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External Evaluation and Review Report

Youth Cultures & Community Trust
trading as Praxis

Date of report: 29 October 2019

About Youth Cultures & Community Trust trading as Praxis

Praxis provides training for youth workers and the wider youth development sector. It is the only tertiary education provider offering the New Zealand Diploma in Youth Work (Level 6). Programme delivery is from four sites and with block courses, weekly classes and a practicum which runs the length of the programme.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 2, 138 Wakefield Street, Te Aro, Wellington
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes. There have been no international student enrolments for over four years.
Number of students:	Domestic: 49 students; including 21 Māori and 15 Pasifika students International: nil
Number of staff:	Two full-time equivalents and 10 part-time staff
TEO profile:	See: NZQA – Youth Cultures & Community Trust
Last EER outcome:	2015 – Confident in educational performance and Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	All programmes – Certificate in Youth Development (Level 4); Diploma in Youth Development (Level 6)
MoE number:	7542
NZQA reference:	C35544
Dates of EER visit:	5 and 6 August 2019

Summary of Results

The most important needs of students and stakeholders are well met, resulting in a qualified workforce able to effectively engage and work with youth in a variety of settings. Self-assessment processes are fit for purpose and transparent, and findings are used to make a range of improvements and achieve valued outcomes.

Confident in educational performance

- Almost every student acquires skills, develops attributes and successfully achieves the qualification. The PTE monitors progress throughout the programme, and achievement is comprehensive.
- Student and stakeholder needs are being well met, resulting in a qualified workforce able to effectively engage and work with youth in a variety of settings. Systematic and ongoing collection of information and data would provide more compelling evidence about the extent to which these outcomes are being met.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Programme teaching and learning is consolidated during practicum in youth work, providing highly relevant programmes well matched to the needs of students and stakeholders. Consistency of monitoring systems and processes could be improved.
- A range of appropriate support networks and mechanisms are embedded into the programme activities and structure of Praxis. These not only effectively support students but also reflect the industry and models of practice used in youth work.
- Praxis is committed to the educational achievement of students; the organisational structure, direction and processes provide a foundation for quality teaching and learning. The effective monitoring of the self-assessment activities in some areas requires strengthening.
- The monitoring and managing of compliance activities varies. Praxis is unable to demonstrate how it ensures programmes are delivered as approved.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Achievement of programme qualifications is strong. For 2015-2018, programme and qualification completions in the certificate and diploma have been consistent. Overall, the diploma has stronger outcomes with almost all learners successfully completing.</p> <p>Parity of achievement is evident in both programmes. With few exceptions, Māori and Pasifika learners are achieving at or above the commitment to the Tertiary Education Commission. This is an improvement since the previous EER.</p> <p>Rates of achievement are validated through robust internal and external moderation, indicating assessment and assessor judgements are at the national standard.</p> <p>Achievement is analysed and relevant data is reviewed and discussed by teachers, programme leaders and the awhi (management) group. Non-completions are discussed with the board of trustees. Processes are systematic and effectively used to monitor and understand performance.</p> <p>Students improve their own wellbeing and increase self-awareness which is important when developing proficiency to work with others. Useful skills and knowledge are acquired such as becoming more self-confident in relationship building, and students increase their capability and competency working with youth.</p>
Conclusion:	Almost every student acquires skills, develops attributes and successfully achieves the qualification. Progress is monitored throughout the programme and achievement is comprehensive.

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

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Praxis is meeting student and stakeholder needs for qualified and skilled youth workers. Praxis is the only tertiary education provider in Aotearoa New Zealand to offer the New Zealand Diploma in Youth Work (Level 6), and one of only two offering the certificate. Provision of these New Zealand qualifications enables youth services and agencies² to effectively engage with youth. The demand for places on programmes from the sector consistently exceeds availability.</p> <p>Students gain relevant employment and engage with further study. Many of the certificate students continue to the diploma, and a few diploma students have continued to a Bachelor's programme in youth work.</p> <p>Praxis has systematically followed graduates from 2018 and can demonstrate that all bar one are employed or working voluntarily in youth work. Praxis believes this outcome is similar to previous years. However, evidence for this has not been gathered purposefully and is based on anecdotal information, mostly through the ongoing relationships with graduates, agencies and within the relatively small sector within Aotearoa New Zealand. A continued systematic approach, which Praxis has now started, to gather destination and outcomes information would be beneficial. It would enable Praxis to fully demonstrate the medium and longer-term benefits and the value of student and stakeholder outcomes.</p>
Conclusion:	Student and stakeholder needs are being well met, resulting in a qualified workforce able to effectively engage and work with youth in a variety of settings. Systematic and ongoing collection of information would provide more compelling evidence about the extent to which these outcomes are being met.

