



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report



Papa Taiao Earthcare Limited

Date of report: 12 June 2025

About Papa Taiao Earthcare Limited

Papa Taiao Earthcare partners with a diverse range of stakeholders to offer part-time training in sustainable regenerative enterprise to secondary school ākonga (students) across Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	7 Mutu Road, Paekākāriki, Wellington
Eligible to enrol international students:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 352 enrolments in 2024 (52 equivalent full-time students) Māori 211 (60 per cent), Pasifika 35 (10 per cent), disabled 27 (8 per cent); 100 per cent under 25 years of age
Number of staff:	5.2 full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	Papa Taiao Earthcare Papa Taiao began delivering training in 2012. In 2025, it is a sub-contractor for four trades academies. Papa Taiao accesses Gateway and STAR funding ¹ for shorter-duration courses. Papa Taiao registered as a PTE in December 2022.
Last EER outcome:	This is the first EER for this PTE.
Scope of evaluation:	Focus area: Trades Academy-funded courses – 75 per cent of the 2024 delivery
MoE number:	7771
NZQA reference:	C60689
Dates of EER visit:	7 and 8 April 2025

¹ Gateway and STAR programmes fund work experience and tertiary courses for secondary students.

Summary of results

Papa Taiao is an innovative provider that is meeting well the important needs of ākonga and stakeholders, some of whom are marginalised. Papa Taiao is highly reflective and intentional in its activities. However, it is addressing some self-assessment challenges.

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Papa Taiao is a well-established, values-based organisation with a clear aspirational purpose and capable leadership. They thoughtfully balance the tension between innovation and continuity.
- In partnership with diverse stakeholders, Papa Taiao offers a range of training relevant to regional needs. Courses are delivered in hands-on 'living classroom' in the outdoors, delivered in project-based learning. These courses engage many priority ākonga, some in isolated communities. The PTE's valued contributions have been externally recognised.
- Most ākonga attend and complete their courses and gain valued credits. They acquire useful skills, knowledge and positive attitudes. Ākonga also learn soft skills and improve their confidence and wellbeing, though this evidence is still emerging.
- Papa Taiao engages relational kaiako who are passionate about developing rangatahi and regenerating the planet. They foster strong relationships and the mana of ākonga, stakeholders and te taiao (the environment). Educational standards are maintained. Kaiako systematically monitor attendance, completions and educational progress. Assessment and moderation practices are robust. Regulatory requirements are effectively managed.
- Papa Taiao is highly reflective and intentional in its activities. The PTE values people and organisational learning, despite limited financial and time resources. Papa Taiao has developed models that articulate its practice and evaluate

its mahi. Achievement data has presented some self-assessment challenges which Papa Taiao is progressively addressing. Gathering meaningful feedback in a feasible way, is another challenge the PTE is undertaking.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Most ākonga are secondary school students who typically attend Papa Taiao training one or two days per week for a term or year. Sixty per cent of ākonga in 2024 were Māori, an outstanding participation rate.</p> <p>Most ākonga completed their Trades Academy-funded courses.³ They acquire useful skills, knowledge and positive attitudes related to te taiao (the environment). They develop soft skills, including how to work in a team. They improve their confidence and wellbeing.</p> <p>Ākonga who completed gained on average 15 credits. Most attended over 80 per cent of their classes in 2024. The unit standard completion rate was close to 70 per cent. Most Māori ākonga completed their courses and gained similar credits to other ākonga. Pasifika numbers are too low to make a clear judgment. Most learning support ākonga completed their courses but gained fewer credits. This was a generally strong result.</p> <p>There were few enrolments in the New Zealand Certificate in Land Based Sustainability Practices (Level 3). The first cohort in 2023 (four) did not complete. Four of the six 2024 ākonga gained credits and are still completing in 2025. Papa Taiao made programme changes to better meet the needs of the mostly Māori ākonga.</p> <p>Papa Taiao has a strong understanding of achievement. Robust assessment and moderation practices give confidence in the results reported. Some data quality issues emerged in 2023 (the first reported cohorts) which have been progressively addressed. Papa Taiao</p>

