



# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Holistic Health Training Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 15 February 2012

# Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	3
Introduction .....	3
1. TEO in context.....	3
2. Scope of external evaluation and review .....	5
3. Conduct of external evaluation and review.....	5
Summary of Results .....	6
Findings .....	8
Recommendations .....	15
Appendix .....	16

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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

Location:	School Road, Mahana RD1, Upper Moutere, Nelson
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	April 2004
Number of students:	Domestic: 232 International: n/a
Number of staff:	Seven part-time (contracted) tutors; one full-time equivalent managing director/tutor
Scope of active accreditation:	Holistic Health Training Limited delivers four courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Holistic Massage Therapy (Level 3) (17 students)</li><li>• Applied Anatomy and Physiology for Holistic Bodyworkers (Level 5) (149 students)</li><li>• Interpersonal and Communications Skills for Bodyworkers (Level 5) (50 students)</li><li>• Certificate in Holistic Pulsing (Level 5) (16 students)</li></ul>
Sites:	One site at School Road, Mahana, Upper Moutere, Nelson. The course, Applied Anatomy and Physiology for Holistic Bodyworkers is delivered by distance from this site. The level 3 course, Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Holistic

Massage Therapy is delivered at five additional sites, the workplaces of each of the five contracted tutors. The holistic pulsing course and communications skills course are taught through workshops at selected appropriate sites to match student needs.

**Distinctive characteristics:** Holistic Health Training Limited is a small training provider, meeting the needs of holistic bodyworkers to access an approved training course at a level that will enable them to be either self-employed or to continue training in one or more modalities of holistic bodywork. The Certificate in Holistic Pulsing is the only specialist course in this modality in New Zealand.

The training provided by the PTE is either by distance (anatomy and physiology, communications, and practitioner skills) or in a practice-based course of workshops associated with self-directed study and assignments. Tutoring of massage students in short workshops is generally undertaken on an individual basis.

**Recent significant changes:** There have been no major changes to course delivery since the last quality review by NZQA in 2007. There have been continued developments in delivery of distance and study materials. Well-advanced planning is in place to develop, for approval by NZQA, a higher-level course in holistic massage.

**Previous quality assurance history:** At the last NZQA quality review, an audit in 2007, Holistic Health Training substantially met the requirements of the standard in force at the time. Three issues relating to governance and management have since been addressed.

**Other:** Most students who are “current”, particularly on the anatomy and physiology course, choose to complete only a few modules, as this programme does not lead to an employment outcome in its own right. Most who are enrolled on the holistic massage therapy course will complete it within the requisite six months.

Holistic Health Training Limited is not required to submit achievement or completion data for any

funding purposes.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The agreed scope of the external evaluation and review of Holistic Health Training Limited included the following mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management, and strategy.

The following focus area was selected because it was, at the time of the EER visit, one of the primary courses being delivered. It is an entry-level course in holistic massage, which is a modality of therapeutic massage.

- Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Holistic Massage Therapy (Level 3).

During the EER visit, other courses were also referred to for the purposes of triangulation, in particular the distance-delivered Applied Anatomy and Physiology for Holistic Bodyworkers (Level 5).

## 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 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 external evaluation and review team of two spent a day and a half on site conducting the EER at the organisation's main training site at Mahana, near Upper Moutere. During the visit the evaluation team met with the managing director/senior tutor and spoke by telephone with four tutors and four students and recent graduates of the holistic massage course, as well as with one student from the anatomy and physiology course. Meetings were held with two professional advisers to Holistic Health Training.

Holistic Health Training has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and submissions received have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Holistic Health Training Limited**.

Seventy-four per cent of students who have enrolled in the level 3 qualification Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Holistic Massage Therapy since it was first approved in 2006 have been awarded the certificate. Students graduating with this qualification are able to be employed in holistic massage or set up their own business.

There is a variable completion rate for courses, with, for example, students enrolled in the level 5 distance course in anatomy and physiology achieving at 33 per cent since 2006. Although the completion rate for this course is lower than for the holistic massage course, students generally enrol to complete only a few modules and not the full qualification.

As well as providing employment outcomes for graduates, the training provided in the holistic massage course is highly valued by local and wider communities of interest. For example, training in holistic massage at a marae has resulted in the delivery of mirimiri (massage) services within the Hauora Māori health context. Through the course in holistic massage, Māori women have learned valuable skills. Delivery of a basic holistic massage training for rape crisis workers has provided boundaries for “safe touching” in this context. The TEO has also delivered training for hospice staff. Training is regularly provided pro bono for community groups, as part of the TEO’s contribution to community.

