

Report of External Evaluation and Review

ProDriver Training Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 15 March 2011

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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: 22 Sheffield Street, Washdyke, Timaru

Type: Private training establishment

First registered: 2006

Number of students: Domestic: hundreds of drivers attend short courses

every year to obtain their heavy vehicle driver licences

or endorsements for other kinds of vehicles.

Number of staff: Nine full-time equivalents

Scope of active accreditation: Assessment of standard accreditations in

- Commercial Road Transport Skills
- Core Driving Knowledge and Skills
- Driver Licence Classes 1-6
- Driver Licence Endorsements for dangerous goods, forklifts, rollers, tracks, wheels, passenger, vehicle recovery to level 3
- Forest Foundation Skills
- General Agriculture Goods Service
- Heavy Haulage
- Interpersonal Communications
- Machine Operations Forestry
- Occupational Health and Safety Practice
- Passenger Service

- Personal Financial Management
- Powered Industrial Lift Trucks
- **Road Transport Operations**
- Self-Management
- Service Sector Core Skills
- Transportation of Livestock by Road
- Transport of Perishable Products by Road
- Transportation of Waste and Recoverable Resources
- Work and Study Skills
- Writing

Sites: Unit 1/6 Alloy Street, Sockburn, Christchurch

McNulty Road, Cromwell

32 McBride Street, Dunedin South

ProDriver provides a range of theory and practical courses for all ages and learning styles focused on driver licences and driver licence endorsements for occupational or recreational purposes for individuals

and transport companies.

ProDriver delivers mainly low-credit programmes. Credits contribute to national certificates in road transport.

ProDriver is committed to providing quality training that promotes the transport industry, road safety, and reducing accidents on New Zealand roads.

ProDriver is approved by Land Transport New Zealand (Land Transport NZ) to deliver courses assessing drivers for class 2, 3, 4, 5 licences; and endorsements for dangerous goods, forklifts, rollers, tracks, wheels, passenger, vehicle recovery. Courses are usually 0.5 to 2.5 days in length, commonly but not always on consecutive days or half-days.

ProDriver assessments are pre-approved by Land Transport NZ and Tranzqual Industry Training Organisation (Tranzqual ITO), and assessment standards contribute towards national certificates in commercial road transport.

Distinctive characteristics:

Driver trainees and ProDriver are required to comply with relevant legislation and Land Transport NZ and

Tranzqual ITO requirements.

Recent significant changes: ProDriver underwent a change of ownership and

management in December 2009. A marketing/manager

was appointed in August 2010.

Previous quality assurance

history:

At its previous NZQA quality assurance, ProDriver met all requirements for ongoing registration apart from one

relating to personnel and the completion of staff

appraisals.

Other: ProDriver also delivers training on behalf of Aoraki

Polytechnic.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The following focus areas were included in the scope of the external evaluation and review:

- Driver licence courses classes 2-5 and driver licence endorsements. These areas represent the majority of training delivered by ProDriver.
- In accordance with NZQA policy, the scope also included the mandatory focus area of governance, management, and strategy.

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/

One lead and one external evaluator spent approximately one and a half days at the Timaru head office which is also its main delivery site. The EER team spoke with the owners/managing director, marketing/manager, tutors in Timaru, Christchurch, Cromwell, and Dunedin, class 2-5 driver licence and forklift trainees, employers, and Land Transport NZ and Tranzqual ITO.

The EER team sighted ProDriver's self-assessment for the EER, the quality management system documents, telephone evaluations file, activity spreadsheet, achievement register, trainee course evaluations and Aoraki Polytechnic course feedback summaries, governance and management meeting minutes, stakeholder surveys, action plans, resources, assessment materials, ProDriver website and take away one-pager, and Land Transport NZ and Tranzqual ITO information.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **ProDriver Training Limited.** The key reasons for this are:

