



Report of External Evaluation and Review

The Learning Wave Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 30 November 2010

Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	3
Introduction	3
1. TEO in context.....	3
2. Scope of external evaluation and review	4
3. Conduct of external evaluation and review.....	5
Summary of Results	6
Findings	7
Recommendations	13
Further Actions.....	13
Appendix	14

MoE Number: 7846
NZQA Reference: C02989
Date of EER visit: 5 October 2010

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:	582 Karangahape Road, Auckland
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	2007
Number of students:	Domestic: approximately 600-900 learners per year enrolled across a variety of programmes (see "Other" section below)
Number of staff:	Seven full-time staff and 23 associates contracted to deliver the programmes when required.
Scope of active accreditation:	The Learning Wave Limited (TLW) is accredited to deliver the unit standards towards the National Certificate in Business (First Line Management) (Levels 3 and 4). The qualification accreditation is held by the relevant industry training organisations (ITOs) and is requested on achievement of all unit standards.
Sites:	The Auckland site is the head office. TLW delivers learning at clients' premises or at an appropriate training venue.
Distinctive characteristics:	TLW was founded by its two current directors. The vision for TLW, driven by these two directors from established business training backgrounds, involves developing and delivering learner-centred programmes to lift productivity in the organisations they work with. All participants of programmes are employed by the organisations that engage TLW to deliver the learning.
Recent significant changes:	NA

Previous quality assurance history: TLW was previously quality assured in 2008 by NZQA under the audit system and met all but three requirements; these related to the quality management system not being complete and some procedures not being fully implemented.

Other: TLW delivers learning through these strands:

- Literacy and numeracy (L&N) learning is funded by the Tertiary Education Commission through the Workplace Literacy fund. These programmes are typically delivered over five days spread over a ten to 40-week period to small groups of six to eight learners.
- Business learning involves learning that can be driven by unit standards within the first line management qualification. There are six to nine delivery days and three coaching days over six to nine months.
- Instructional design involves delivery of the first line management learning with embedded literacy. The National Certificate in Business (First Line Management) (Level 3) is awarded on completion of all unit standards. There are nine delivery days and three coaching days over six to nine months.
- TLW offers business learning for clients that is outside the government-funded and unit standard framework.
- TLW also offers a service of coaching and mentoring.

All programmes are tailored to the needs of the organisation and the learners following a needs analysis.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review of The Learning Wave Limited included the following.

- Literacy and numeracy (L&N) programmes

These programmes are 25 per cent of TLW's total business and are funded through the Tertiary Education Commission Workplace Literacy fund. Programmes are not usually unit standards based.

- First line management training at levels 3 and 4

These programmes include the original programme developed for TLW's main client and the more recently developed programme with embedded literacy. This was developed in conjunction with Competenz ITO. Programmes are unit standards based and qualifications are requested by the relevant ITO (which holds the qualification accreditation) on completion of all relevant unit standards.

- Governance, management, and strategy

This is the mandatory focus area.

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 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 of The Learning Wave Limited (TLW) comprised one lead evaluator and one external evaluator. The team visited TLW for two days at its Auckland site.

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

- TLW staff: two directors, the business operations manager, people development manager, business development manager, and four associates involved in design and facilitation of programmes
- TLW learners: seven learners currently engaged in the L&N programme and four graduates of the first line management programme
- External stakeholders: three key stakeholders who have engaged TLW to deliver learning across all programmes, and representatives from two industry training organisations.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **The Learning Wave Limited**.

On completion of the programmes delivered by The Learning Wave, the learners' educational achievements and increase in workplace productivity are very high. Learners who complete the literacy and numeracy and first line management programmes achieve their set goals. Literacy and numeracy learners have increased literacy levels by the end of the programme, and an average 80 per cent of learners enrolled on the first line management programmes achieve the qualification.

The learners achieve personal growth in confidence and interpersonal skills over and above their individual expectations. The evaluation team heard and saw evidence from the learners, facilitators, and employers that the skills and strategies they had learnt and adopted had enabled them to communicate more effectively both in the workplace and in their own personal situations with family and friends. This positive communication has resulted in a better work and home-life environment and a more productive role in the workplace. These outcome measures are described in detail on page 10.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **The Learning Wave Limited**.

