

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Fruition Horticulture (BoP) Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 19 November 2014

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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:	Fruition Horticulture (BoP) Limited
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	50 First Avenue, Tauranga
Delivery sites:	One learning centre, as above. In addition, community-focused training is delivered in community settings (halls or other suitable facilities).
First registered:	16 June 2006
Courses currently delivered:	<p>At the time of the external evaluation and review (EER), Fruition Horticulture was delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vakameasina programme. This is a non-formal education programme funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) solely for Pasifika peoples with temporary employment permits to work in New Zealand (typically seasonal horticultural work).• Tuition support and guidance for learners enrolled in the Lincoln University Regional Diploma in Horticulture and Horticultural Management programme (off-campus).• Farmsafe/Growsafe. This programme is being delivered on contract to Farmsafe.• Nelson Cadets programme. The delivery of off-job training to cadets, contracted by

Primary ITO.

In addition to these programmes, previously (in 2013 and earlier) Fruition Horticulture delivered another course of study, which self-assessment information submitted for this EER provides evidence for (namely the Effective Supervision programme on contract to the former Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (now Primary ITO)).

Fruition Horticulture, as a part of a consortium, has also recently been awarded a contract to deliver a programme: Foundation Learning for Employment in the Post-Harvest Sector, funded by the Tertiary Education Commission. At the time of the EER this programme had not yet begun; however, planning documentation was submitted as self-assessment and on-site evidence.

Code of Practice signatory?:

No

Number of students:

- 2013 – Vakameasina – 831 learners
- 2013 – Lincoln University Regional Diploma in Horticulture and Horticultural Management – 19 learners
- 2013 – Effective Supervision – 40 learners

(The above figures are of enrolled learners, and are not a count of 'equivalent full-time learners'.)

There are no international students enrolled. (Vakameasina learners do not enter New Zealand on a student visa.)

Number of staff:

Eight full-time equivalents

Scope of active accreditation:

Fruition Horticulture has consent to assess a range of agricultural, horticultural and generic unit standards up to level 6 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Details on these consents can be found at:

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=780405001>

Distinctive characteristics:

Tertiary education and training is one of five services offered by Fruition Horticulture.

Within the educational arm of the company, learners are predominantly full or part-time employees within the horticultural sector.

Presently, the main focus of the PTE's educational services is the delivery of the Vakameasina programme. This programme comprises two hours of instruction per week over 10 weeks to groups of temporary Pasifika workers in New Zealand who are employed in horticulture. The contract with MFAT is unique, and until recently has been the only government-funded training and education support available to these migrant workers while they are in New Zealand.

In regard to the Lincoln University diploma programme, Fruition Horticulture provides tuition support for learners living in the central North Island. This occurs through a sub-contracting arrangement with the university, where Fruition Horticulture provides classroom-based tuition to part-time learners who would otherwise study remotely. Under this arrangement, Fruition Horticulture is responsible for tuition (classroom and tutor matters), while the university retains ultimate responsibility for the overall programme (including curriculum development, core learning materials, formal assessments, and the awarding of qualifications).

Recent significant changes: The ownership and directorship of Fruition Horticulture changed in 2013.

In 2011 (for the 2012 year), Fruition Horticulture won the tender to deliver Vakameasina in its own right (previously delivered under sub-contract to another provider).

Previous quality assurance history: NZQA undertook a first EER of Fruition Horticulture in 2010. NZQA was Confident in the organisation's educational performance, and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER was:

- Governance, management and strategy
- The Vakameasina programme¹
- Support for the Lincoln University Regional Diploma in Horticulture and Horticultural Management (Level 5)

Governance, management and strategy was selected as a focus area because it is a mandatory requirement. The Vakameasina programme was selected as a focus area because it is a significant area of delivery, which Fruition Horticulture is now fully responsible for. Support for the Lincoln University diploma was selected as this pertains to higher-level, formally assessed delivery by Fruition Horticulture, and is currently being delivered.