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

³ See Appendix 1 for further details.

	systematically tracks and monitors individual educational progress; reports are given to ākonga each term.
Conclusion:	Achievement is generally strong. Papa Taiao has a robust understanding of achievement, addressing data quality issues and making programme changes.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Papa Taiao's purpose is 'to enable young people to make a living through enterprise while regenerating the planet and its people, through offering a range of student led innovative and entrepreneurial learning'. There is convincing evidence Papa Taiao is achieving its purpose at this stage of development.</p> <p>Papa Taiao has gained noteworthy stakeholder engagement and external recognition. The PTE engages with a diverse range of stakeholders including schools, numerous kura kaupapa, conservation groups, government agencies, councils, remote communities (Hokianga, West Coast) and thought leaders. Some examples of recognition are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a West Coast course tree planting project winning the 2023 national Young Enterprise Scheme award • receiving significant Curious Minds funding in 2024 • participating in a workforce development council working group developing micro-credentials for entry-level conservation learning. <p>Papa Taiao ākonga gain multiple benefits. They achieve valued credits towards their National Certificate of Educational Achievement. They learn knowledge and skills and experience personal development and improved wellbeing. Ākonga contribute to conservation enterprise projects that benefit themselves, local communities and the environment (te taiao). Papa Taiao is exploring other ways to more systematically evaluate these outcomes. It has used the Most Significant Change evaluation approach as one method. Papa Taiao has reviewed its community</p>

	<p>projects, developing a model identifying key factors that enable community change.</p> <p>Papa Taiao offers school partners a conservation enterprise learning pathway for their ākonga. The PTE has developed a values-informed collaborative school agreement that identifies the 'mana-enhancing gifts and gains' for each party. The very high participation rate of Māori ākonga (60 per cent in 2024) and strong engagement with Māori stakeholders is a sign of its cultural responsiveness.</p> <p>Papa Taiao is highly reflective and intentional in its activities. It has developed a logic model and theory of change model for how it contributes to people and system change. The PTE works with evaluation subject matter experts.</p>
Conclusion:	Papa Taiao is contributing to high-value benefits for its ākonga, stakeholders and the environment. The PTE is highly reflective and innovative.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Papa Taiao, drawing on its rich stakeholder engagement, is clearly responsive to the important needs of local ākonga and regional stakeholders. Facilitators co-construct courses with ākonga, schools and community stakeholders. The outcome is that Papa Taiao offers a broad and dynamic range of courses including regenerative gardening, pest control, revegetation and moana restoration.</p> <p>Papa Taiao provides ākonga with hands-on outdoor learning opportunities using community and accessible resources and contexts. It is passionate about meeting needs in flexible and creative ways. Project-based learning is a central part of the delivery approach, such as designing a community mural about pollution. Ākonga find the learning environments often interesting and fun. Kura/schools that were interviewed said these niche</p>

	<p>courses are effectively meeting the needs of these ākonga. Community stakeholders interviewed said the courses are relevant and valued.</p> <p>Papa Taiao effectively maintains sound educational standards. Assessment practice is robust. Internal moderation procedures are systematic and validated by typically positive external moderation results. Papa Taiao is carefully exploring how to innovate in its assessment practice in wānanga and real-world contexts.</p> <p>Papa Taiao found the New Zealand Certificate in Land Based Sustainability Practices (Level 3) did not meet needs well in its delivery context. It therefore made Type 2 changes introducing wānanga and shorter-duration, more intensive delivery. The PTE has also recently gained approval to offer ākonga the New Zealand Certificate in Primary Industry Skills (Level 2) (April 2025). Papa Taiao has trialled an oral ākonga evaluation during a wānanga to gain more meaningful data and greater participation. A more systematic course review process would add value.</p>
Conclusion:	Papa Taiao training design and delivery matches well to the needs of ākonga and stakeholders. The PTE is focused on adapting and improving its training practices.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Papa Taio has core organisational values that support ākonga including manaakitanga: 'Raising the Mana of people, and things, by showing respect and kindness'. The PTE engages relational kaiako passionate about rangatahi, their development, and regenerating the planet. Kaiako foster strong relationships with and between ākonga, seeking to create safe learning spaces. For example, kaiako and ākonga identify how they are at the beginning of each class. Kaiako systematically monitor the attendance, completions and educational progress of ākonga.</p> <p>There is a strong focus on adopting te ao Māori mātauranga and practices, including wānanga. Ākonga are</p>

