and performance reviews, and shortcomings are remedied by a responsive system of professional development to enhance skills and teaching ability. Much emphasis is placed on giving higher teaching and literacy and numeracy skills to tutors. There is a comprehensive system of tutor induction which is designed to give new tutors (especially those from industry) the necessary skills to deliver lessons effectively. Some tutors find it useful to keep a personal diary which allows personal reflection on teaching practice. Students' learning needs are determined during the entry interview and a personal learning plan is devised for each student to chart the progress through the programme.

The evaluators determined that Comcol has a very effective and proactive self-assessment system. Any gaps are effectively managed and do not impact significantly on teaching and learning.

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**.

The level of achievement at Comcol is good. Students acquire valuable vocational skills and qualifications, mostly at levels 1-3 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. The tutors told the evaluators that they believed the students were ready for foundation positions in the cookery and barista industries when they finished the programmes. Students on the Springboard programme acquire fewer specifically vocational skills but improve their physical and mental well-being through a number of team activities and exercise-based lessons. The MSD-funded Training for Work programme (rebranded by Comcol as Job Connect, 11-13 weeks in duration) has the aim of putting people into employment, whereas the TEC-funded Youth Guarantee programme (1200 hours, with an average of 40 credits of unit standards) can lead to a variety of outcomes such as gaining employment, higher skills attainment, or study for higher qualifications. The students gain achievement in unit standards, adding to their record of learning and leading to their gaining national qualifications. In this type of programme, Comcol enrolls second-chance youth and adult learners, with the aim of giving them an opportunity to turn their lives around. Comcol is committed to this endeavour.

Students also have the opportunity to gain numeracy and literacy skills, as there is an intense interest in these fields at Comcol, with levels of competence being tested before, in the middle, and at the end of the programme in order to gauge the level of improvement. The programmes also have a strong emphasis on the development of character and life skills, which are strong forces in the attainment of employment. The evaluators heard that such abilities as writing a curriculum vitae, budgeting, interview skills, communication skills, writing skills, teamwork, and the building of self-confidence are all covered by the lessons in the programmes. The students interviewed by the evaluation team confirmed that they acquired enhanced life skills and that they gained in confidence and made friends by participating in the programme.

Completion rates in the programmes selected as focus areas are generally acceptable, with most of the students in the Youth Guarantee (Hospitality) programme expected to finish. The Job Connect programme is expected to have a 50-60 per cent completion rate (the MSD target is 64 per cent) and so the completion rate for this programme is a bit low. The tutors that were interviewed

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

attribute this in part to the difficult employment situation and the requirements of the major funding bodies. For example, the Work and Income New Zealand contract requires a minimum of 30 hours per week of employment for a student to be considered as having completed the programme satisfactorily. The tutors said this is difficult for the students to achieve in the current employment market.

Comcol realises the importance of tracking Māori student results; about 45-50 per cent of students identify as being Māori. At Invercargill, the progress of Māori students in literacy and numeracy is similar to that of all students.

Self-assessment in the area of student achievement is covered in a series of feedback-gathering questionnaires. Online TEC literacy and numeracy tests are conducted to affirm the improvement in student competency. Individual learning plans are used to guide each student through the programme, taking into account the learning style and employment aspirations of the student, which are determined through the enrolment interview. The individual learning plan allows the student to plot their progress. Student progress and attendance is plotted through the student tracking system, an online database that records individual achievements and attendance, and cohort statistics. The data is available to the national managers in Rangiora who use the information to ascertain the programmes' effectiveness, to determine trends and create reports to send back to the colleges.

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**

There is considerable value in the learning for those students who complete the programme they enrolled in. Students develop self-confidence and a sense of self-worth. Tutors told of noticing dramatic changes in the students' character and motivation during a programme as a result of the teaching. Some students said they had never formally achieved much in the past. Students who had low self-esteem and poor life skills at the start of a programme have flourished. Many are able to find employment, go on to higher training, and attain higher qualifications. Other benefits are the friendships they make, which often persist after the completion of the programme. Feedback about the programme and the teaching from students and graduates who have employment is mainly positive.

Those employers who were contacted by the evaluators were positive about the standard of training provided. One employer in Invercargill has three graduates working at their workplace. Work placement during the programmes is invaluable as it gives the employer a chance to see the student in action, and gives the student a chance to prove themselves. Work placement is not a major feature of the Youth Guarantee (Hospitality) programme in Rangiora due to difficulty in finding sufficient positions locally. Most employer feedback is positive but is informally gathered and so not used in a systematic way.

