

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Seafood Training Services Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 4 September 2013

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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:	Seafood Training Services Limited (STS)
Type:	Private training establishment
Location:	19 Rockport Place, Christchurch
Delivery sites:	330 Cashel St, Christchurch Various seafood processing factories, mainly in the South Island
First registered:	18 November 2003
Courses currently delivered:	Foundation Focused Training Opportunities (FFTO) course in seafood processing Delivery and assessment of unit standards towards the National Certificate in Seafood Processing (Levels 2 and 3) on behalf of Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT)
Code of Practice signatory?:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: STS has been allocated six funded places for the FFTO course for 2013 by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). Six students were enrolled at the time of the EER; in 2012, 18 students were enrolled, approximately 50 per cent of whom were Māori and 2 per cent were Pasifika. STS has delivered training to approximately 70 industry-based students under contract to NMIT as

at June 2013.

Number of staff:	Approximately five staff, including two management and administration staff, two full-time tutors and three part-time contracted tutors
Scope of active accreditation:	The National Certificate in Seafood Processing, with strands in Basic Processing Skills and Intermediate Processing Skills (Levels 2 and 3)
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>Students referred by Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) to the FFTO course are identified as those at highest risk of long-term unemployment. They are generally high-needs students with varied educational backgrounds and personal circumstances. Foundation skills development and seafood industry-related training are delivered through a four-day-a-week programme, which includes three days' practical training at a local seafood processing facility.</p> <p>STS delivers training to industry-based students at various seafood processing facilities, primarily in the South Island.</p>
Recent significant changes:	Student numbers for the FFTO course declined as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes in 2010 and 2011. At that time, the administration of STS relocated to the Christchurch suburb of Burwood, although delivery has continued at the Cashel St site.
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>STS met all requirements at the previous NZQA quality assurance visit, an audit in 2009.</p> <p>In 2012, STS met the external moderation requirements of NZQA and the New Zealand Industry Training Organisation.</p>

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus areas selected were:

- Governance, management and strategy, which is mandatory
- The Foundation Focused Training Opportunities course, which is the only course delivered by STS under its own accreditation.

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.

One lead and one team evaluator conducted a one-day visit to STS, attending both the head office and the training site. Interviews were held in person with the owner/director, administration officer, FFTO tutor and six current FFTO students. In addition, phone interviews were held with one tutor, two employers, a WINZ programme manager and a representative from NMIT. A wide range of documents and other resources was reviewed, including learner files, learner achievement and feedback data, course and assessment materials and stakeholder feedback.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Seafood Training Services Limited**.

STS is making a valued contribution to the provision of a skilled workforce to the seafood processing industry. This is achieved in two ways: first, through the delivery of foundation training for WINZ clients in Christchurch; and secondly, through industry-based training across the South Island. Employers contacted by the evaluators confirmed that STS is effectively preparing foundation students for employment within their processing facilities, ensuring that they have a basic level of processing skills and knowledge and display appropriate attitudes and behaviours in the workplace. In 2013, STS has been selected by NMIT to deliver seafood processing training on the institute's behalf, at levels 2 and 3 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. This attests to the organisation's reputation within the industry and confidence in STS's ability to provide relevant training and to achieve desired outcomes.

Learner achievement in the FFTO course at STS is good, especially when considered in the context of the challenges presented by the educational backgrounds and personal circumstances of many of the clients referred by WINZ. STS is consistently meeting the TEC target of an average of 25 unit standard credits per learner. Learners are not only acquiring useful and relevant skills for the seafood processing industry, but are also improving their employability through the development of appropriate attitudes to work and increased confidence and motivation. STS has evidence that the literacy and numeracy skills of some students improve during the course, but noted that employment could be achieved by learners with low levels of literacy and numeracy. While STS finds it difficult to retain students for the TEC target of 14 weeks, the evaluators sighted evidence that approximately half of those students who leave the course after only eight weeks do so to take up employment. STS achieved positive employment outcomes for 67 per cent of FFTO learners from 2011, meeting the TEC target.¹ Taking into account the very high needs of this learner cohort, STS is effective in delivering on its goal of giving each individual a chance to acquire useful skills and achieve employment, regardless of their background.