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 evaluation team comprised two evaluators. The team visited Fruition Horticulture on 5 and 6 August 2014. Meetings and interviews were held with:

- The two company executive directors²
- Two staff with responsibilities, respectively, for overall delivery of the Vakameasina programme, and overall delivery of educational support for the Lincoln University diploma
- Two additional tutors delivering the Vakameasina programme
- A tutor providing support for the Lincoln University diploma
- A student presently enrolled in the Lincoln University diploma³

¹ [Vakameasina \(source: MFAT NZ\)](#)

² The directors are also personally involved in tuition for the Lincoln University diploma programme, and development work for all other programmes.

³ At the time of the EER, two Lincoln University diploma papers were being offered with Fruition Horticulture support. There were eight enrolled learners in the Engineering paper
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- Four graduates who have completed papers with Fruition Horticulture towards the Lincoln University diploma (telephone interviews)
- A Lincoln University representative (contract manager)
- The MFAT representative (contract manager)
- Six learners in the Vakameasina programme
- An employer of workers enrolled in the Vakameasina programme

In addition, the evaluation team reviewed a range of operational documentation, including strategic planning materials, staff meeting minutes, a quality management manual, enrolment information and policies, course design information, and samples of delivery and assessment materials. The evaluators undertook a sample review of all materials tabled.

This documentation complemented the self-assessment information that had been submitted by Fruition Horticulture prior to the EER.

(scheduled during the time of the evaluation), but only two were seeking tuition on the week of the evaluation. Of these, only one was available for interviewing.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Fruition Horticulture**.

There is clear and comprehensive evidence that Fruition Horticulture is meeting the most important needs of learners and other stakeholders and that this results in positive learner outcomes.

For learners on the Lincoln University diploma programme, the main desired outcome is a recognised industry qualification which can lead to new roles and career opportunities. Evidence gathered through this evaluation indicates that learners are achieving a qualification, as demonstrated by the qualification success rate (generally 100 per cent with most cohorts of learners). In addition, there is evidence that learners value the specialist advice and support gained directly from Fruition Horticulture through this programme.

For Vakameasina learners, the desired outcome is education that allows temporary migrant workers to more readily participate in New Zealand work and community activities. The learner-centred, negotiated curriculum of this non-formal programme allows learners to select particular topics, ensuring high relevance and interest to the learners. The selection of thematic learning areas is well balanced by experienced ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) tutors who embed basic literacy and numeracy within the programmes. Evidence from employers and learners indicates that this knowledge is highly valued (for example, how to read a pay slip, emailing family at home, and access to community services). There is also some evidence that the learning has positive impacts in the workers' homeland communities.

This evaluation has also found strong evidence of effective processes that contribute towards the outcomes noted above. This includes clear strategic and management processes, and suitable resources. The evaluation has not found any significant gaps or weaknesses within the educational processes and practices applied by Fruition Horticulture for the current programmes offered.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Fruition Horticulture**.

Fruition Horticulture has a highly effective self-assessment approach which is applied to all programmes and all areas of operation. This approach applies the six key evaluative question areas used within this report, and therefore has strong alignment with the quality expectations of NZQA. Evidence shows that the self-assessment methodology is applied consistently and regularly.

Continuous application means Fruition Horticulture staff and management have current information on the progress of learners against desired outcomes, including social and academic outcomes. This information is used both to understand learner needs and to support learners. Examples of the use of this information leading to improved educational performance and other valuable outcomes were noted during this evaluation. Examples include the trialling of first-language speakers as interpreters in the Vakameasina programme, system adjustments to better monitor attendance, and ongoing tutor training and support.

Management and staff at Fruition Horticulture demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement, and an orientation to research and evaluation which reflects the science-based nature of the key industry stakeholders. Overall, the approach of Fruition Horticulture allows the organisation to gain useful insights into its practices, using valid and relevant data – which ultimately contributes to quality educational outcomes.

Findings⁴

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**.

For Fruition Horticulture, learner achievement in relation to the Lincoln University Regional Diploma in Horticulture and Horticultural Management can be measured in regard to: (i) ongoing participation and retention; (ii) student satisfaction with tuition and the learning environment; (iii) student qualification achievement results (albeit noting that formal qualification achievement is the overall responsibility of the university).

