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Report of External Evaluation and Review

SIS Training & Consulting Ltd

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 6 July 2016

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Final Report

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:	SIS Training & Consulting Ltd
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	28 October 2004
Location:	416 Suffolk Road, Stoke, Nelson
Delivery sites:	Training is delivered either in hired venues or in the workplace.
Courses currently delivered:	<p>SIS Training delivers a range of seafood-related training for the seafood industry and to a number of food companies throughout New Zealand in partnership with the industry training organisation, Primary ITO. The programmes delivered lead to the following qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Certificate in Seafood Retailing (Level 2)• National Certificate in Seafood risk Management (Level 4)• New Zealand Certificate in Retail Produce (Level 2)• Limited Credit Package in Seafood Risk Management (Level 6) <p>Customised training packages, based on relevant unit standards developed by Primary ITO, are delivered in response to employer and client needs.</p>

Code of Practice signatory:	Not applicable
Number of students:	<p>Domestic: in 2015, SIS Training recorded 220 trainees. The ethnicity breakdown of trainees by percentage in 2015 was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Māori 17 per cent • European 73 per cent • Other 10 per cent <p>Although ethnicity data is collected during the application and enrolment stages, SIS Training does not specifically record achievement data by ethnicity.</p> <p>International: nil</p>
Number of staff:	In addition to the two SIS Training directors, the PTE has five contracted trainers, one training manager and one administration manager.
Scope of active accreditation:	The full accreditation for SIS Training is available at: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=767747001
Distinctive characteristics:	SIS Training is both a training provider and a provider of consultancy services to the seafood and food industries. SIS Training provides training and consulting in seafood processing, food safety quality control, aquaculture training advice, health and safety advice and risk management.
Recent significant changes:	The most recent significant change for SIS Training has been the sale of the PTE to a new owner. The new owner has experience in tertiary education at senior management level.
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>In relation to previous external evaluation and reviews (EERs), SIS Training was previously quality assured by NZQA in March 2012. SIS Training received statements of Highly Confident in educational performance and Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment. The two focus areas (governance, management and strategy, and seafood processing) were each rated as Excellent for educational performance and Excellent for capability in self-assessment.</p> <p>In addition, Primary ITO conducted moderation of</p>

SIS Training in 2015 and commented that the PTE has a robust internal moderation process.

Other:

SIS Training's uniqueness is that it is a small PTE offering workplace training. SIS Training operates within a culture of inclusiveness and friendliness where trainees can learn in a familiar environment to ensure they achieve relevant qualifications for their employment.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER included two focus areas. These were the mandatory focus area of governance, management and strategy; and seafood processing which is one of the main areas of training provided.

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.

The EER was conducted over one and a half days by two evaluators who visited SIS Training at its primary office in Nelson.

The evaluation involved engagement with: the new owner of SIS Training, the training manager, office manager, three tutors, four key employer stakeholders, and six trainees from the various programmes offered.

In addition to documents provided for the EER scoping, the EER team sighted and was provided with strategic and business plans, management and operational policies, quality management system documents, moderation review results¹, self-assessment documents, and monitoring and programme review data (including achievement data and stakeholder and learner feedback surveys).

¹ Moderation review results from the relevant industry training organisations were provided during the EER.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **SIS Training & Consulting Ltd.**

Key reasons for this judgement include the following:

- SIS Training has a clear purpose and direction which is fully understood by staff and is demonstrated through their commitment to delivering quality training to a high standard.
- The transition to a new owner has been seamless, providing the new owner with an opportunity to see the strong leadership qualities of the current staff.
- SIS Training has consistently maintained high achievement rates (above 95 per cent unit standard completions) in its courses over 2014-2015.
- SIS Training has highly qualified and industry-respected trainers, as supported by positive feedback from all key stakeholders including learners. Staff were specifically recruited and selected by the previous owner of SIS Training for their experience as trainers in the seafood industry and their ability to relate and engage effectively with people.
- The PTE has strong relationships with key stakeholders, as shown by the ongoing referral requests for training from current and new clients, including a large international food store co-operative. This includes the positive relationship SIS Training has with Primary ITO.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **SIS Training & Consulting Ltd.**

SIS Training can demonstrate that its self-assessment practices are robust, transparent and valid. The key reasons for this conclusion and judgement include the following:

