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# External Evaluation and Review Report

Employment Focus Limited trading as  
Professional Business and  
Restaurant School

Date of report: 1 August 2022

# About Employment Focus Limited trading as Professional Business and Restaurant School (PBRS)

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*PBRS is a niche provider delivering hospitality and cookery programmes from levels 3-6 to international students in downtown Auckland.*

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|------------------------------|--|
| Type of organisation:        | Private training establishment (PTE)   |
| Location:                    | 150 Hobson Street, Central Business District, Auckland   |
| Code of Practice signatory:  | Yes  |
| Number of students:          | 2022 enrolments (at the time of the EER)<br><br>International: 56 students from a range of nationalities including India, Thailand, Korea and China  |
| Number of staff:             | 12 full-time and two part-time   |
| TEO profile:                 | <a href="#">Employment Focus Ltd</a>   |
| Last EER outcome:            | Confident in educational performance and<br>Confident in capability in self-assessment   |
| Scope of evaluation:         | There were two focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International Students: Support and Wellbeing</li><li>• International Diploma in Food Preparation and Cookery Supervision (Advanced) (Level 5).<br/>Most current enrolments are in this programme.</li></ul> |
| MoE number:                  | 7455   |
| NZQA reference:              | C48095   |
| Dates of EER online enquiry: | 27 and 28 April 2022   |

# Summary of results

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*Valued outcomes and achievement are supported by experienced management, close monitoring and support of student progress, integrated self-assessment, and industry-connected and experienced teachers. Such core processes have supported students to complete programmes despite significant disruptions to usual delivery due to COVID-19. Industry stakeholder needs are well met. Recent NZQA monitoring identifies a need to improve aspects of moderation and assessment.*

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## **Confident in educational performance**

PBRS has shown resilience and responsibility in navigating two turbulent years of the COVID-19 pandemic, sustaining delivery to (onshore) international students as a niche provider of hospitality and cookery training in central Auckland. It has a clear purpose and direction and is led by experienced management. While having to significantly scale back operations and adapt programme delivery, PBRS has maintained core processes important to student outcomes and effective self-assessment, appropriate resourcing and facilities. Student and industry needs remain well met.

## **Confident in capability in self-assessment**

Programmes and activities are of strong relevance to industry. Students access work experience opportunities with well-known CBD restaurants and hotels. Employment outcomes are high.

Students gain relevant skills and knowledge and nearly all gain qualifications. Achievement is well supported by knowledgeable and experienced teachers, appropriate facilities, industry experience, student support and real-time monitoring of progress and remedial learning opportunities and support as required.

A recent NZQA monitoring report has found the need to improve assessment and moderation, particularly to address some over-generous marking.

In most areas, self-assessment gives relevant insights into learner achievement and outcomes. Senior management use self-assessment information authentically and insightfully. Self-assessment is embedded as usual practice, giving confidence that it will continue to inform educational performance.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 1. How well do students achieve?

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| Performance:                      | <b>Good</b>   |
| Self-assessment:                  | <b>Good</b>   |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>Most students at PBRs successfully complete their courses and gain qualifications. For the programme focus area, 55 out of 60 students (92 per cent) successfully gained the level 5 diploma qualification in 2021 – four of these students did not fully complete but gained the level 4 qualification. In 2020, 50 out of 58 (86 per cent) gained the qualification (four of these students who withdrew gained the level 4). PBRs is aware of the reasons for withdrawal and non-completion.</p> <p>While completions are high, the overall rating for this key evaluation question reflects some issues of over-generous marking<sup>2</sup> and use of open-book tests as found in NZQA’s recent monitoring report for the focus area programme.</p> <p>Students acquire relevant, useful skills and knowledge, including in the areas of research, food safety, international cuisines, creativity, workflow and planning, time management and teamwork. Professional communication standards and presentation are a continuous focus.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>While it is not possible to fully understand the impact on the depth of the skills and knowledge acquired, the usual PBRs learning experience was significantly disrupted by COVID-19-related lockdowns, with theory components delivered separately from practical learning until students could return to campus. The return to campus required a focus on assessment and catch-up work and little time for the extra formative learning opportunities PBRs values and typically delivers.</p> |

<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.

