



# Report of External Evaluation and Review

PassRite Driving Academy Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 31 May 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:	44-46 Princess Street, Onehunga, Auckland
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	2006
Number of students:	PassRite Driving Academy Limited (PassRite) trains around 1500 students per year on short courses of less than one week in duration.
Number of staff:	Eight
Scope of active accreditation:	PassRite currently delivers training and assesses against unit standards in driver licensing, specialising in truck driver licensing.
Sites:	Hamilton <sup>1</sup>
Distinctive characteristics:	PassRite is a New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) approved course provider and its instructors are also NZTA-approved.
Previous quality assurance history:	PassRite was previously evaluated by NZQA in April 2010, which resulted in NZQA being Confident in PassRite's educational performance and Not Yet Confident in its capability in self-assessment. An improvement plan was subsequently drawn up and PassRite has engaged with NZQA in its implementation. NZQA and PassRite then agreed to the current EER.

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<sup>1</sup> The Hamilton site is run by a separate company, but is an approved site by virtue of a Memorandum of Understanding with PassRite.

Other: PassRite, founded in 1990 by its current director, is a provider of driver training and education for all classes of driver licensing and endorsements. PassRite delivers short courses of between one and five days, which include a theory component and practical driver training and assessment. PassRite has its own fleet of modern trucks, trucks and trailers, and motorcycles.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review of PassRite Driving Academy Limited included the following focus area:

- Truck driver licensing.

The majority of training is in truck driver licensing for classes 2, 4, and 5.

The mandatory focus area is:

- 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/>*

The evaluation team for this EER comprised one lead evaluator and one team evaluator. The team visited the academy for one day at its Auckland site.

The staff, students, and external stakeholders interviewed as part of the EER included:

- PassRite staff: director, general manager, operations manager, senior trainer, and trainers.
- PassRite students: past students from the truck driver licensing programmes interviewed by telephone.
- External stakeholders: employers who support their staff in gaining the licences and endorsements; interviewed by telephone.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **PassRite Driving Academy Limited**.

Pass rates for NZTA truck driver licenses and endorsements are very high for students at PassRite. PassRite students gain relevant knowledge and skills in their chosen area of vehicle licensing or endorsement. On average, 90 per cent of students pass the unit standard assessments and tests first time. The overall achievement is closer to 100 per cent, including those students who require further attempts.

Stakeholders and students value highly PassRite training for the licences and endorsements. Feedback reflects that while the students gain the licences and endorsements required for their work, they also acquire additional useful skills in understanding about log books and trucks that prepare them well for their jobs. Students also said that, although the course was challenging, it had made them better drivers.

Self-assessment shows a high degree of repeat business from key stakeholders, demonstrating the value they place on the PassRite training. More informally, PassRite is aware of the value of training resulting in safer driving, increased fuel economy, reduction in wear and tear, and job security.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **PassRite Driving Academy Limited**.

PassRite has clearly embedded a wide-ranging self-assessment process which continually reviews all areas of the organisation. There was clear evidence of effective self-assessment which has led to changes for improvement. An example of this is the change made to a series of PowerPoint slides relating to a particular question in the assessment by reducing them to just one slide for clarity. This has now seen students answer the question more easily.

Some areas of self-assessment are at the embryonic stage and are yet to provide data that can be analysed. Processes have been put in place and there was evidence of data that will be used for analysis. Large numbers of students enrol on the truck driver licensing courses, making available a greater level of analysis of achievements over time and comparisons of courses and trainers. This is a valuable process for gaining a greater understanding of student achievement and how it could be improved.

PassRite is fully aware of the huge value that a strengthened, ongoing self-assessment has had on the performance of the academy. All staff have a positive approach to developing and maintaining a systematic and comprehensive self-assessment process that will provide them with knowledge about their training and positively support potential growth in student numbers.

## TEO response

PassRite Driving Academy Limited has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

# Findings<sup>2</sup>

## 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**.

Pass rates for NZTA truck driver licences and endorsements are very high for students at PassRite. PassRite students gain relevant knowledge and skills in their chosen area of vehicle licensing or endorsement which result in achievement of unit standards. On average, 90 per cent of students pass the assessments and tests first time. The overall achievement is closer to 100 per cent, including those students who require further attempts.