- Self-assessment is structured, ongoing and continually monitored through the responsibilities of the training manager and the collective input of all training and administrative staff.
- Regular review of trainee progress is guided by a range of inquiry questions including NZQA's six key evaluation questions. This has created an environment where self-assessment is well understood and embraced by staff.
- The PTE actively engages with stakeholders through six-monthly stakeholder meetings. This leads to in-depth and regular analyses of stakeholder feedback. Information is coordinated through the administration manager and the training manager, and then discussed at staff meetings where all trainers are in attendance. Decisions are made collectively by the group.
- As a small organisation, SIS Training is highly responsive and able to make quick decisions about minor matters.
- SIS Training ensures that its long-established links in the industry are nurtured and maintained through various formal and informal relationships, allowing it to be responsive to industry developments and needs. This is evidenced through the design of many of its programmes, particularly those needing compliance accreditations.
- In relations to moderation, SIS Training has received positive responses from NZQA and Primary ITO, indicating that the PTE's teaching and assessment processes meet both entities' standards.

Findings²

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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**.

Trainee achievement in terms of completing courses and gaining the necessary qualifications is high. The achievement rates of 95 per cent and above have been consistent since the last EER in 2012. This is typical for many corporate providers such as SIS Training, where courses are of short duration and achievement is based on gaining unit standards to meet legislative requirements and standards for working, in this case the seafood processing industry. Although SIS Training's results data indicates significant decreases in enrolments since the last EER, analysis of unit standard completion rates per trainee shows more credits are undertaken and achieved by trainees. As most trainees are referred to SIS Training by their employers, there is limited scope to assess the trainees' prior learning. This has had little impact on achievement rates and can be attributed to the high degree of wrap-around learning support provided by SIS Training for those trainees.

In addition to achieving unit standards, trainees are gaining useful and practical skills. Trainees commented that they had improved their literacy levels, increased their knowledge of relevant legislation and best practice relating to their place of work, and had a greater awareness of their role and responsibilities in their job. These include developing risk management plans, designing and setting up product displays, and researching and explaining relevant legal requirements. These outcomes were confirmed by employers and were seen by them as high value for their business as well as important criteria for employees wishing to progress in their employment.

The self-assessment summary and analysis provided by SIS Training for this EER shows that the PTE's processes are comprehensive and robust. SIS Training demonstrated through its reports, staff interviews, recorded meeting minutes, learner and stakeholder evaluations and key stakeholder interviews that its programmes are clearly trainee focused. There is strong evidence that SIS Training is conducting in-depth analysis of its data, particularly achievement data, to help understand trainee outcome trends, satisfaction with the delivery of the courses, and suggested areas for improvement. For example, in 2014, 169 out of 173 trainees (98 per cent) completed their training with SIS Training, all achieving

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

relevant units standards towards an accredited qualification. In 2015, 65 out of 67 trainees (97 per cent) completed training with SIS Training. The training manager also checks evaluations for any likely trends and prepares them for discussion by all staff during their review meetings. The positive moderation results from NZQA and Primary ITO provide further evidence that SIS Training has reliable processes in place to assess achievement and progression of its learners.

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 almost all cases, trainees that attend courses delivered by SIS Training are referred by their employer with the expressed aim of achieving the relevant certification to satisfy industry requirements related to their job. Positive evidence taken from various sources, including post-course evaluation feedback, telephone interviews and written testimonials demonstrates how stakeholders derive much value from SIS Training's courses. In addition to meeting contracted requirements, this evidence supports the confident endorsement by Primary ITO, which considers SIS Training as one of the leading training providers in the industry.

In addition to satisfying legislative requirements, other outcomes include improved practice in the workplace, greater appreciation and awareness of the need to ensure safe practices are happening, employees gaining increased skills, recognised unit standard-based certification, improved learning abilities and, in some cases, pathways to promotion. Employers commented that having qualified people on site, particularly those trained in the area of risk management, provided them with cost savings. They did not have to contract qualified people to oversee risk-related scrutiny. Rather, they could upskill from within and ensure that appropriately qualified people were on site and readily available.

Employers also commented that having SIS Training so close to a major shipping port and in proximity to seafood processing plants meant that the clients could have easy access to trainers and request courses at very short notice. Clients were highly satisfied that SIS Training could be flexible and change schedules at very short notice.