Learners at Holistic Health Training improve their well-being and confidence and often re-focus their lives. Most learners are women, most are mature, and many are planning to change their careers, looking for a supplementary income, or seeking additional skills to benefit their existing employment. For example, at least two graduates have been able to find employment in providing holistic massage for cancer patients.

In the unregulated therapeutic massage industry, Holistic Health Training is a substantial contributor to the promulgation of standards for safe practice. Holistic Health Training actively contributes to the debates on the legislation and regulations surrounding massage. The TEO promotes, for its learners, an understanding of existing legislative requirements such as the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act, Health and Disability Commissioner Act, and the Fair Trading Act.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Holistic Health Training Limited**.

Holistic Health Training has an effective daily and weekly system for self-assessment with respect to learner achievement, enrolments, completions, withdrawals including reasons, and contact made with external stakeholders. Data is kept on all enrolments, course completions, withdrawals, and students “on hold” and the reasons why. The TEO routinely seeks feedback from learners and external stakeholders. There is ongoing engagement with industry and practitioners in a wide range of holistic health modalities.

Formal feedback by way of surveys and questionnaires has proved difficult to collect. However, feedback is regularly sought and received by way of phone calls and day-to-day email contact. This data is systematically recorded. The TEO is concerned about the low return rates for formal post-course learner feedback and is actively seeking ways to improve this.

Improvements in response to feedback received have been regularly made. These improvements include a newsletter to all students and graduates, DVDs demonstrating practical skills, and tabulated muscle charts to supplement the distance education materials for the anatomy and physiology programme.

While self-assessment is ongoing and systematic, some longer-term analysis of data would enhance the self-assessment practice of Holistic Health Training.

## TEO response

Holistic Health Training Limited has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Learners are achieving at different rates in different programmes. The holistic massage course has a high (73 per cent) achievement rate, reflecting its short, practical nature and one-to-one tutoring model. Learners respond very positively to the teaching mode of experienced and qualified tutors in their own practice facilities and are able to use this qualification in order to practice, either in their own business or in other employment.

The distance-delivered anatomy and physiology course has a much lower achievement rate (33 per cent), although there are contextual reasons for this. The most important is that there is no employment outcome for this qualification on its own. Many learners use one or more anatomy and physiology modules, which are focussed on the requirements for holistic bodyworker modalities, to progress on to further training, such as in holistic pulsing, or to supplement their knowledge for holistic massage. Students pay as they enrol for each module, and many delay further enrolments for financial reasons. Most learners are mature women who are either considering a change in employment or are preparing for earning a supplementary income or working from home. The status of all learners within each programme is held on the learner database. It is known, for example, how many learners are on hold but still current, and the reasons for any withdrawals.

The current recession has caused an increase in the number of students who are on hold, as this training is, for many, a personal choice that may not ever lead to employment. All learners who withdraw or who have not sent an assignment for marking for six months are contacted, for encouragement to continue or to find the reasons for withdrawal. While this results in a decision by some students to continue with their studies, it is also an effective strategy for organisational self-assessment.

All achievement data is collected and kept and derives from a variety of sources, including phone conversations, feedback on individual assignments, and statements of goals and aspirations made at the practical workshops. Some destination data is held, although systematic collection of learner feedback and destination data has proven difficult to date. Holistic Health Training is collecting

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

and collating data from more informal sources and is working on improving the response rates to more formal methods of data collection.

## 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 **Excellent**.

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

In the unregulated massage industry, the holistic massage course delivered by Holistic Health Training provides an introduction to safe and ethical massage practices. This was verified at the EER visit by triangulation with external stakeholders. The TEO has received repeat bookings for courses delivered to community groups, including the marae-based course, and those for rape crisis and hospice workers.

Some graduates have been employed in relaxation massage in spas associated with the tourism industry, some have become self-employed, and some work with particular clientele, such as sportspeople and cancer patients. At least two graduates spoke of the value brought to their own lives in being able to give beneficial massage to their family members.

Learners at Holistic Health Training improve their well-being and confidence and are often able to re-focus their lives. Evidence for the very positive personal outcomes for students was seen in their feedback and responses recorded in the weekly self-assessment journal kept by the manager. This evidence was verified at the EER visit by interviews with current students and graduates of the holistic massage course and with a current student of the anatomy and physiology programme.