Self-assessment is thorough, comprehensive, and systematic and there was evidence of significant changes made for improvements that were based on the analysis of findings. For example, the coaching days in the first line management programme with embedded literacy have now been aligned to the appropriate delivery days, there has been an increase in communication to learners prior to the programme to make expectations clear, and TLW now identifies a manager for support prior to the programme.

TLW takes a positive approach to self-assessment and is always seeking ways to do it better. Recent investment in a new information technology system has further strengthened the self-assessment process with a central source for data and findings and more readily available information.

TEO response

The Learning Wave 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**.

Learners who complete the learning programmes facilitated by TLW achieve well in both their academic and personal growth. There was abundant evidence from comprehensive self-assessment to demonstrate that the learners achieve personal growth in confidence and interpersonal skills over and above their individual expectations. The learners' positive achievement results in turn meet their employers' needs as the learners become more productive in the workplace. There is good retention of learners on the programme and very few do not complete as it is delivered during the working day and presented as an investment in their professional and personal development.

Clear and comprehensive aggregated achievement data across all programmes demonstrates consistent positive outcomes. Learners engaging in the L&N and embedded literacy first line management programmes show raised literacy levels by the end of programme. Learners participating in the first line management programmes on average are achieving better than the 80 per cent qualification completion target set internally by TLW. The achievement rate of the first line management qualifications compares favourably with the PTE sector average of 70 per cent for all qualifications.

The current comprehensive and systematic self-assessment process has produced a multitude of data from the programmes delivered over the past two years. As the number of programmes delivered grows, TLW's understanding of achievement would be strengthened by reviewing the quality and value of the data gathered to ensure that the findings effectively inform changes for improvement. Consistent monitoring of individual learning plans across all L&N programmes would better inform the learner, employer, and TLW of the ongoing achievement and effectiveness of the programme.

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 **Excellent**.

The close engagement with client organisations, as developed and maintained by TLW staff, is effective in ensuring that the agreed appropriate learning outcomes are met and therefore increase the client organisation's productivity.

The evaluation team spoke to organisations that have engaged TLW in a number of programmes over the past five years, demonstrating the value of the outcome of these programmes to those organisations. One key stakeholder and major client of TLW expressed the value of the learning programmes by making a conscious decision to continue investing in the training despite the economic downturn, where many organisations would have ceased training to cut costs.

A thorough self-assessment process of measuring the value of outcomes is collated and clearly presented in a project report for the organisation. The evaluation team heard and saw multiple examples of the value that these programmes had to the learner and their employer. Some examples of the value to the organisation include improved job performance, an increase in the number of incident reports filed accurately, improved levels of participation and questioning and feedback in meetings, reduced staff turnover, a decrease in costs, positive shifts in lost time due to injury, and improved productivity through greater efficiency.

The outcome of the facilitation of these programmes has been of great benefit to the individual learners. The evaluation team heard and saw evidence from the learners that the skills and strategies they had learnt and adopted have helped them to communicate more effectively both in the workplace and in their own personal situations with family and friends. There were examples of successfully diffusing negative situations, both in the workplace and in the home, and of positive attitudes becoming contagious. This positive communication has resulted in a better work and home-life environment.

TLW is proactive in capturing "most significant change" stories which confirm the organisation is adding the value of increased confidence and competence for learners. This data is captured thoroughly through the formal process of learner and stakeholder evaluations and more anecdotally by recording verbal feedback from learners which is subsequently transcribed.

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**.

The learning programmes match the needs of the learners and their employers well because of effective relationship building by TLW staff. Members of staff involved in the development of the programmes work closely with a client organisation for a period of time in order to conduct an accurate learning needs analysis and set realistic business outcomes.

TLW use an effective team approach in the design, development, and delivery of the programmes which draws on the team's breadth of expertise and experience and ensures the consistency and quality of the programme. There was evidence to demonstrate a thorough process of understanding clearly the outcomes that are required by the learners and by the organisation to match the learners' needs.

The interactive and participatory design of the programmes is effective in engaging the learners in a variety of activities and to practise the "tools" they have been given to handle everyday situations. The resources and material are customised to the client organisation by using the company name and logos and, where appropriate, using the organisation's paperwork to maintain relevance.