SIS Training's regular contact with employers, trainees and Primary ITO enables it to react almost immediately to accommodate their needs. These include schedule changes, notification of updated legislation, and the implications of any programme reviews. As part of its overall self-assessment regime, SIS Training conducts six-monthly stakeholder meetings, bringing stakeholders together so they can formally thank them for using the PTE's services. More importantly, the meetings, combined with regular and direct industry contact, provide SIS Training with a

reasonable level of information to ensure its programmes continue to add value to a client's business.

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**.

SIS Training's programmes are well planned and are designed specifically to meet the needs of the seafood industry. The evaluation found that SIS Training has extensive knowledge of its industry, and through this knowledge has managed to customise and contextualise the training course content to meet client needs. The essence of a client's training needs are typically captured at the initial inquiry stage through in-depth conversations with SIS Training, and the training is customised accordingly. Types of training packages include the appropriate duration of a course and the content, level and pitch. Once the training package has been confirmed, together with the appropriate unit standards and assessment criteria, SIS Training is then able to provide up-to-date training in accordance with current legislation and standards. When legislative changes occur that have implications for programmes, SIS Training's training manager and head trainer analyse and design the programmes to accommodate the changes. These are then promulgated through the organisation at staff meetings or, if time does not allow, through direct contact with the trainers. On these occasions, changes to programmes are made after full discussion and disclosure with Primary ITO. SIS Training also makes contact with a number of its clients to inform them of the changes so they too can inform their employees of the changes and the revised practice.

Self-assessment capability in relation to this evaluation question is deliberate, formalised and planned. For all new programmes and those programmes that have not been taught for more than two years, SIS Training conducts its own internal moderation to ensure the content and assessment are fit for purpose and that they align with current legislative and standard regulations. These moderations are led by the training manager and formalised at staff meetings.

SIS Training gives much credit to the use of learner and stakeholder feedback to ensure its programmes meet all its clients' important needs. Although the courses are of short duration, learner evaluations are still conducted at the end of the courses. However, it is the regular direct stakeholder contacts made by SIS Training that ensure feedback is captured, analysed and given due consideration during the review of training packages.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Teaching practice at SIS Training is highly effective. The evaluators found strong evidence showing that all SIS Training's trainers have extensive knowledge and experience of teaching relevant course content to legislation and accreditation requirements. In addition, the support provided to Primary ITO in the design and development stages of the courses delivered by SIS Training provides the PTE with the added advantage of tailoring its training more effectively to achieving assessment requirements.

The delivery of training by SIS Training reflects good practice in adult education, with a facilitation focus. Trainers use a range of theory and practical activities to give trainees the skills to build a strong level of understanding of the course content to prepare efficiently for assessments. In some cases, simulated training is offered to ensure knowledge is being applied effectively under realistic workplace conditions.

In terms of resource support, the administration of training is efficient and effective. SIS Training provides detailed preparation instructions for trainers to ensure they are well prepared and have all the necessary resources to conduct their training. These include updated legislation requirements, the most current assessment tests for the relevant programme, as well as logistical support, including training location and venue and all necessary travel arrangements.

Self-assessment by the training staff is comprehensive and intended to ensure practice is effective and leading to stronger trainee outcomes. There is an active system in place for the internal moderation of assessment decisions and materials. This is usually carried out by the training manager. The evaluation team sighted examples of internal moderation assessments and was more than satisfied that the process is sound. External moderation reports by SIS Training's associated industry training organisation, Primary ITO, confirm that assessment decisions are valid and consistent and meet national standards. At its most recent moderation visit, the Primary ITO moderator recorded in the moderation report that SIS Training provided 'robust, valid and effective tutor delivery and assessment'. NZQA moderation reviews have consistently concluded that SIS Training meets all its moderation requirements.

At an individual level, all trainers are observed at least once a year by the training manager or the head trainer. Observation reports are brought back to the staff meetings to allow for all trainers to provide collective feedback. The focus on quality training and maintaining high standards of teaching delivery by SIS Training is reflected in the overwhelmingly positive feedback from key clients and the ongoing requests by clients requiring training for their employees.

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 **Excellent**.