<sup>2</sup> NZQA monitoring found that although learner assessments provide evidence of learners’ culinary skills, there is limited evidence of analysis and/or research where these are required by the learning outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> There has been some disruption to the extent of this skill base development across all students and cohorts because of the pandemic and the need to constantly reorganise timetables due to multiple Auckland lockdowns.

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|             | <p>Industry stakeholders engaged for the EER described PBRS students as comfortable, confident and sufficiently prepared to work in real-world contexts. Learning is advanced through professional work experience opportunities.</p> <p>Achievement is also supported by the subject matter knowledge and industry experience of teaching staff, and appropriate resources and facilities. Moreover, student progress is closely monitored, and additional learning and support is provided in real time and as needs are identified.</p> |
| Conclusion: | <p>Students gain knowledge, skills and attributes relevant to employment. Achievement is supported by close monitoring of progress, industry-experienced staff and relevant work experience. Some aspects of assessment need improvement.</p>  |

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

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| Performance:                      | <b>Excellent</b>  |
| Self-assessment:                  | <b>Good</b>   |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>Industry stakeholders engaged for the EER readily provide PBRS students with workplace experience and value this reciprocal opportunity, including subsequent employment of PBRS graduates. They identified that students transition well to real-world hotel and restaurant settings. Students benefit from the insights and critique of those well established in the industry.</p> <p>PBRS surveys employers in relation to programme graduate profile outcomes. Such information is supplemented by anecdotal feedback through industry networks.</p> <p>Graduates gain employment in a variety of culinary-related roles. PBRS tracks graduates' employment outcomes at different time intervals post-qualification and captures data on the various chef role levels in which graduates are employed.</p> <p>Self-assessment data shows that graduates are employed in roles of varying levels of seniority. There is potential for PBRS to analyse and reflect further on the data collected to add insight to understand the different roles being gained. There may also be an opportunity to identify themes and trends arising from PBRS's surveying of graduates at different intervals post-completion.</p> |

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|             | <p>PBRS has improved its self-assessment processes in response to a previous EER recommendation. It achieved consistency at NZQA's 2019 consistency review of the level 5 qualification.</p> <p>Different examples shared demonstrate additional and important value-add for students and industry. For example, PBRS contributes significant time and investment to enable students to prepare for and participate in national culinary competitions. Students gain additional skills and knowledge. Participation is an additional positive attribute considered by potential employees. The events also support connections with industry.</p> <p>Another example is the teaching and support provided by PBRS that enabled interns from a large industry stakeholder to complete their cookery qualifications amidst challenges that arose during the pandemic. The stakeholder highly values PBRS's training, support and facilities.</p> |
| Conclusion: | <p>PBRS contributes significant value to students and industry. Graduates gain a valued qualification and relevant knowledge, skills and experience leading to employment in an industry of high demand. PBRS collects data on the roles graduates gain, with an opportunity to expand this understanding.</p>   |

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

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| Performance:                      | <b>Good</b>  |
| Self-assessment:                  | <b>Good</b>  |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>PBRS's connections to industry and its location in the largest restaurant and hotel precinct in New Zealand contributes significantly to supporting international students to access relevant and valuable work experience and employment.</p> <p>PBRS programmes are designed to provide a clear progression through skill levels, and a pathway for students in the hospitality and cookery fields. Learning environments are planned and structured for the benefit and needs of the students, including to support student progression from levels 4 to 5 in the focus area programme. Industry stakeholders affirmed the calibre of PBRS teaching staff and facilities.</p> <p>As stated in 1.1, the Auckland COVID-19-related lockdowns and periods of student home isolation were highly disruptive to the</p> |

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|                    | <p>usual model of course delivery (and programme design) which inextricably links theory and practical learning. Furthermore, a focus on supporting students to complete as close to their original timetable as possible meant less opportunity for the additional formative learning and practical activities usually delivered. Nevertheless, teaching staff provided additional tutoring and support to those who required it.</p> <p>Internal and external moderation processes are well established, and are valued by and actively involve teaching staff. NZQA's recent monitoring report for the focus area programme identified that PBRS has effective methods of pre-moderating assessment materials and tracking actions that arise from assessment and moderation. However, not all aspects are fully effective, with improvements required.</p> <p>NZQA found that assessment decisions for learning outcomes that involve analysis and reflection/evaluation are over-generous in some learner samples. Further, because some assessments for the level 5 courses are open-book tests, additional forms of assessment (or closed book conditions) are needed to show independent understanding of minimum theory knowledge.</p> <p>PBRS reviews courses each term based on tutor and student feedback and student achievement information. PRBS has well-established processes to regularly gain feedback from students to inform programme improvement. Feedback is analysed quarterly, with term-by-term comparative analysis undertaken, and actions proposed where issues are identified and/or satisfaction has decreased.</p> |
| <p>Conclusion:</p> | <p>Programmes are relevant and appropriate, though the usual and preferred programme delivery methods were disrupted by COVID-19. Tutors worked hard and closely with students to enable them to complete all programme requirements to time. Aspects of assessment and moderation require improvement.</p>   |