	<p>actively involved in their learning such as choosing community projects or building (in teams) their own garden beds. It is a living classroom, often outdoor and in the community, which encourages participation and inclusion. Ākonga and school partners note that the approach is different to many other school activities. Alumni sometimes come back and share their experiences, such as leading a community pest control network.</p> <p>Papa Taiao typically delivers training one or two days per week. There are formal agreements with schools/kura, who provide most of the pastoral care. Regular connections with school liaisons ensure support needs are followed up. The PTE has limited influence on the other days of the week. Papa Taiao reported there have been no critical incidents or formal complaints. The PTE reviewed its health and safety procedures in 2024. Kaiako professional development in 2024 explored how to better support the PTE's neurodiverse ākonga.</p> <p>Papa Taiao pays close attention to ākonga wellbeing and progression. Its evaluation plan aims to gather meaningful ākonga (and stakeholder) feedback. However, currently there is limited representative feedback from ākonga and stakeholders . Papa Taiao is investigating how to strengthen this feedback loop in 2025.</p>
Conclusion:	Papa Taiao effectively supports its ākonga to stay involved, develop and complete their learning. Papa Taiao pays close attention to ākonga wellbeing. Some self-assessment activities could be strengthened.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Papa Taiao is a small, well-established organisation with a clear purpose and evolving live values. These intentions strongly inform its high quality strategic and annual plans and decision-making. PTE registration has been part of Papa Taiao's long-term planning.</p> <p>There is a capable and complementary management team, supported by an able and experienced advisory group.</p>

	<p>Educational leadership is robust. Enhanced systems, mentoring and oversight of kaiako are evident. Papa Taiao has recruited, supports and is professionally developing the right people to fulfil its purpose. The PTE is highly responsive to diverse, including marginalised, stakeholder needs. It often acts as an effective bridge between the different worlds of its diverse stakeholders. The leadership thoughtfully balances the tension between innovation and continuity, despite limited financial resources. These tensions will remain moving forward.</p> <p>The Papa Taiao team is highly reflective. Its people seek to discern how to fulfil the PTE's transformative purpose, remain aligned to its values, while grounded in the day-to-day realities of its ākonga, stakeholders and managing a registered PTE. Papa Taiao values organisational learning. This report has noted multiple examples of considered self-review and experimentation, enabling significant innovation and ongoing adaptation. Papa Taiao is currently reviewing its values and evaluation plan. It is a challenge finding evaluation approaches that are robust, feasible and values-aligned. The new 'Poutama' value seems an important foundation.</p> <p>Papa Taiao reviews its activities and uses data to guide decision-making. Achievement and feedback data are two challenges that it is progressively addressing.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Papa Taiao leadership is effectively supporting mostly high educational performance. The organisation is clearly learning, as demonstrated by some significant innovations and adaptations. However, currently, self-assessment information and processes are not of consistently high quality.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Papa Taiao has in place a detailed quality management system that has been updated to support consistent compliance management practice and mitigate risks. The PTE has clear roles and responsibilities. In interviews with the EER team, the leadership was conversant with key regulatory requirements. This enquiry found operating practices that indicate this system is being implemented. The other signs of effective compliance management practice were that Papa Taiao:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered programme hours and assessments that were consistent with the NZQA programme approval documentation. • Gained NZQA approval for significant changes made to the approved programme. • Has a systematic internal moderation system operating. It has participated in the required external moderation activities. • Has formal agreements with partner schools and trades academies in place. • Engaged appropriately experienced and qualified staff for the training context. Staff undertook professional development to ensure they met the consent to assess requirements. • Undertakes the required police vetting of staff engaging with vulnerable young people. • Undertook a sound review of the Code of Practice for pastoral care. Papa Taiao published the required information on its website. However it needs to define critical incidents and complaints in its self-review. • Has in place coherent health and safety procedures that have been recently reviewed. • Has the necessary temporary site approvals. • Submits its various NZQA attestations in a timely fashion, with one exception.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States there have been no significant ethical and legal incidents since being registered as a PTE. <p>There is a range of evidence that demonstrates that the organisation reviews and updates its management practices to ensure it remains compliant.</p>
Conclusion:	Papa Taiao has an effective approach for managing and reviewing its important compliance accountabilities.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Trades Academy funded courses