² Workplace practicum

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Programmes are highly relevant to stakeholders and are structured to benefit students. Students have opportunities to apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: whole-of-institute residential block courses, weekly classes with regional students, and a practicum at a community agency for the duration of the programme. Academic processes are sound and learning activities are aligned with assessment and learning outcomes.</p> <p>There are a range of authentic mechanisms to gather feedback from students. Quality and detailed information is gathered, providing an opportunity to investigate feedback further. Praxis is making improvements and changes based on feedback received.</p> <p>Tutors and guest lecturers are experienced, currently working with youth and members of the youth work professional association. Learning is consolidated under the guidance and supervision of appropriately experienced professionals in the practicum, a significant proportion of the programme.</p> <p>There are a number of purposeful and systematic processes well established within Praxis which guide teaching practice, including collegially planning the structure and delivery and sharing teaching resources. Programme leaders have oversight and track student progress across all regions. Tutors track and provide reports for each cohort, which are discussed at planning days to establish teaching for the next term.</p> <p>Programme review and input from stakeholders, including agencies, is providing relevant and useful information to maintain the relevance and currency of the programme and its delivery.</p> <p>Systems and processes are comprehensive. However, a lapse in monitoring the implementation of these by the awhi group has led to a few, but isolated, lapses affecting one cohort's learning</p>

	experience, hence the ratings for this key evaluation question.
Conclusion:	Programme teaching and learning is consolidated during practicum in youth work providing highly relevant programmes that are well matched to meet the needs of students and stakeholders. Consistency of monitoring systems and processes could be improved.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Thorough interview and selection of students into both the certificate and diploma identifies learner needs and their confidence to undertake study. The option to enrol in the certificate meets the need of some students to develop study skills and experience in youth work. There is a clear progress and criteria for those wishing to progress from the certificate to the diploma, ensuring those who pathway have developed the academic skills to undertake study at level 6.</p> <p>The structure of the programme as discussed in 1.3 is planned. The systematic engagement with agencies and supervisors strengthens the support, guidance and supervision, and the students' learning. This is a significant factor influencing the high rates of achievement. Formal memorandums of understanding and agency and supervisor handbooks provide clear parameters and responsibilities for each role and reflect youth work practices. Praxis is effectively monitoring students' practicum experience to ensure it continues to support learning throughout the programme.</p> <p>Alongside ongoing student feedback mechanisms at block courses and cluster meetings, a formal and comprehensive student mid-year review (with input from Praxis, the agency and the supervisor) provides learners with a clear understanding of their performance and progress. This process provides an opportunity to identify and collaboratively agree strategy and activities to support the students in their learning. Where more focused support is required, 'extra care plans' are initiated to enable students and Praxis to better monitor support and track</p>

	continued progress.
Conclusion:	A range of appropriate support networks and mechanisms are embedded into the programme activities and structure of Praxis. These not only effectively support students but also reflect the industry and models of practice used in youth work.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Praxis' values are clearly embedded in the culture of the organisation. The purpose and direction of the PTE is clear and continues to be focused on the development of training for youth workers and the wider youth development sector. Praxis maintains ongoing professional relationships with the professional association and youth services in the regions.</p> <p>The board of trustees' membership reflects the sector, including education representation, and they are aware of the niche area of delivery and its importance to the sector. The board meets four times a year, receives a range of information, and provides useful guidance to the PTE. The relationship between operational management of the PTE and the board is cohesive and collaborative, supporting the strong culture of the organisation. A mid-year retreat with all staff provides time to reflect on the organisation and its direction.</p> <p>Praxis is proactive in succession planning and has implemented a co-leadership model which is a work in progress. Staff get feedback on their performance and are supported with professional development which is useful for their own career development.</p> <p>There are a number of purposeful and robust processes well embedded within Praxis and across the regional delivery sites. However, during the transition to the co-leadership model, academic oversight of the effective implementation of some of these processes by the awhi group has not been consistently maintained. This had an impact on the teaching and learning of one cohort of learners. This is an area that requires strengthening.</p>

Conclusion:	Praxis is committed to the educational achievement of the students. The organisational structure, direction and processes provide a foundation for quality teaching and learning. The effective monitoring of self-assessment activities in some areas requires strengthening.
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1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>There are gaps in Praxis' capability to monitor and manage compliance accountabilities.</p> <p>NZQA attestations and returns have been submitted within required timeframes, and permanent site approvals are current. Praxis recently became aware of the requirement to notify NZQA of temporary site notifications and this is now occurring.</p> <p>Praxis is unable to demonstrate how it ensures programmes are delivered as approved. This is considered a gap as it impacts both programmes which comprise all delivery by Praxis.</p> <p>Praxis is still to complete a review of the quality management system which has been a work in progress for the last few years. Areas for improvement are being identified and addressed as the review progresses. Prompt completion of the review needs to be prioritised to ensure all processes remain relevant and fit for purpose.</p> <p>The Tertiary Education Commission audit in June 2018 found systems, processes and practices were acceptable with minor nonconformities, which have been addressed.</p>
Conclusion:	The monitoring and managing of compliance activities varies. Praxis was unable to demonstrate how it ensures programmes are delivered as approved.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: All Programmes

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

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 Youth Cultures & Community Trust trading as Praxis:

- Monitor more closely the implementation of sound academic processes across all four delivery sites.
- Complete the quality management system review.

Requirements

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

NZQA requires Youth Cultures & Community Trust trading as Praxis to:

- Demonstrate that all programmes are delivered as approved, as per sections 11.1(a) and 12.1 (d) of the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Praxis qualification completions³

	Qualification completion (actual student numbers)			
	2015	2016	2017	2018 ⁴
Certificate in Youth Development (Level 4)	100% (16/16)	73% (22/30)	86% (19/22)	68% (13/19)
Diploma in Youth Development (Level 6)	93% (13/14)	100% (13/13)	95% (21/22)	94% (17/18)

³ Information provided by Praxis.

⁴ First year of delivery of the New Zealand certificate.

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

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

Disclaimer

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

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

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

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

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

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). 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/>.

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