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

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| Performance:                      | <b>Good</b>   |
| Self-assessment:                  | <b>Good</b>   |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>PBRS appropriately supports and involves students in their learning. A core support team ensures that students are aware of support available and have access to support services.</p> <p>A comprehensive student handbook is provided to the students. PBRS uses different fun and quiz-based activities to encourage students' knowledge of handbook information.</p> <p>The support team undertakes regular classroom visits to make sure that students are aware of the support available and to encourage one-to-one appointments with support staff if needed.</p> <p>PBRS identifies that employment support is a key need and assists students through activities such as job-seeking guidance, and curriculum vitae and interview preparation.</p> <p>PBRS understands the challenges that impact students' learning and provides support to minimise barriers. For example, in recognition of the challenges to motivation during the Auckland lockdowns, teaching staff implemented different approaches and classroom activities aimed at keeping students actively engaged in their learning. Over this time, student withdrawal numbers remained relatively low (four students withdrew in 2021).</p> <p>During lockdowns, contact was also made with students to check on their wellbeing and to provide financial and welfare-related guidance and support.</p> <p>While PBRS records the various support interventions it provides to students, analysis of the nature and extent of the support being provided and the difference being made, could assist PBRS in determining key areas for continuing focus.</p> <p>Academic support is mainly provided by teaching staff in response to individual student's needs, with some basic academic skills training for writing and research provided in the first week of each student intake.</p> <p>The student voice is actively sought, valued and utilised by PBRS. For example, analysis of student survey data found higher satisfaction by on-shore students directly recruited and/or engaged by PBRS pre-commencement, as compared with past off-shore recruited students whom PBRS did not have direct</p> |



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|             | <p>contact with due to agent engagement. This has informed PBRs's policy regarding engaging students pre-commencement.</p> <p>Management regularly engages with student representatives to share survey results and resulting actions and to hear feedback. Student representatives have regular opportunities to share student feedback or concerns with management.</p> |
| Conclusion: | While support services have been scaled down, students are appropriately supported and involved in their learning, including through increased levels of individualised academic and pastoral support (given reduced student numbers). The student voice is well collected and used to ensure needs are met.  |

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

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| Performance:                      | <b>Excellent</b>   |
| Self-assessment:                  | <b>Good</b>  |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>PBRs placed the needs of students at the centre during the significant challenges of the pandemic, lockdowns and closure of borders to new international students.</p> <p>Though staffing, delivery and the range of support activities are significantly scaled down, PBRs has sustained continuity and ensured the continuance of appropriate support, core academic and self-assessment processes, and appropriate staffing, resources and facilities to support educational achievement.</p> <p>The senior leadership team keeps abreast of sector and industry developments, continues to deliver to its mission, and has sought opportunities to ensure continued sustainability. For example, it recently acquired 15 new international student places as part of a New Zealand fourth border exception. The PTE's vision, purpose and direction is clear and well articulated, with educational aspects at the centre.</p> <p>The PTE is managed by a committed, collaborative senior leadership team who have been with the PTE for a long time and are experienced and knowledgeable in the industry. PBRs's small team of staff have a long connection with PBRs, including tutors who returned to PBRs because they value the school.</p> <p>Teaching staff are well qualified and experienced for their roles. Staff are supported by academic oversight, guidance and support from the programme manager who is responsive to their</p> |