SIS Training trainees are well guided and supported. As most courses are of short duration, typically half to one day, SIS Training has identified that the pre-course preparation and the on-site programme are where it can effectively provide its resources to support trainees. Trainees are provided with a pre-course checklist detailing course instructions, venue location, date and training time and assessment criteria.

In relation to appropriate learning environments, SIS Training has produced sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it responds well to minimising barriers to learning. As most trainees come through employer referrals, SIS Training has found that levels of prior learning can vary widely. In some cases, trainees' literacy and numeracy needs only surface at the beginning of the course. On these occasions, the trainers are able to provide one-to-one tuition given the relatively small class sizes. For trainees with English as a second language, the trainers have permitted verbal, rather than written, assessments to allow the trainee every opportunity to be assessed.

For post-course support, SIS Training trainers offer advisory support to ensure a seamless transition from theory to application in the workplace. This additional work is enabled by the close working relationships SIS Training has with its clients. Feedback from clients indicates that the accessibility of SIS Training staff to client requests for support further cements their confidence in and relationship with SIS Training.

Client relationships are further nurtured through regular stakeholder advisory meetings. At these meetings, SIS Training is able to reaffirm its relationships with stakeholders, share any recent changes related to seafood processing legislation and any compliance implications, as well as seeking feedback relating to other client needs and how best SIS Training can meet them.

The staff training meetings also include issues related to trainees or the programmes. The collective input by all staff ensures there is consistency in agreement to the solutions offered. It also further promotes the good use of peer support among trainers.

Guidance and support, although limited in scope because of the short courses offered, is consistent, with no evident performance or self-assessment deficiencies affecting learner achievement.

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 **Excellent**.

The 2012 EER report for SIS Training rated educational performance in relation to governance and management as excellent. The evaluation team can confirm that SIS Training has continued to maintain this level of performance. The evaluation team can also confidently conclude that the strategic direction and purpose of SIS Training remains clear and purposeful. In addition, the evidence gathered to date from staff and other key stakeholders of SIS Training further confirms that the transition from the previous owner to the new one has been seamless and has had very little impact on the quality and excellence of programme teaching and delivery. What has made the transition successful has been the previous owner remaining with the PTE as a trainer and allowing the new owner to operate from the same offices.³

Leadership within SIS Training is strong and effective throughout the PTE. A significant change was the development of a training manager position to oversee the monitoring and review of quality within the PTE. This position did not exist at the previous EER, with the chief executive at the time taking on the responsibility for ensuring quality. All the training staff have extensive experience in the seafood processing industry, which has enabled the previous owner to delegate a lot of responsibility to the trainers in terms of liaising with stakeholders and ensuring training maintains its relevancy and currency with the respective industry sectors. As a means of ensuring consistency, all programme design decisions are managed through the training manager, with discussions and decision-making occurring at formalised staff review meetings.

The recruitment of the training and administration staff has been effective. The training staff have had long-established careers in the seafood processing industry, including extensive previous experience as registered trainers for seafood processors. This has provided SIS Training with a strategic advantage in the provision of high-quality training. The number of referrals and inquiries from a range of key stakeholders validates the staff recruitment process by the previous owner. In addition, all the trainers, including the training manager, have been employed with SIS Training for many years and continue to remain with the PTE. This shows how much the staff are valued by SIS Training management.

In relation to self-assessment activity, SIS Training has highly structured monitoring and review systems in place which provide the organisation with comprehensive

³ The new owner has indicated that the PTE will shift its business to a new location as the current premises is a private residence belonging to the previous owner.

information to make improvements to training resources, content and delivery methods. The active involvement by the trainers in the seafood processing industry ensures quality information is obtained to either make improvements or validate the training delivered. Evidence provided showed that SIS Training is at the forefront of industry training design, with staff actively involved in the NZQA Targeted Review of Qualifications process at both governance and working party levels. SIS Training is often sought out by industry training organisations for advice about programme development.

At an operational level, SIS Training has developed its own set of structured review and monitoring processes which ensure there is complete control and management of the quality assurance processes in place. These include a continuous improvement register and an amendment register to record and monitor programme changes and improvements.

Scheduled staff meetings allow time for in-depth discussion and collective decision-making around the quality management system and self-assessment processes. This further demonstrates the level of trust and respect that currently exists within SIS Training.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management and strategy

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

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

2.2 Focus area: Seafood retailing and risk management courses

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

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

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review.

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/>.

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