In regard to retention, Fruition Horticulture staff were able to demonstrate, through management records, the continuous retention of enrolled learners through the papers offered each semester. This was also confirmed in student and graduate interviews. In addition, further data on the learners' rate of progress is kept by the course coordinator, who contacts all learners each year to determine enrolment needs and study plans. This is good practice and means the reasons for any student withdrawal or exit are clear and understood by the PTE.⁵ All of these factors are reflected on in regular and documented management meetings.

In regard to student satisfaction, Fruition Horticulture places strong emphasis on understanding learner achievements within classroom settings, as it is this aspect of delivery that the PTE is directly responsible for. Fruition Horticulture has a well-developed process of ongoing student evaluations (all students, all courses tutored). From this data the self-assessment summary provides evidence of very high student satisfaction, noting that most student evaluations rated their tuition by Fruition Horticulture as 'excellent'. Documented evidence reviewed for this evaluation, along with student and graduate interviews, corroborates this finding.

Data on the formal completion of university papers studied with Fruition Horticulture support shows a near 100 per cent learner achievement rate since 2010. Data is also disaggregated into Māori and non-Māori completions for the purpose of ensuring any disparities that arise can be managed⁶ (there are no significant outcome differences). Table 1 provides a summary of key achievement data for

⁴ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

⁵ Evidence supplied by Fruition Horticulture indicated that withdrawals typically related to non-study factors, such as a change in life circumstances, new occupation, shift in location, etc.

⁶ There are no Pasifika peoples enrolled in this programme.

this programme. These educational outcomes correlate well with information from learners and employers about the value of learning in workplace settings (discussed under Findings 1.2).

Table 1. Lincoln University Regional Diploma in Horticulture and Horticultural Management (Level 5) – learners enrolled with Fruition Horticulture for tuition support		
	Fruition learner numbers	Lincoln University paper completed
2011 Semester 1	20	20 (100%)
2011 Semester 2	12	12 (100%)
2012 Semester 1	6	6 (100%)
2012 Semester 2	18	17 (94%)
2013 Semester 1	7	7 (100%)
2013 Semester 2	12	12 (100%)

For the Vakameasina programme, the learning outcome sought is active engagement by targeted eligible workers. Desired outcomes include in particular: (i) attendance, and (ii) satisfaction with the content provided. These are appropriate measures and are also agreed and monitored by the funding agency.⁷ Fruition Horticulture’s self-assessment evidence indicates that it is exceeding contracted attendance requirements (presently 87 per cent), and exceeding other community education outcomes. For example, 96 per cent of learners agreed with the statement that, ‘the course made me feel more confident about speaking and listening in English’. This information is gathered by an independent tutor (i.e. not the delivery tutor), is demonstrated in self-assessment, and is consistent with statements from learners enrolled in this programme. On this basis, although no formal qualifications are obtained in the Vakameasina programme, the evaluation team is confident that learners in this programme are acquiring useful skills and knowledge which are improving their well-being. The evaluation team is equally confident that the self-assessment practices used to gather, monitor and reflect on this information are robust, and note that they are reported on comprehensively in six-monthly activity reports to MFAT.

⁷ MFAT has designed a mix of 11 long-term, medium-term and short-term desired outcomes for this programme. Under this overall design, learner groups select subject areas of interest (such as emailing skills, English language, selecting and cooking food in New Zealand) and Fruition Horticulture’s tutors are tasked with delivering a programme towards these desired learning outcomes.

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

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

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

This evaluation has found strong and convincing evidence that learners and stakeholders consider that Fruition Horticulture delivers useful skills and knowledge which bring clear benefits to individuals and communities and the horticulture export sector.

In particular, graduates from the Lincoln University diploma programme commented positively on the career value of the qualification achieved. They considered that it led directly to new roles and career opportunities in the horticulture industry. A range of excellent examples supporting this were noted by the evaluators. Learners (and graduates) also valued the customisation of Lincoln University study materials to better fit with horticultural activities in the upper North Island (in particular kiwifruit and avocado orchards).