Comcol is committed to a mission to continue in foundation education. It is dedicated to providing education to those who, in its eyes, deserve a better chance. This benevolent attitude is present throughout the colleges and is inherent in the governance and management of the organisation. There is a 'Celebrate Success' function held at the Invercargill site, which is like a graduation ceremony and celebrates the students' achievements, although there are a number of non-completions from the programmes. At Dunedin, the evaluators were told that an effective strategy has been to dedicate one tutor from a course to spend time networking with employers to ensure that adequate work placement and hence permanent employment opportunities arise for the students. While this strategy is still developmental, it is starting to be effective.

The students each have a personal employment plan to ensure their needs are understood and met. Tutors assist learners in gaining confidence to make 'cold-calls' to employers – sometimes accompanying them on visits to employers. Tutors maintain contact with the work brokers at Work and Income.

Comcol will benefit from placing further emphasis on liaising with industry representatives at governance and management level. While there is some informal networking at this level, a formalised arrangement would be useful. Comcol has tried using liaison committees in the past, but found that this was not effective as it was very difficult for industry people to attend meetings.

1.3 How well do the 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**.

Generally, the programmes and activities at Comcol match the needs of the stakeholders, particularly the students. The success of the programmes is measured through feedback from the various stakeholders. Students provide formal feedback twice a year. For those students who leave before the end of the programme, there is an exit evaluation. The evaluators learned that gaining written feedback from industry people is difficult, and so most of the feedback from this source is anecdotal. Most employer feedback is positive, as confirmed by the evaluators. It is apparent that TEC targets will largely be met in 2012, although there is frustration at the way MSD targets are set. MSD is not sending sufficient students to Comcol – in 2012 there were considerably fewer than the MSD-set target of 50 students for the Job Connect programme, which distorts outcomes unfavourably. It is expected that outcomes will fall behind the expected target of 64 per cent completion for this programme. It is unclear how this will affect business in 2013.

In an attempt to foster meaningful industry contacts, the Blenheim site has found a strategy that works for them. They have hosted a 'Business after 5' meeting for employers which has worked well and provided valuable interaction.

Comcol has a close relationship with the industry training organisation, the Hospitality Standards Institute (HSI), in relation to the Youth Guarantee (Hospitality) programme. HSI has visited some Comcol sites recently as part of the ongoing moderation of unit standards that it administers. The report of the moderation visit was supplied for examination and HSI has positive views on the hospitality training operations at Comcol.

Other good practices that enable optimum student performance are the screening that occurs at the entry interviews and the one-week trial allowed in some programmes, during which the student may be taken off the roll or may choose to exit voluntarily. This lessens the chance of poor performance and outcomes. Students are encouraged to talk about their learning and employment needs during the entry interviews to ensure that the best possible learning experiences are facilitated.

Students enter the programmes through a system of 'rolling entry', through which the students can enter the programmes when they present themselves. This ensures that the students are able to enter the courses quickly and do not have to wait until a cohort starts, which may only be once a year.

There is some informal contact with students after they leave Comcol. The evaluators were able to speak with a couple of graduates who happened to be visiting the Dunedin site that day to see their former tutors. This type of continued relationship is very valuable for the college and indicates that the students enjoyed their time there.

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**.

The tutors at Comcol are generally recruited from the industry to which the skill set is relevant, and they are technically very well skilled in their field. Upon their engagement, Comcol supplies them with a tutoring mentor and a comprehensive induction booklet and goes to great lengths to provide teaching and literacy and numeracy support skills.

Comcol places great emphasis on literacy and numeracy support for the students and has engaged a literacy and numeracy national manager to travel around the colleges and supervise a structured programme of development in this area. Comcol was a pilot for the TEC literacy and numeracy assessment tool. Literacy and numeracy is generally embedded throughout the lessons for the main disciplines and those who were interviewed feel this is working well. The online

TEC assessment tool is used at the start, intermediate stage, and conclusion of the learning to help ascertain needs and improvement.