- A high proportion of ProDriver trainees achieve their class 2, 3, 4, or 5 driver licences. A similarly high proportion achieve their driver licence endorsements for dangerous goods, forklifts, rollers, tracks, wheels, passenger, or vehicle recovery. Trainee satisfaction feedback indicates a high degree of appreciation of the quality of the training ProDriver provides, from the front office staff to the tutors to the new owners/managing director. Trainees were excited by the theory and knowledge and driving tips they gained from their licence training and how well they were able to apply them to their practical skills.
- The value of the training goes well beyond obtaining licences that are legally required to drive heavy and other kinds of vehicles. It extends to gaining unit standards that contribute to national certificates in commercial road transport which an increasing number of trainees are starting to achieve. Licences enable successful trainees to obtain or retain employment and provide opportunities to develop a career and earn more money as they achieve a higher and/or greater range of driver licences. This benefits the trainees, their families, their employers, and their communities.
- ProDriver's quality training promotes the transport industry and more efficient, better, and safer driving. ProDriver encourages a professional attitude and behaviour in the drivers it trains, and trainees observed that they increased their sense of well-being and confidence. It was confirmed by one transport company spoken to that the benefits of more efficient, better, and safer driving include improved productivity through increased efficiencies that are measurable.
- ProDriver matches the needs of its trainees, families, employers and local, regional, and national communities by ensuring that all trainees undertake the most appropriate driver licence for them and that they have every opportunity to succeed. At least one company employs ProDriver to assess their drivers regularly, write a report, help upskill them further, and reassess them to standards that exceed those required to obtain a licence.
- The guidance and support that ProDriver provides is far-ranging and includes providing simple, accessible information for trainees and following up poorer performing trainees.
- The new owners and managing director have made significant improvements in the 12 months since they bought ProDriver. ProDriver's educational performance is commendable. It is expected to continue to remain one of Land Transport NZ's and Tranzqual ITO's preferred providers.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **ProDriver Training Limited.** The key reasons for this are:

- ProDriver closely tracks and monitors the progress of its trainees within courses and often between courses. It has begun to collate detailed data on the achievement of licences, endorsements, unit standards, and national certificates. At the time of the EER visit, ProDriver was about to process, analyse, discuss, and compare progress and achievement by programme, site, and tutor. This ProDriver initiative will mean its data will be far more comprehensive than has historically been required to report to Tranzqual ITO, and ProDriver will be able to use the data to consider organisational improvements which go beyond monitoring individual candidate progress.
- ProDriver effectively gains feedback from trainees, tutors, and each other through
 management and staff meetings, assessment and internal moderation which include
 observation, external moderation, professional development, and staff appraisal.
 ProDriver analyses, reflects on, and uses such information to make improvements
 but could develop further these aspects of its self-assessment.
- ProDriver conducts end-of-course trainee satisfaction surveys. It has started obtaining feedback from trainees on the value of their training some time after it has taken place using follow-up telephone calls as part of an annual survey. This follow-up has the potential to gain very valuable additional information. Extension of these practices to employers and even tutors would provide additional valuable information which would enable ProDriver to make further ongoing improvements.
- ProDriver is very aware of the value of its training, which emphasises more efficient, better, and safer driving. In addition, follow-up, in-cab assessments can further develop drivers' knowledge and skills. More detailed qualitative and quantitative information about its training would provide ProDriver with further evidence of the value of its training and help develop it and related initiatives. Additional information could include measures (which one employer uses) such as reduced petrol consumption and safety benefits, as well as possibly reduced accidents, near misses, and traffic offences as indicators of improved productivity.
- ProDriver's tutors from its four sites communicate with each other regularly. This
 was appreciated by all trainers, who would also value more frequent face-to-face
 meetings for the sharing of good practice.

TEO response

ProDriver Training Limited has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

Findings¹

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 **Good.**

A very high proportion, between 95 and 98 per cent, of ProDriver trainees achieve their class 2, 3, 4, or 5 driver licences. A similarly high proportion achieves their driver licence endorsements for dangerous goods, forklifts, rollers, tracks, wheels, passenger, or vehicle recovery. Although most trainees obtain their licences by completing limited credit programmes, the assessment standards they gain also contribute to national certificates in commercial road transport such as the National Certificate in Goods Service (Heavy Vehicle Driver) and the National Certificate in Passenger Service (Large Passenger Vehicle) which an increasing number of trainees are starting to achieve.