Self-assessment in the area of achievement has strengthened since the previous EER. There are now processes in place to record the progress of assessments and tests for each student during the course which are both paper-based and electronically processed on the student management system. Although this information has enabled PassRite to demonstrate achievement clearly, there is no evidence of data gathered by programme, by trainer, or over a period of time. Analysis of this data would identify patterns and trends to inform PassRite of further possible actions for continuous improvement.

PassRite monitors progress and achievement well for those students employed by its key stakeholders. Where key stakeholders have a number of employees continually embarking on licences and endorsement training, PassRite records all achievement and highlights when employees need to renew or take additional licences or endorsements. PassRite also alerts the company to any expired licences that need to be renewed.

## 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**.

Stakeholders and students value highly PassRite training for the licences and endorsements gained. PassRite has built and maintained close relationships with its stakeholders over the past 21 years of training. These relationships help to inform PassRite of the value of what it delivers. Feedback reflects that while the students gain the licences and endorsements required for their work, they also acquire additional useful skills in understanding about log books and trucks. More informally, PassRite is aware of the value of training resulting in safer driving, increased fuel economy, reduction in wear and tear, and job security.

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

Both students and stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team said the shortened timeframe in which to obtain the relevant licence or endorsement was a huge bonus. Licences can be obtained within a week through a course provider such as PassRite; otherwise, a six-month period is required before the candidate can be tested to obtain the full licence.

Positive feedback was reflected in the majority of student evaluations. Students said it was good to learn and understand the up-to-date NZTA regulatory requirements. This was especially the case for those students who have returned to do additional courses for other licences or endorsements. Students also said that, although the course was challenging, it had made them better drivers.

Self-assessment shows a high degree of repeat business from key stakeholders, demonstrating the value they place on PassRite training. This is also reflected in the marked increase in PassRite's income compared with the same time last year. The recently introduced software, SharePoint, is now helping PassRite to formally record and gather valuable stakeholder information and feedback.

### 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 **Good**.

PassRite shows a strong commitment to matching the needs of its stakeholders and students by offering a broad range of licensing and endorsement training, thus claiming its service to be a "one-stop-shop" for its customers. PassRite has been delivering licence training for 21 years, and throughout this time has endeavoured to deliver value in training.

Excellent stakeholder relationships with client companies and NZTA have enabled PassRite to be proactive and stay "ahead of the game". An example of this is the recently introduced motor cycle course that teaches road safety and will lead to obtaining a relevant licence when the regulations are introduced next year.

Materials and resources used within activities are customised where appropriate to ensure the learning is relevant for the students. Courses are tailored to match the client company's requirements. For example, one course required PassRite trainers to focus on vehicle dynamics and not so much on log books as it was more relevant in that context. Another example was the addition of a traffic management component to a course because it was deemed relevant and valuable for the students and their employer.

PassRite is also responsive to feedback and has a positive approach to changes for improvement. An example of this timely response to feedback was the change of activities in one course to reflect the appropriate context. The students' work involved transporting loads that were not tied down, so the course content was changed to reflect this. The evaluation team heard from the stakeholder that they were very happy with the outcome. PassRite is also a member of a group of training providers who are looking at innovative

and effective delivery of new and current courses. One initiative currently being discussed is an option of online learning to complement the classroom activities.

Students' needs are identified up front where possible for extra literacy and language support. PassRite offers the options of involving interpreters, scribes, and oral testing where appropriate. The needs of students and stakeholders are also matched by delivering the courses in the evenings, at weekends and, in some instances at the employer's site if deemed applicable. For example, the forklift and "man-up" courses are delivered at the stakeholder site in order that the relevant vehicles and machinery can be utilised in the practical component of the training.

There was clear evidence of effective self-assessment that has led to changes for improvement. For example, self-assessment showed that 60 per cent of students were struggling with one particular question. This has now been addressed by using one PowerPoint slide rather than four to help clarity. Results already show the success of the improvement as the last group passed this question with no issues.

The evaluators concurred that self-assessment could be strengthened by gleaned more constructive feedback on suggested changes for improvement from the well-established relationships with stakeholders. This, coupled with an overall analysis of data gathered through the student evaluations, would feed more valuable information into the review of the courses.