The tutors interviewed had all acquired unit standard 4098 *Use standards to assess candidate performance*, and some acquired unit standard 11551 *Moderate assessment*. Tutors are encouraged to gain their adult teaching certificates with financial assistance from Comcol. Planned professional development is implemented throughout the colleges to enhance the tutors' lesson facilitation skills. Observations of tutoring, peer reviews, and regular performance reviews of staff provide information that informs future professional development. A couple of the colleges have engaged tutor support people to supervise this professional development. Professional development is also provided on other matters, e.g. social issues such as suicide, depression, drugs and alcohol, and learning issues such as literacy and information and communications technology. Comcol funds or makes a contribution to external professional development opportunities, although most tutoring professional development is offered internally. Academic support tutors give support to tutors in the planning of courses. At Dunedin, this culture of support has led to 'open doors', a team-teaching approach. Excellent support is provided to new tutors.

Comcol engages in peer tutoring and uses mixed teaching methods to provide variation and interest for the students. The provider uses mainly common assessment tasks and other pre-moderated material supplied by ITOs. Other positive steps are the monthly activity report, which itemises the moderation activities for the colleges, and the regular tutor forums held to discuss issues of consistency throughout the programmes. There are weekly tutor-student meetings to discuss student progress and enable feedback to be given in a timely manner. Tutors commonly keep personal reflective diaries and so engage in self-assessment of their practice at many levels. The value of the teaching is mainly determined from formal feedback through student evaluations and informal feedback from industry sources. This feedback is mostly very positive.

The evaluators heard about trips and visits that students were preparing for. Camping excursions are designed to help boost confidence and team-building. Experiential learning is the main approach taken to teaching and learning and the students show great advancement in life skills through the programmes.

Comcol reacts decisively in response to such needs as the upskilling of tutoring staff to maintain high standards. It operates a comprehensive system of internal moderation to complement the external moderation required by NZQA and the ITOs. Comcol also has reciprocal arrangements with other institutions. Regular collection of student feedback is collated nationally, analysed to identify trends, and a report sent to the tutor and the college concerned. Students are tracked for two or three months (depending on the programme) into employment as a requirement of the funding bodies. This enables an insight into how well the students are being prepared for employment, and the results are generally positive.

1.5 How well are the learners guided and supported?

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

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

The core business of Comcol, which is the provision of foundation education to disaffected and disadvantaged students, is predominantly focussed on support of the student. Almost everything that is done for the student includes an element of support. The provision of support is systemic and endemic throughout the organisation, but the Rangiora site has recently had significant management changes and the systems of support were not so obvious there as a result of the changes. However, a temporary manager has been appointed. A cohesive team is now developing at this college, with professional development plans and reviews under way. Appointment of a permanent manager should be made by November 2012. This indicates good self assessment and management of an awkward situation.

Students are given a comprehensive handbook which has much information regarding the school, the programme, academic rules, and support services. The handbook also outlines the procedure for laying a complaint. Many of the programmes contain elements of health and safety training which assist in helping the students develop self-management skills. Life skills are taught within the courses: budgeting, personal presentation, interview skills, and communication among them.

Work experience, which is a valued part of the programmes, is often hard to find. One tutor in Dunedin acts as a work broker, keeping in touch with industry to gain access to possible work experience opportunities. The Dunedin site also hosts external speakers, including employer representatives. This is valued by both learners and employers, and assists the provider in achieving good employment outcomes. Where necessary, the tutor will accompany students to work placement and employment opportunities as a support person. Tutors also assist with interview techniques, the compilation of a curriculum vitae, and how applications should be handled.

External counselling services are available for any special needs that students may have. Each campus has a designated person whom the students can refer to for counselling. The evaluators heard that tutoring staff are very approachable and willing to listen to students' problems, which are resolved by the tutor or the managers. The nature of the provider's business occasionally presents students who can be disruptive and counterproductive. The evaluators heard of several instances where problems had been dealt with decisively, indicating that Comcol is prepared to act quickly in such situations.

Self-assessment in this area involves ongoing reflective practices, such as the tutors' journals which provide a check on personal development of the students as seen through the eyes of the tutors. The evaluators noticed that classroom mural

displays also portrayed the self-reflection of the students in a type of free expression.