Heavy vehicle or endorsed driver licences are essential for trainees to be able to drive particular kinds of vehicles. They enable holders to obtain or retain employment and enable other drivers to drive or tow vehicles for recreational purposes. Achievement of such licences also enables employees to develop a driving career and earn more money as they achieve higher class and/or a greater range of driver licences. Trainees also observed how their knowledge and understanding of theory related closely to practical skills and helped make them more efficient, better, and safer drivers. They commented that this in turn increased their sense of well-being and confidence.

ProDriver closely tracks and monitors the progress of individual trainees within courses and often between courses. It has begun to collate detailed data on licence, endorsement, unit standard, and national certificate achievement for 2009/2010. It has also done this by archiving data from 2007. ProDriver's own data will be far more comprehensive than has historically been required to report to Tranzqual ITO, and it will be able to use the information to consider organisational improvements which go beyond monitoring individual candidate progress. At the time of the EER visit, ProDriver was about to process, analyse, discuss, and compare progress and achievement by programme, site, and tutor. Improved tutor and employer feedback should also contribute to this process which is expected to further enhance trainee achievement.

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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 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 **Good.**

The outcomes of the training are very valuable and directly benefit the trainees, their families, their employers, and their communities. The training not only enables successful trainees to obtain or retain employment but also provides them with opportunities to develop a career and earn more money because they achieve a higher class and/or greater range of driver licences and/or national certificates in commercial road transport.

ProDriver encourages a professional attitude and behaviour in the drivers it trains.

Feedback from trainees, as confirmed by the EER team, showed that trainees appreciated the additional driving tips they received and felt that these exceeded the knowledge and practical skills required to obtain a licence. Trainees observed that their training increased their sense of well-being and confidence when driving. Those who had not succeeded at school through a lack of motivation, limited engagement with their learning and teaching, or literacy and numeracy challenges, were delighted by how more confident their success at ProDriver made them feel.

ProDriver's quality training promotes the transport industry and more efficient, better, and safer driving. Transport companies confirmed the benefits of more efficient, better, and safer driving which include improved productivity through increased and measurable efficiencies. These efficiencies enable companies to state confidently how many thousands of dollars they can save as a consequence of the training. Efficiencies include regular driver care and maintenance of the vehicle, reduced petrol consumption and tyre wear, and improved use of gear changes and brakes, all of which contribute to improved productivity. Trainees observed that what they learned was also transferable to driving their own cars, for example how to identify and address driver fatigue.

ProDriver makes good use of various feedback mechanisms to increase its understanding of the value of its training for learners and other stakeholders. These include end-of-course trainee satisfaction surveys and follow-up telephone calls, as part of an annual survey. This has the potential to gain very valuable additional information. ProDriver obtains feedback from employers from mainly informal, anecdotal sources which are nevertheless valid and very positive. The extension of self-assessment practices such as those started for trainees to something more systematic for employers would also provide similarly valuable information. Tutor feedback is currently based on observation at the time of the training and reporting immediately afterwards and could also be extended in a similar way. Extension of such practices to employers and even tutors would then provide additional valuable information which would enable ProDriver to make further ongoing improvements.

At least one company employs ProDriver between licence assessments to assess their drivers, write a report, help upskill them further, and reassess them to standards which exceed those required to obtain a licence. ProDriver is very aware of the value of its training and such follow-up, in-cab assessments and training which can further develop drivers' knowledge and skills. More detailed qualitative and quantitative information would help ProDriver further develop its training and related initiatives.

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.**

ProDriver's programmes and activities match the needs of trainees very well. ProDriver provides very accessible information on its website and a simple one-page, step-by-step flier which unpacks potentially complicated information on how to gain a heavy driver licence. The organisation strives to ensure that all trainees are training for the most appropriate driver licence for them. This can include not only pre-course counselling but pre-course driving assessment. In rare cases, despite initial screening, ProDriver will dissuade a candidate from undergoing their final summative assessment and counsel them on other careers or activities they might consider if it is clear that they will not succeed in the transport industry.