Key stakeholders with whom the evaluators spoke in order to validate the information held and provided by the TEO included the recent South Island representative of Massage New Zealand, holistic massage workers, including oncology and hospice workers, a massage (mirimiri) provider in a Māori health (Hauora) setting, and four students. In addition, two external consultants, both with in-depth knowledge and experience of holistic massage and its requirements in terms of standards and practice, verified their ongoing involvement with the TEO in relation to resource development and the acceptability of the standards of training delivered with respect to wider provision in New Zealand. All external stakeholders who were interviewed at the EER confirmed that they value the outcomes of the training delivered by Holistic Health Training.

Holistic Health Training provides value to the community. For example, courses have been tailored to the needs of rape crisis workers, hospice workers, people working independently with cancer patients, and iwi. Courses and advice on safe massage practices have at times been provided pro bono to community groups or

learners who wish to extend their skills. In response to an expressed need by graduates of the level 3 holistic massage course, a more advanced course in holistic massage is under development for approval by NZQA.

All feedback received is collated in the manager's daily and weekly journal, and any issues responded to as they arise. This journal provides an effective daily and weekly system for self-assessment with respect to learner achievement, enrolments, completions, withdrawals and reasons for withdrawal, and contact with external stakeholders.

### 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 **Excellent**.

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

Holistic Health Training matches programmes and activities to the needs of learners and other stakeholders. The manager knows who the stakeholders are, and knows how the holistic massage course fits into the landscape of the related modalities of holistic bodyworks. There is a clear understanding of how the modalities fit together and their respective training requirements. The range of learner needs is also well understood and responded to. Evidence for this was seen in the manager's running record of feedback and contact with stakeholders, including responses and improvements that have been made.

The massage industry, of which holistic massage is just one modality, is both fragmented and unregulated. Although the professional body, Massage New Zealand, has a code of practice and sets requirements for registration, it is not a legal requirement for those practising massage to be registered or even to be a member of Massage New Zealand. Holistic Health Training, through its holistic massage course, promotes and educates for safe practice and, although the qualification does not meet the requirements for registration by Massage New Zealand, graduates may continue to work towards registration with this body or they may safely practise, as many graduates do, with this qualification.

Learners who were interviewed at the EER visit verified that their goals and needs are met by the course they are taking. All confirmed that the tutors are easily contacted and responsive to their needs. The needs of learners vary, from those wishing to gain some massage skills for working within their own family, to those who wish to set up in their own practice or be employed in a relaxation massage setting such as a hotel spa. One recent graduate said the holistic massage course had been, "one of the best things that has happened for me, for my whānau and for our development".

The external stakeholders who have an understanding of the wider therapeutic massage industry in New Zealand confirmed that the introductory course in holistic

massage provides a safe and ethical basis for practice. Although the requirements for registration by Massage New Zealand are for a higher-level qualification than the level 3 course, the recent South Island representative of this organisation confirmed that there is no legal requirement to be registered and that Holistic Health Training has a good reputation in the industry for the quality of its training at the level that it is provided. The qualification provides a potential pathway for membership of the professional body.

The manager of Holistic Health Training has a sound understanding of the therapeutic massage industry and provides leadership within this industry. For example, there has been a strong contribution to different communities of interest, including rape crisis workers, hospice workers, and marae. The manager has also appeared before a Parliamentary select committee to give evidence on the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act. Advice is given to learners on all relevant legislation, including the Health and Disability Commissioner Act and the Fair Trading Act.

#### 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**.

Holistic Health Training provides an appropriately structured and effective learning environment for its learners. Tutors of the introductory holistic massage course teach on a one-to-one or one-to-two basis, in order to maintain a safe and effective learning environment. Learners who were interviewed confirmed that this workshop-based teaching mode is of the highest quality, and that they feel supported in their learning.

The holistic massage course has been further developed in 2011 by the appointment of five contract tutors who deliver the course at their own massage business sites in Nelson, Christchurch, Wellington, Tauranga, and Auckland. After their appointment, a two-day initial training was provided for each tutor at the Mahana site of the TEO. This training focussed on the scope of the tutoring role, including assessment requirements, from which a comprehensive document for contract tutors was developed. This document, the contract for tutors, and the course and assessment materials for the holistic massage course were sighted at the time of the visit. Stakeholders, including students, who were interviewed at the EER, confirmed the effectiveness of the staff selection process, which has resulted in the appointment and subsequent professional development of five well qualified and effective tutors. Ongoing learner feedback is positive concerning effectiveness of the teaching.