STS provides individual learning support and pastoral care that is appropriate to the needs of the students and minimises barriers to learning. Tutors are effective in creating a positive learning environment for the acquisition of both practical skills

¹ STS anticipates achieving approximately 60 per cent positive employment outcomes for 2012, although this data could not be confirmed at the time of the evaluation.

and theoretical knowledge. The organisation is well managed and engages frequently with the seafood industry.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Seafood Training Services Limited**.

STS uses a range of approaches to understand and improve educational performance for individual learners in the FFTO course. These include an initial interview, tests and completion of a student profile, and four-weekly reviews and regular learner feedback. There is good evidence that this information is used to establish key learning and personal needs, to monitor individual progress and to inform teaching plans. Examples were provided of STS making changes to teaching resources and activities, to better meet learner needs and reduce barriers to learning. Good records are maintained of individual learner achievement and employment outcomes. As a very small organisation, STS is able to identify trends in learner outcomes by drawing on these individual records. Staff report that meetings are held to undertake moderation and review recent training activities. These could usefully be supplemented by periodic opportunities for FFTO and industry-based staff to gather as a group to focus on sharing and learning from each other's experiences, reflecting on educational performance overall, and identifying improvements.

STS's engagement with industry is frequent, informal and personal. It includes regular phone and email contact and visits by the director, as well as routine conversations with processing industry staff by the FFTO tutor in the course of the practical training activities. This informal approach to stakeholder engagement reflects the size and nature of the organisation. It is providing valuable client information and feedback, which enables STS to understand industry needs and address any immediate issues arising; the director maintains email records of his engagement with industry partners. The evaluators noted that STS addresses stakeholder needs on a case-by-case basis rather than relying on the annual stakeholder survey. Industry input is sought in relation to teaching resources (such as seeking information on chemicals used, and sourcing workplace photos for teaching materials). The evaluators found that there could be value for STS in systematically collating, reviewing and reflecting on stakeholder feedback from time to time, with a view to identifying opportunities for better meeting stakeholder needs. STS is a small, well-organised provider with administrative and academic processes that are regularly reviewed. A greater emphasis on identifying and understanding how well these processes contribute to desired outcomes, and following up on how effective changes are in driving improved educational performance, would further strengthen STS's self-assessment capability.

Findings²

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**.

STS learners are achieving good outcomes, taking into account their varied educational backgrounds. The FFTO students have been identified as at highest risk of unemployment by the referring agency (WINZ), and many have challenging personal circumstances. Evidence was provided that these learners are acquiring useful knowledge and practical skills related to seafood processing, and are achieving an average of 25 unit standard credits each. While the programme can be successfully completed with low levels of literacy and numeracy, STS provided some evidence that learners are making progress in these skills, although for some students the study duration is too short for measurable improvements in tests. In addition, learners are gaining important personal attributes and attitudes which enhance their employability, such as improved confidence and motivation. The effectiveness of STS in improving the learners' employability was confirmed by WINZ, which noted the importance of these learners developing routines and increasing their ability to self-manage. While STS finds it difficult to retain students for the target of 14 weeks, the evaluators sighted evidence that approximately half of those students who leave the course after only eight weeks do so to take up employment. Taken together, this evidence confirms that, despite their very high needs, learners in the FFTO course are achieving well. STS also provided evidence that industry-based learners are gaining unit standards towards the National Certificate in Seafood Processing.

STS maintains good records of the progress of the FFTO students, and the evaluators found that the tutor and director work closely together to ensure a positive outcome for each learner, taking into account their individual circumstances. The director reports that STS is able to identify trends in learner outcomes by drawing on these individual records, although the evaluators found little evidence of the use of this understanding for improving educational performance.