Initial and ongoing needs analysis at the point of learning, teaching, and assessment includes literacy and numeracy. ProDriver is aware how sensitive this matter can be to young men in particular and addresses literacy and numeracy and any other learning barriers individually. ProDriver uses reader/writers when appropriate but is also committed to not passing any candidate who cannot achieve what is required. It has identified literacy and numeracy and English for speakers of other languages as challenges, especially in Christchurch. Planned training with Aoraki Polytechnic in adult teaching and learning will be augmented to cover these aspects.

ProDriver maintains currency with the latest requirements and practices and works with and contributes to ongoing improvements to courses, resources, and assessment materials with Land Transport NZ and Tranzqual ITO, Aoraki Polytechnic, and employers. The EER team spoke to trainees who appreciated the range of learning and teaching approaches and resources. The trainees also confirmed the value of the close integration of theory and practice as they learned, and the additional driving tips they were able to apply to their practical driving skills. They appreciated the considerable pre-reading which their courses included as well as the resource booklets they keep for future reference. This feedback was consistent with the self-assessment feedback ProDriver had obtained and which the EER team sighted.

ProDriver's programmes and activities match the needs of its trainees and their employers. ProDriver enables trainees and their employers to choose for the training and assessment to be conducted at their place of work and/or use their own vehicles or equipment. This gives some trainees additional confidence, supports successful assessment, and makes the training even more directly beneficial to the employer. ProDriver's programmes and activities also match the needs of families, and trainees' local, regional, and national communities. Trainees are not only able to train locally, to be locally employed, to become better, safer, and more efficient drivers, but also to obtain or retain jobs, develop driving careers, increase their incomes, and help reduce accidents on New Zealand roads.

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 Good.

The teaching at ProDriver is highly effective, based on the results achieved, trainee and employer feedback, EER team observations, and the satisfaction of Land Transport NZ and Tranzqual to the extent that ProDriver is one of their preferred providers. The EER team spoke to a range of trainees who appreciated how engaged they became in their learning. Trainee motivation was generally very high, although tutors reported that it was variable for trainees referred for pre-employment training by the Ministry of Social Development.

Trainees attributed their engagement and motivation to a number of factors. These include: the knowledge and experience of their tutors; the range of learning and teaching approaches and resources; small classes; attention to each individual including those with literacy and numeracy challenges and a history of poor school achievement; the ability to simplify, explain and answer questions; the close connection and integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills; and the use of pre-reading, checkpoints, formative as well as summative assessment, and take-home resources for future reference. Trainees only undertake assessment when they are sufficiently prepared and ready. The assessor puts trainees, who are often quite anxious, at ease and builds their confidence.

Tutors are highly experienced in the transport industry and relate very well to all trainees. They all have comprehensive, current transport industry licences and minimum adult teaching and assessment qualifications which are to be further developed through professional development from 2011. External professional development and effective performance appraisal underpin the effectiveness of the teaching at ProDriver. A review of the performance appraisal system is under discussion in order to further improve its quality and the level of reflection and participation. Regular communication between tutors, including through Skype or in face-to-face meetings, helps tutors share good practice. The tutors appreciate this sharing and would like more of it.

ProDriver effectively gains feedback from trainees, tutors, employers, and each other through management and staff meetings, internal assessment moderation by the managing director (including observation), external moderation, and staff appraisal. The organisation analyses, reflects on, and uses such information to make improvements but could develop other aspects of its self-assessment. ProDriver acts on feedback to the appropriate level of detail, including recommending changes to resources or assessments to Land Transport NZ or Tranzqual ITO.

Trainee satisfaction feedback obtained by ProDriver and confirmed by the EER team indicates a high degree of appreciation of the effectiveness of the teaching ProDriver provides in a supportive learning environment. The training is relaxed but focused and addresses and reduces the quite high levels of anxiety that written assessments and/or practical assessments can cause to the detriment of successful achievement.

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.**

The guidance and support that ProDriver provides to its trainees is an impressive and holistic approach to learning, teaching, and assessment. The front-of-office reception staff are very efficient, effective, and friendly from the first enquiry and continue their support throughout and after training and assessment.