Primary ITO also provided written and oral evidence that various initiatives of Fruition Horticulture were valued in the sector. This included noting that the PTE has been endorsed by the AgExcel quality mark.⁸

In regard to the Vakameasina programme, the funding provider, MFAT, said it was highly satisfied with the outcomes being achieved, and that the initiative with Fruition Horticulture was considered to be a unique example of quality training of this type within the sector. MFAT also indicated that all key performance indicators are being met, although a formal review of long-term outcomes has yet to take place. Notwithstanding, MFAT has extended to size of the programme to allow for more participants as a result of the initial results achieved by Fruition Horticulture.

Learners on the Vakameasina programme said that the learning was useful for their short-term New Zealand living situations, and would also be beneficial for them on their return to their communities (for example, through increased knowledge of nutrition and healthy food choices). In addition, the evaluation team received evidence from employers who have found the programme beneficial as it increases employee skills and awareness, and equips migrant workers to live and work in New Zealand with greater ease.

To ensure MFAT and employer stakeholder needs are reflected on, Fruition Horticulture holds a six-monthly forum of stakeholders associated with this initiative. Evidence provided for this evaluation demonstrates that these forums are used to reflect on services to date, and to make minor adjustments to improve the quality of

⁸ This is Primary ITO's indicator of training quality within the sector.

provision. There is good evidence that this self-reflective process results in service improvements which benefit learners.

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**.

For the delivery of the Lincoln University diploma, Fruition Horticulture ensures that all learning modules are matched to industries in and around the Bay of Plenty. This is required as some of the core materials from the university lack direct relevance to the learners. Matching learning materials involves preparing supplementary materials (worksheets), and at times undertaking site visits to ensure learner needs are being met. This is good practice. Evidence shows that the programme is well matched with learners' needs (noting that enrolments comprise people already working in the sector). The programme was found to be generally relevant and provided rigorous professional development at undergraduate level, but was otherwise unavailable to regional workers. There is scope, however, for Fruition Horticulture and the university to further develop the working relationship, with more rigorous educationally focused engagements and discussions, for the betterment of learners.

The delivery of the Vakameasina non-formal community education programme is designed to be fully learner-centric, with each cluster of learners selecting the particular topics they consider most relevant to them (for example banking, cooking, supermarket shopping, use of information technology, etc). Tutors develop learning modules around these themes, and then incorporate basic literacy and numeracy skills within each module. A customised literacy test is also used early in the programme, to ensure literacy provisions are at a level suitable to the cluster group, as this can vary widely. In addition to customised tutorials, at the request of MFAT a module on sexual health has been introduced, and is delivered by a specialised knowledge tutor.⁹ Other specialised classes are arranged if required by learner clusters (for example, chainsaw use). This flexible approach ensures a high match between programme delivery and learner/stakeholder needs.

For both programmes, the views of learners on the relevance of education are routinely gathered, and there is evidence this is discussed by management to create positive improvements in learning delivery. The MFAT programme has also

⁹ This module is only delivered with the consent of the learner community.

been subject to in-depth investigation by an external evaluator contracted by MFAT, and provision was continued as a result of the positive findings.¹⁰

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**.

The tutors of the Lincoln University diploma programme have significant and relevant industry experience and knowledge. Key staff also have formal adult education qualifications. The educator/learner ratio is up to 1:12, although is typically less than 1:10. Evidence from students and graduates is that tutors are good communicators, with good subject and sector knowledge, and who are highly capable in tutoring on their subjects. However, two graduates said they had been disappointed with the communication skills of one former tutor. Fruition Horticulture's directors also noted this disappointment through student evaluations, and had adjusted delivery to remedy the situation.¹¹ Fruition Horticulture closely monitors both tutor performance and learner satisfaction; they set high standards and modify practice where warranted.