² 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 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**.

STS's owner/director has long-established relationships with the seafood industry and a good understanding of employer expectations. The organisation is delivering valued outcomes to industry, which is attested to by the ongoing provision of access to processing facilities for FFTO training, and the selection of STS by NMIT in 2013 to deliver industry-based training in the South Island. Stakeholders contacted by the evaluators confirmed that they value STS's contribution to a skilled workforce for their industry and that they are satisfied that learners gain a basic level of practical processing skills and food safety knowledge, and display appropriate attitudes and behaviours in the workplace.

STS achieved positive employment outcomes for 67 per cent of FFTO learners in 2011, meeting TEC targets. WINZ values highly the opportunities STS provides for learners to gain skills and move into employment, regardless of their backgrounds. The evaluators found that STS is active in taking steps to match individuals to workplaces, in order to provide the best possible outcomes for both employers and employees, including long-term employment and career progression.

Tutors and the director gather information in the course of frequent and informal contact with key industry staff, and the director retains email records of this activity and agreed outcomes. The usefulness of stakeholder engagement could be enhanced by a more systematic approach to capturing and sharing key information across the STS team, from time to time, with a view to developing targeted improvements.

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**.

STS is very learner-focused, actively seeking feedback from the FFTO students and responding to their needs, both educational and personal. The initial interview process includes several tests to assess learning styles and literacy and numeracy skills, and completion of an individual learner profile. The completion of four-weekly evaluations and participation in a weekly class meeting, together with the small class sizes, provides ample opportunities for students to share their perspectives and offer suggestions or ask for assistance. The evaluators sighted documentary evidence of these activities and also heard examples of adjustments

being made to the teaching programme, for example a field trip and class presentation designed to build confidence and communication skills. The evaluators found that students were very satisfied with the inclusive and supportive learning environment, which encourages them to remain focused and achieve their goals.

The FFTO programme provides for an appropriate mix of theory and practical activities. The tutor works with students in groups, or individually, in the three-day-a-week workplace sessions, reinforcing the material covered in the classroom. Students benefit from demonstrations and receive assistance from factory supervisors, and are also allocated to a variety of practical tasks to build their skills. In these ways, they are gaining useful experience and greater confidence to move into the workforce. Vacancies at the Christchurch factory training site are often filled by STS students.

STS delivers courses that are at the right level and appropriate for the seafood processing industry. Block courses are delivered for industry-based learners in their workplace and at a time agreed with the employers. The director described how he consults with industry to match the programme delivery with the structure of the workforce and the skills required for each group. The evaluators found a high level of satisfaction overall with the training provided by STS. Although some industry stakeholders noted an ongoing industry shortage of staff with the skills for filleting tasks, these are beyond the current scope of training delivered by STS. Learner resources have been developed in-house and are regularly revised, using feedback from staff and in consultation with industry. Improvements have been made to course books to make the material more accessible to learners, and to incorporate changing work practices or equipment. Another initiative is the development of self-paced booklets designed to assist learners to revise content and to prepare for assessments, which is proving to be effective in building student confidence and reinforcing learning.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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**.

STS is providing an inclusive and effective learning environment, where FFTO students are able to gain knowledge and understanding of basic seafood processing, and then have an opportunity to apply their learning in a real workplace under supervision. Class activities are structured to include both individual and group work, and regular revision of material ensures that basic concepts are understood. The evaluators found that the FFTO tutor is effective in minimising barriers to learning, such as low levels of literacy, as well as in developing other key foundation skills, such as confidence, communication and self-management. The progress of individuals is closely monitored, particularly their achievement of

unit standards. However, the extent to which the individualised approach works well is largely undocumented in relation to foundation skills development. A more structured process for reflecting on the effectiveness of current teaching strategies could be helpful in consolidating good practice.