#### 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

The teaching effectiveness of the PassRite trainers is good across the training team. Each trainer comes to PassRite with their own area of relevant experience in the heavy vehicle industry and their own teaching style and delivery that successfully engages the students in learning. The trainers use relevant and engaging teaching strategies and resources such as a model truck, YouTube clips, a DVD made by ACC, group activities, stories from experience, simple terminology, and students' experiences as examples.

Management is actively involved in the review of teaching effectiveness. The three trainers have the skills to deliver the courses well and are all being developed in their relatively new roles. The director, who himself has extensive training experience in all aspects of vehicle licensing, has a hands-on approach to ensuring the quality of training is upheld and has adopted a mentoring role which effectively develops the trainers on an individual basis.

There was evidence that clear formal processes are now in place and have begun to be implemented to ensure there is accuracy and consistency in the marking of both theory and practical assessments. These processes are planned over the next few years to ensure all areas of the training are reviewed regularly.

The evaluation team concurred that the training team is still in the development stage in acknowledging each other's strengths and working collegially. A more open and

transparent approach would mitigate any risks of inconsistency and support the quality and value of the outcomes.

Although the assessment processes are now embedded, it is still too soon in some areas to have gathered enough data for self-assessment or to measure whether improvements have taken place. The evaluation team acknowledged the recently implemented process of collating programme results which will need more time to successfully measure trends by comparing courses and trainers.

## 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

Support and encouragement for students to achieve all components of the course is the key focus for all PassRite staff. Comprehensive information is sent out to the students once they are enrolled. The evaluation team heard from students that this information and pre-reading is useful in helping them to prepare for the course.

PassRite has appropriate strategies in place to identify where extra support may be required. Trainers often work one-to-one with the students in the classroom and in the breaks. The evaluators also heard from the trainers that, where peer support had been encouraged, it was very effective among the students in motivating each other to achieve.

Students can re-take assessments and are supported to do so if necessary. As discussed in section 1.3 above, PassRite offers many ways to support the students in their assessments such as interpreters, scribes, and oral questioning. PassRite also ensures that an interpreter is available at the testing centre for the theory test for the learner licence. PassRite has recognised the barrier that this test poses for some students as some are unfamiliar with using an online tool and with the multiple-choice style of testing. There is now a computer with practice tests available to the students to become familiar with prior to attempting the real test at the testing centre.

Strong stakeholder relationships enable PassRite to gather feedback from students about their experiences and support. Feedback on student evaluations is now shared and results celebrated where appropriate. However, an overall analysis of evaluations and responding at the individual level would provide valuable information for the review of the course and its delivery and content.

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

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

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

Heavy vehicle driver licensing is the academy's key focus. The founder and current director of PassRite is passionate about the industry and set the vision 21 years ago. It was clear to the evaluation team that this attitude has been instilled throughout the organisation.

The director describes his "philosophy" of wanting to be "ahead of the game", by being proactive in providing training for the industry that meets stakeholder needs. He is also actively involved in the day-to-day operation of the training.

The director and general manager complement one another well as there is a balance between the commercial and educational focus. Their combined leadership style is open and transparent and encourages communication and feedback.

PassRite is a well-resourced training centre which is also in close proximity to the testing centre, making it easier for the students to access licences on completion of the relevant parts of training.

There was evidence to show that tighter policies introduced since the last EER have created a smoother workflow, and more formalised processes have made roles and tasks clearer and easier for all staff.

Staff are valued at PassRite. Management recognises individual strengths across the organisation and within the training team and encourages professional development in adult teaching. New staff follow a thorough induction and records are kept of their career development. However, the evaluation team concurred that the responsibility of management to develop the trainers as a coherent team is essential and would help to mitigate any risks of inconsistency as discussed in section 1.4.

PassRite management is fully aware of the huge value that a strengthened, ongoing self-assessment has had on the performance of the academy. All staff take a positive approach to developing and maintaining a systematic and comprehensive self-assessment process which will provide them with knowledge about their training and positively support potential growth.

## 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 **Good**.

### 2.2 Focus area: Truck driver licensing

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

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

# Recommendations

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

# 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 New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.*

*The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

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

*External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website ([www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

*Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication *Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review*, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>*

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