Tutors in the Vakameasina programme are ESOL-qualified and experienced in working with learners from other cultures.¹² As the level of fluency in English of these learners varies widely, Fruition Horticulture has also trialled the use of interpreters and determined that learning outcomes are strongest with direct English language delivery. Tutors noted the importance of reciprocal and group-based learning, and recognising specific community 'leaders', as key means to engage learners and better ensure the success of outcomes. As noted above, independent tutors are drawn on to observe and assess the work of other tutors with this group. This is also good practice and reflects the provider's commitment to meet the needs of stakeholders and to support learner achievement.

Tutors in all programmes work to clear programme guides, which are developed and maintained in accordance with the PTE's quality management system. Recent investment in and development of shared information technology services has strengthened the capability of the PTE to deliver consistently across a range of sites.

¹⁰ <http://www.aid.govt.nz/about-aid-programme/measuring-results/evaluation/2011-review-and-evaluation-reports/review-recognise>

¹¹ This tutor is no longer with Fruition Horticulture.

¹² The qualification held is often the NCALNE (National Certificate Adult Literacy and Numeracy Educator).

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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 **Excellent**.

Fruition Horticulture staff seek to provide Lincoln University diploma students with the support suitable for part-time students engaged in level 5 study. This includes flexibility in the delivery schedule and, where required, one-to-one supplementary support. However, there is potential scope to better link students to any online resources from the university. Notwithstanding, there is evidence that Fruition Horticulture raises student support matters with Lincoln University during formal engagements (for example discussions on ensuring the relevance and currency of Lincoln learning materials).

For Vakameasina learners, Fruition Horticulture has focused on ensuring that appropriate in-community support is available for learners. This includes computer and internet access, and links to other community support agencies and services (for example health clinics). Food is also provided for all classes (learners will have worked a full day in manual labour prior to attending classes).

Learners in both areas commented on the positive and supportive learning environment offered by Fruition Horticulture. There are no student complaints (although complaints processes are in place).¹³

Fruition Horticulture gathers comprehensive, relevant and regular feedback from a range of sources to ensure that learner support and guidance is effective across the programmes (including the Lincoln University student survey process, regular meetings, and consultation with Vakameasina learners and community leaders as well as MFAT and horticulture industry stakeholders). This knowledge has even extended to follow-up of learners on the Vakameasina programme after their return home.

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**.

Fruition Horticulture has all necessary strategic and management documentation in place, and evidence was presented to demonstrate how this is used to guide service development, and to monitor quality. Planning is currently focused on

¹³ There were no active complaints at the time of the EER, nor any recent complaints (2011 onwards).

engaging more New Zealanders in horticulture training through funding being made available from the Tertiary Education Commission.

Staff indicated that they felt valued, and that their needs were being met with appropriate teaching and delivery resources. Job descriptions and performance appraisal systems are in place. The directors say there are no current legal or ethical matters arising, and the organisation remains financially stable.

The evaluation has found strong self-assessment practices relating to governance and management, in particular clear quality management processes, explicit self-review sessions, and regular sessions with staff to discuss best practice and optimal services for the learners. The cumulative result is effective governance and management support, which permeates throughout Fruition Horticulture and underpins consistent and continuing positive educational outcomes for learners and other stakeholders.

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: Vakameasina programme

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

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

Stronger evidence is required of student success and long-term outcomes for this focus area.

2.3 Focus area: Support for the Lincoln University Regional Diploma in Horticulture and Horticultural Management (Level 5) programme

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

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

Although this evaluation found that the programme is valued by learners, graduates and industry for its contribution to regional horticulture and the career development of staff, there was also some evidence of misalignment of the curriculum. This relates in particular to kiwifruit and avocado (or similar) horticultural operations. Some papers focus on dairying and animal husbandry, and although they contain useful transferable learning, the lack of material on specific horticulture operations was a gap. Fruition Horticulture provided solid evidence that it had also identified this gap in its own self-assessment and had raised the issue with Lincoln University on a number of occasions. It was also noted by students in their programme surveys. For these reasons, the evaluators assigned the above ratings to the focus area. Fundamentally, these are course control matters resting with Lincoln University.

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Fruition Horticulture work further with Lincoln University on the development of content that would more directly align with kiwifruit and avocado (or similar) horticultural operations, as this is currently a gap identified by some students and graduates.

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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