Students interviewed by the evaluators were extremely positive about their tutor, and described how they were encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Although several of the tutors have seafood processing and/or significant tutorial experience, as well as unit standard 4098 for assessment of learning, only the director holds an adult teaching qualification. As STS is a small organisation, the owner/director is able to provide a high level of individual support for the tutors, including those for industry-based students, who are distributed across the South Island. This includes practical support for administration (such as enrolment issues, supplying teaching resources and so on) as well as teaching delivery (observing and/or team teaching as required). In addition, annual performance appraisals provide opportunities to identify areas for development. The evaluators noted several recent staff meetings that provided opportunities for discussion on resources and teaching methods. Ongoing, regular opportunities to reflect as a group and to share information on teaching practice could be useful for maintaining consistency and continuing to improve teaching effectiveness overall.

STS has established fair and transparent assessment practices. The director rotates tutors for industry-based courses around the sites to assist with consistency in delivery and assessment. Tutors are required to use model answers for all assessments, and internal moderation processes are systematic and involve regular meetings of all tutors. STS consistently meets the external moderation requirements of NZQA and the New Zealand Industry Training Organisation (which has absorbed the activities of the previous standard-setting body, the Seafood Industry Training Organisation).

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**.

Learners at STS benefit from a comprehensive approach to guidance and support, which is demonstrably having a positive influence on their well-being. The evaluators found evidence of this in learner outcomes data and feedback from stakeholders, including WINZ and the learners themselves. Positive outcomes include improved confidence and motivation, the ability to gain employment, and the opportunity to move forward, regardless of background.

STS offers a 'wraparound' system of guidance and support, from the interview process through to employment, and in some cases beyond. Students report a family feeling in the FFTO course, where their development and learning is

supported by the whole group. Learners with literacy challenges are supported to understand content and to build their knowledge, in both the FFTO and industry-based courses. Tutors described how teaching programmes are amended to include a variety of practical and oral activities, including assessment, as well as the provision of one-to-one tuition. STS establishes clear expectations around behaviour and attendance, which is monitored carefully, to reinforce the importance of routine and reliability for employability. The FFTO tutor maintains a diary where individual student issues, and actions taken to address them, are recorded and monitored. In addition, students are supported to access a wide range of community and support services, such as medical and accommodation services. Overall, STS demonstrates that it has a good understanding of the needs of the students and is effective in supporting them to make progress towards greater participation in society.

The provision of guidance and support is largely dependent on the commitment and resources of the director and tutorial staff. The high level of responsiveness to individual needs is manageable within a small, focused organisation. However, some analysis of the most effective intervention strategies and sharing of experiences across the teaching team might further enhance STS's capability.

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

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**.

STS is an effective training organisation which is well managed and resourced appropriately, and is delivering valued outcomes. The director and staff share a commitment to giving learners a second chance, focusing on the future rather than the past. The oversight of day-to-day activities at STS is provided by the director, who takes a hands-on approach to ensuring training meets individual needs and delivers valued outcomes. Stakeholder liaison is frequent and informal. However, there is limited evidence of analysis of data or feedback, over time or across groups of stakeholders, to identify trends. The development of practical processes for staff to reflect as a group on data or stakeholder feedback, and to identify and monitor targeted improvements, would be useful in ensuring that educational performance is maintained.

Administrative and academic processes are clearly set out and regularly reviewed, and appropriate records of courses and individual learner progress are maintained. A greater emphasis on identifying and understanding how well these processes contribute to desired outcomes, and following up on how effective changes are in driving improved educational performance, would further strengthen STS's self-assessment capability.

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 **Good**.

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

2.2 Focus area: Foundation Focused Training Opportunities course

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

NZQA recommends that Seafood Training Services Limited consider developing processes for the periodic collation and analysis of information from a variety of sources (including staff feedback and reflections, learner achievement and outcomes data, and stakeholder feedback), with a view to identifying opportunities to improve teaching effectiveness, better meet learner and industry needs, and improve educational performance overall.

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).

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

www.nzqa.govt.nz