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Papa Taiao has thoughtfully developed and delivered a wide range of courses in consultation with ākonga, schools/kura and communities for various regions and contexts. The majority of ākonga were Māori in 2024⁴, a key success. Most ākonga complete, learn and gain credits. Some courses have been externally recognised for their valued contributions.</p> <p>There is strong evidence of mostly robust self-review, evolving practices and improvements. However, self-assessment information and processes are not of consistently high quality. Achievement and feedback data are two areas that Papa Taiao is progressively addressing.</p>
Conclusion:	A range of diverse courses are meeting well the important needs of many ākonga, schools and stakeholders. Self-review is mostly robust, bringing evolving practices and improvements. However, some self-assessment challenges remain.

⁴ See Appendix 1 for further details.

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Papa Taiao Earthcare Limited:

- Consider ways to enhance its key achievement measures and analysis (key evaluation question 1).
- Explore how to more systematically evaluate changes in ākonga personal development and wellbeing, in a feasible manner (key evaluation question 2).
- Explore how to gather meaningful and representative ākonga (and stakeholder) feedback, in a feasible manner (key evaluation question 4).

Requirements

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

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

Appendix 1

Table 1. Summary of achievement measures for 2023 and 2024

Year	2023					2024 ⁵				
Ākonga	Overall	Māori	Pasifika ⁶	Learning Support	Pākehā	Overall	Māori	Pasifika	Learning Support	Pākehā
All courses										
Enrolments (EFTS)	352 (43.6)	139	35	60	178	412 (52)	211	17	27	184
Unit completion rate (%)	-	-	-	-	-	93	-	-	-	-
Trades Academy funded courses										
Enrolments (EFTS)	121 (30.6)	70	11	18	40	163 (39)	95	9	15	59
Completed course (%)	74	79	82	100	32	75	70	11	100	37
Unit completion rate (%) (of ākonga who completed course)	73	75	47	54	74	69	70	55	55	89
Average credits (of ākonga who completed course)	15	15	10	12	15	15	15	11	10	18
Attendance (of ākonga who completed course – above 80%) (%)	54	35	9	33	63	85	70	100	100	100

⁵ The PTE noted that the quality of the 2024 data has improved since 2023, its first year of reporting results.

⁶ Nearly half of Pasifika also identified as Māori.

Short courses										
Enrolments (EFTS)	(13)	-	-	-	-	(13)	-	-	-	-
Average credits	11	-	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	-

Source: Papa Taio data

Table 2. New Zealand Certificate in Land Based Sustainability Practices (Level 3) 127978-2 Completions for 2023 and 2024

Year	Enrolments	Programme completions	Still completing	Average credits achieved
2023	4	0	0	-
2024	6	0	4	14
2025	9 ⁷	-	9	NA

Source: Papa Taiao data

⁷ Includes the 2024 ākongā still completing.

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

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

Disclaimer

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

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

- *Identify organisational fraud⁸*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

⁸ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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