Tutors are required to provide a self-evaluation of their course delivery after their first three learners have completed the course. The first of these had just been received at the time of the EER visit. A performance appraisal method, to be

implemented in March 2012 when all tutors meet together at Mahana, is being developed.

Self-assessment by the TEO with respect to the effectiveness of the teaching has led to the improvement of teaching resources, such as the DVDs produced for both holistic massage and the anatomy and physiology course, and tabulated muscle charts for use with these two courses. Tutorials have also been recorded on audio files, which has been of great value to a blind student. The website for Holistic Health Training has links to online tutorials and to each of the tutors. The lead tutor and managing director has external professional supervision and is considering ways to provide a similar service for all contracted tutors.

Moderation of assessment occurs centrally when all assessments are submitted to the manager/lead tutor at Mahana. Further development of the moderation system is occurring, for implementation at the March 2012 tutor meeting.

## 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**.

A very low tutor-to-learner ratio in the massage course provides the basis for excellent learner support and guidance. In addition to their knowledge of the holistic massage therapy field, tutors all have well developed interpersonal skills and model these in their tuition. Learners and recent graduates who were interviewed all confirmed that they have received excellent support from their tutors for their learning. The manager of the TEO is accessible to both learners and tutors for additional assistance. One tutor said that the “brand” of Holistic Health Training is created on a solid basis of support, advice, and excellent resources.

Examples of support for both learning and professional development that were seen by the evaluators, and commented positively upon by learners and tutors, included the DVDs to support the holistic massage and communication courses, the website, and the very informative newsletter, which is sent out regularly to all learners and graduates.

The part-time nature of the programmes delivered by Holistic Health Training puts some limit on the extent to which the well-being needs of learners can be addressed by the TEO. However, feedback on learners’ positive outcomes for well-being, including physical health, is regularly received and is recorded in the weekly journal. The newsletter has a focus on well-being and health, mirroring somewhat the requirement for learners to have developed skills in creating a safe, supportive environment for their clients. Throughout the holistic massage therapy course, for example, skills and knowledge relating to communication and maintaining confidentiality and respect for the client are both taught and assessed.

Improvements to delivery and support for learners have been made in response to learner feedback. For example, the newsletter is now sent out to graduates as well

as to current learners to provide continued support in this relatively small community of interest. The website provides additional support and guidance for both potential and current learners.

Longer-term analysis of self-assessment data would enhance the TEO's understanding of the well-being needs of its learners.

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

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

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

The managing director of Holistic Health Training is also the manager and lead tutor. The roles of governance and management are, to an extent, merged. There is a clear understanding, however, of the respective roles, and good modelling of this is apparent.

There is a high-level engagement of the manager with communities in the development of relationships with them and in the maintenance of currency with respect to changes in legislation and the development of codes of practice. There is a strategic plan for the company, which also acknowledges wider factors or occurrences that either have, or will, impact on further developments. The current recession and the recent closure of another PTE that delivered massage programmes are two such factors.

In response to learner feedback and as part of the strategic plan, a higher-level programme in holistic massage is being developed for approval by NZQA. Improvements have been made to communications with learners, such as the newsletter and website developments. A quality management system underpins the work of the TEO. Improvements are determined on the basis of sound planning and effective self-assessment.

Specialist consultants are regularly engaged to provide assistance as required, for example with information technology, including website and programme development. The manager is active in the local business association and receives professional external supervision. In this small organisation, and in the small and specialised holistic massage professional community, engagement with the wider business community and in professional supervision provides an ongoing opportunity for benchmarking and self-assessment.

Self-assessment is ongoing and systematic, with the manager consistently seeking ways of receiving feedback from learners and other stakeholders. A large database of learners is kept, including those who have withdrawn and their reasons why. Longer-term analysis of trends, such as the time taken for completions, and analysis of formal feedback received would enhance self-assessment.

## Focus Areas

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

### 2.1 Focus area: Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Holistic Massage Therapy (Level 3)

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

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

### 2.2 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

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

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

# Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review, other than those implied or expressed within the report.

# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.*

*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 courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.*

*NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. 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 policies and criteria 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](http://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/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>*

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