1.6 How effective are governance and management at 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 **Excellent**.

Comcol has an excellent regime of governance and management. Governance is strong and looks outward to the needs of the sector as well as providing the vision to guide the organisation. The principal director – one of the founders of Comcol – is currently serving on the TEC board of directors, and was previously on the NZQA board in the 1990s. At governance level, Comcol actively lobbies the funding bodies' policy groups. This shows a distinct commitment to the direction of the foundation education sector. Part of the governance vision for the Comcol council is that it should remain exclusively in the field of foundation or second-chance education. To ensure that this is the case the organisation has changed its status to that of a registered charity, and limited the role of governance to the directors and managers of the colleges. Council terms of reference do not limit membership to college staff, although this is the current situation. College staff will always hold a majority on the council. This protects against takeovers by other providers, preserves the vision and intent of the Comcol council, and guarantees succession. There is a clear demarcation of duties between management and directors, which is illustrated by a separation in the meetings of the two bodies.

The directors and managers are acutely aware of the benefits and challenges of working with funded students in a shifting environment. Comcol is dependent on the number of students the government agencies are prepared to pay for, and the number of students that are referred by the agencies.

The evaluators were impressed with various sector-related research documents that had been commissioned to inform organisational practices. Themes range from educational to sector related. This research has not been published or presented in a public forum, but Comcol is considering putting it on its website for greater exposure. To date, the research has been circulated to management and staff to assist with internal practice.

There is a general management ethos not to involve the tutoring staff too much in the overarching, big-picture issues, in order to allow them to concentrate more on the specifics of dealing with the students. It is accepted that this is an appropriate attitude to ensure that attention is focussed on student achievement. The teaching philosophy of the Comcol council is based on self-paced and learner-centred principles, and Comcol tries hard to maintain this philosophy. Governance lobbies directly with industry sources to get input for the strategic planning of the institution. The strategic plan and annual financial reports were made available to the

evaluators. Originally, liaison advisory boards were used to source this information, but these boards proved to be ineffective and the provider now lobbies industry sources directly.

Comcol utilises a centralised electronic tracking system to tabulate student results and attendance. This is done on an individual student basis by the various colleges, but the data is available centrally at the service centre at Rangiora. There the data is collated and national trends are noted, with reports being sent back to the colleges.

The evaluators visited three sites and gained the impression that Comcol is very well resourced in so far as it maintains spacious and well-appointed premises with good resources, such as computer rooms and commercially oriented hospitality facilities for learning. The management at Rangiora responded well to a staff request for further kitchen resources by authorising their purchase.

The evaluators saw the minutes of directorate meetings and the feedback from various stakeholders that inform the strategic direction of the provider. Comcol sees its quality management system as a living document and reviews the contents on a three-year schedule. There is strong influence and guidance from the service centre to the colleges on policy and direction. Each college, however, manages its own operations independently, and there are some differences in the way each is run, with some differences in services. Each college is able to respond in its own way to the demands of the local labour market. For example, the Marlborough site has lost funding for its age care programme and has had to close the course, but this does not affect the other colleges.

Comcol governance and management are engaged in some very good self-assessment strategies. They engage in risk analysis for aspects of the colleges' functions. The council engages in its own self-assessment on an annual basis. Some management personnel have sought professional business mentors to improve their practice, and some have engaged in New Zealand Institute of Management programmes to complement their skills. The tutors engage in behaviour management skills courses, which are endorsed by management and add value to the teaching.

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 **Excellent**.

The governance at Comcol is centralised at the service centre in Rangiora. It is made up of a very strong group of Comcol managers and directorate members. Governance and management are outward looking and influential in the foundation education sector. They provide strong vision and educational direction for the colleges. While the standard of governance and management is excellent, programme outcomes at Comcol are also affected by external changes in funding policies.

2.2 Focus area: Youth guarantee programme – Hospitality

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

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

The above programme at the North Canterbury site is adversely affected by recent college management changes. The affects have been disruptive and unsettling to staff members and students alike. The college expects that this situation will improve with a new manager to be appointed at this campus by November 2012. Management recognised the imposition caused by this unsettling situation and acted quickly to resolve it.

2.3 Focus area: Job Connect

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

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

2.4 Focus area: Youth guarantee programme – Springboard

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

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

Recommendations

To assist Comcol to add further value to its programmes, the evaluators recommend that:

- Systematic and formalised means of engaging with employers are implemented to gain meaningful feedback on programme effectiveness
- Comcol continues to liaise with funding agencies to influence the funding mechanisms so the individual colleges are able to better meet the funding requirements.

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-eeer/introduction/>

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