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|             | <p>needs. Clear information is conveyed to support lesson planning and delivery. Effective communication between management, teaching staff and students is important to the organisation.</p> <p>The senior leadership team meets regularly to review student and staff feedback, student achievement-related data and sector intelligence. Self-review is authentic, with clear understanding and interrogation of information to ensure validity and to support decision-making and actions. Management and staff have consistent and strong insights into the PTE's strengths and challenges. Records are kept of decision-making, operational decisions and academic quality aspects.</p> <p>Management's responsiveness to ensure improvements are made when identified – and the established processes are in place to understand and support academic quality and review – gives confidence that PBRS will address the issues with aspects of assessment and internal moderation recently found by NZQA.</p> |
| Conclusion: | <p>The strength of PRBS's senior management team, a clear vision, capability and focused resourcing, has enabled PBRS to effectively navigate extremely challenging times, while ensuring the continuance of core support, academic and self-assessment processes that have supported educational achievement in a vocational area of importance. The rating for self-assessment reflects that moderation is an area for strengthening.</p>  |

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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| Performance:                      | <b>Good</b>  |
| Self-assessment:                  | <b>Good</b>  |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>PRBS has established processes in place to effectively manage key compliance accountabilities. PBRS demonstrated its full understanding of NZQA programme approval and accreditation requirements and timely meeting of compliance requirements.</p> <p>NZQA's recent monitoring report for the focus area programme identifies that PRBS partially, but does not fully meet NZQA assessment and moderation criteria. The monitoring report found that learning outcomes, the wording of graduate profile outcomes and their number designation are not wholly consistent with the approved programme document. In 2019, PBRS met the majority of NZQA's national external moderation</p> |

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|                    | <p>requirements, with non-compliant results for one unit standard for the second year.</p> <p>PRBS demonstrated a strong understanding of Code of Practice requirements. Related self-review is undertaken regularly through a team approach involving the checking of processes to ensure Code outcomes are met. PRBS has established processes in place to assure the quality of agents and has also undertaken an internal agent review. In 2021, NZQA confirmed its review of, and confidence in, PBRS’s approach to Code self-review and identified some good practices in place.</p> <p>The PTE completes international student file audit checks each term, alongside several standard processes to ensure that students have valid visas and appropriate insurance cover.</p> <p>The EER sampled file information for 16 students. This found evidence of appropriate English language entry requirements for all students. There were two instances of gaps in insurance cover. Information provided by PBRS demonstrated that it had appropriately identified, alerted and followed up both students on the requirement to have insurance. In one case they did not permit the student to attend class until the insurance had been renewed. As well as advising students in writing of the need to have insurance in such circumstances (which PBRS did), PBRS could add to its response by specifying the potential implications of not having insurance cover.</p> <p>PBRS has assessed its processes against the new Code of Practice and has responded where a need was identified – it now provides specific information to students on tenancy rights.</p> |
| <p>Conclusion:</p> | <p>PRBS has established processes in place to ensure the effective management of key compliance accountabilities. Processes are used authentically to ensure effectiveness and are regularly audited and reviewed. Self-review is mostly comprehensive but needs strengthening to fully meet assessment and moderation expectations.</p>  |

# Focus areas

*This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.*

## 2.1 Focus area: International Students: Support and Wellbeing

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|------------------|-------------|
| Performance:     | <b>Good</b> |
| Self-assessment: | <b>Good</b> |

## 2.2 Focus area: International Diploma in Food Preparation and Cookery Supervision (Advanced) (Level 5) leading to the New Zealand Certificate in Cookery (Level 4) (Ref. 2101) and the New Zealand Diploma in Cookery and Patisserie (Level 5) (Ref. 2102)

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|------------------|-------------|
| Performance:     | <b>Good</b> |
| Self-assessment: | <b>Good</b> |

## 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 Employment Focus Limited trading as the Professional Business and Restaurant School:

- Review self-assessment information collated on student employment outcomes to consider the potential to better analyse and demonstrate insights into the different employment roles being achieved and their value.
- Consider recording and evaluating the frequency of use and impact of different student support activities.
- Specifically advise students in writing of the implications of being without insurance cover when reminding students of the need to put in place or renew insurance.

## Requirements

NZQA requires Employment Focus Limited to:

- Implement appropriate improvements to address issues found in NZQA's June 2022 monitoring report for the level 5 programme and to fully meet Rule 4.1 Criterion 6 and Rule 6.1 Criterion 1 of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2021.

# Appendix

## 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 fraud<sup>4</sup>
- 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.

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<sup>4</sup> 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 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.*

*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 including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

*The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.*

*In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes 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 2016. 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)). 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](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)

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