Comprehensive pre-course learning through pre-course reading of resources provided in advance is completed by trainees and is integrated into the course so that it directly connects to the training. Trainees cannot proceed and succeed without doing the pre-course work. Initial needs analysis is supplemented by ongoing needs analysis which takes place at different points of learning, teaching, and assessment and when literacy and numeracy issues and other barriers to learning are addressed. ProDriver does not assess anyone who they suspect is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The organisation acts appropriately according to the situation and external advice and provides guidance and support to the trainee.

ProDriver tutors are proactive in ensuring that trainees have every opportunity to succeed. The EER team witnessed an example of this during a practical assessment. The assessor was extremely patient and took time to integrate further learning with assessment to the point that the candidate made such progress at the point of summative assessment that they achieved their licence. However, if a candidate cannot show that they have reached the standard required and that their performance is repeatable, ProDriver will not award them their licence. Post-course takeaway materials are available to trainees for future reference.

The commitment of ProDriver tutors to the community and road safety are exemplified by their alerting employers to any poor driving behaviours on public roads by ex-trainees. ProDriver's and the EER team's feedback from trainees, tutors, employers, and Land Transport NZ and Tranzqual ITO show high satisfaction with the guidance and support that trainees receive.

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 **Good.**

The new governance and management team has supported educational achievement very effectively so far and has shown business acumen, resilience, and integrity in practice, has met challenges and competition, and has grown ProDriver's reputation to the extent that it recently gained a new client dissatisfied with its former training provider. ProDriver has shown that it is prepared to develop new initiatives and take risks without jeopardising its business. For example, it is about to meet a request to provide further training in the

transport and ground spreading of fertiliser and has embraced a new kind of relationship with Aoraki in a new and different funding environment.

The new owners, the managing director, and the recently appointed marketing/manager are aware that they need to ensure that the needs of both management and training are met in the short and longer terms. Current leadership is aware of the need to increase the ability of the organisation to sustain its operations in changing times. Accordingly, it has a focus on staffing capacity and capability, record-keeping and processing, and procedural documentation as well as consideration of succession planning.

ProDriver has been very effective in supporting educational achievement and is expected to continue doing so. ProDriver's vision of promoting more efficient, better, and safer driving is shared by all the staff involved in planning and is supported by the new owners and management. On first purchasing ProDriver 12 months ago, the new owners and managing director updated ProDriver's quality management systems, which appear at this early stage to be very suitable for an organisation of its size and support good practices and improvements.

Several of these improvements and practices have been referred to earlier in this report and in section 4 in particular. They underpin a culture of highly effective learning and teaching through the use of a variety of approaches and resources, attention to each individual – including those with literacy and numeracy challenges and a history of poor school achievement – close connection and integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and the integrated use of pre-reading, checkpoints, and formative and summative assessment. ProDriver governance and management also supports educational achievement in several ways: by supporting staff through effective performance appraisal, professional development, and internal moderation; developing a strong administration team; building a management team with marketing capacity; developing the gathering and processing of achievement data; and developing the gathering of follow-up trainee feedback which includes responses on the effectiveness and value of training some time after the training.

The success of such developments is reflected clearly in ProDriver's educational performance, the effectiveness of trainees' achievements, the teaching and guidance and support given to trainees, the value of the outcomes, and how well trainees' needs are matched by the programmes and activities. However, more time is needed to see the full benefits of these developments and even better and extended self-assessment in areas such as employer feedback referred to in previous sections of this report. This will further confirm the high level of confidence the EER team and other interested parties already have in ProDriver's new owners and managing director. The EER team expects that ProDriver will remain one of Land Transport NZ's and Tranzqual ITO's preferred providers. It would be helpful if ProDriver were able to benchmark its achievement of national certificates, perhaps through Tranzqual, to confirm its claim that its completions rate is higher than most of its competitors.

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 Good.

2.2 Focus area: Driver license courses classes 2-5

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

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

2.3 Focus area: Licence endorsements

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 this EER.

Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this 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. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and 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 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 (<u>www.nzqa.govt.nz</u>).

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/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/

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