Actions taken as a result of programme reviews carried out by TLW demonstrate TLW's flexibility, responsiveness, and proactive approach to continuous improvement. Each programme is reviewed throughout the delivery, and a more in-depth review takes place on its completion. Self-assessment shows feedback and involvement of all parties, including the relevant TLW staff, learners, and employers. The reviews have resulted in changes for improvement such as moving the coaching days in the first line management programme to align more appropriately with the delivery days and the addition of new activities to engage a diverse range of age and learning styles.

TLW has an embedded philosophy of matching the needs of its learners and stakeholders to increase productivity. This is clearly demonstrated in the design and development of the first line management programme with embedded literacy in conjunction with the industry training organisation, Competenz. Although the design phase was challenging, this programme is now currently half-way through delivery of its second pilot programme with TLW and has also been delivered by another provider. The review of the programme shows that it has been very successful.

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 teaching by TLW is very effective in engaging the learners in meaningful, practical activities which reinforce the learning and relate it to a variety of contexts. The evaluation team heard strong evidence from current learners, graduates, employers, and the industry training organisations that the teaching is “excellent” and carried out by “professional” facilitators who bring “energy and variety” to the learning environment. The facilitators create a “non-threatening” environment which builds trust and sees “confidence levels raised” and a “fundamental difference” in attitude and behaviour by the end of the programme.

The facilitators relate well to the learners and are effective in engaging with them. The matching of the programme to the learners’ and employers’ needs does not stop at the activities and design of the programme. TLW contracts a facilitator who matches the profile of the organisation appropriately. This has been recognised and received well by the learners and the employers.

TLW is proactive in the quality control of programme delivery. The primary focus on learner achievement through effective teaching has required TLW to employ a dedicated member of staff to continually upskill the pool of facilitators through development, training, mentoring, and coaching. “Boot camps” to prepare facilitators for a programme are attended by the team of facilitators who are involved in the design, development, and delivery of the programme and have also included the ITOs and the managers of client organisations.

Thorough self-assessment shows systematic internal and external monitoring of consistency in assessment results and findings feed into the reviews of programmes. An additional component involved feeding some of the learning back to the stakeholder organisation to ensure ongoing support was offered in the workplace to cement the course learning experience.

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 learners on TLW programmes are supported well by the facilitators and mentors in their workplace. The evaluators saw evidence of how effectively TLW ensures there is appropriate guidance and mentoring for the learners in their working environment as well as ongoing support from the facilitator of the programme.

All learners attending the programmes are well prepared and expectations of the programme are made clear prior to the first day. There is comprehensive evidence to show that TLW takes great care in ensuring the learners know what to expect and has also used graduates of previous programmes to tell their story.

The success of the programme has depended on the support of the whole of the stakeholder organisation. TLW involves all levels within an organisation in the programme in order that the value is made apparent and the individuals will be supported throughout. The evaluation team saw three managers attending a session when interviewing the students.

The first line management programme has specific coaching days which will now be aligned to the delivery sessions for the one-to-one support and guidance. Self-assessment showed that these coaching days were helpful but would be more valuable if aligned to the delivery. The effectiveness of this change for improvement is yet to be realised.

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**.

TLW has a clear philosophy which strives to see positive change in the client organisations.

TLW is successful in developing learners' skills and confidence to help them be more productive in the workplace. This vision is embedded throughout the organisation and is driven by the management team.

Two directors who founded TLW perform the role of governance. The original vision and strategic direction are owed to the directors, but there is now strong evidence to show that the founding philosophy is shared by the management team as they continue to have more involvement in TLW's strategic direction.

The directors and the management team have an open leadership style which nurtures and supports its staff. Associates are contractors of TLW but are well supported in professional development and feel involved in the organisation's decisions. The evaluation team saw the professional development plans for 2007-2010 and all the courses and qualifications completed in relation to adult and literacy teaching.

TLW has robust processes and practices in place to support its entrepreneurial approach to future programmes. The quality management system ensures the programme quality is maintained while making changes for improvement.

The evaluation team saw evidence of the cross-organisational relationships that are built up by TLW staff with all levels of the client organisations. This excellent client relationship was also experienced first-hand by the evaluators at the external evaluation and review.

Self-assessment is ongoing, comprehensive, and consistently applied across all programmes. Recent investment in a new information technology system has enabled TLW to further strengthen its self-assessment by having a central source for data and findings and information more readily available.

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: L&N (Literacy and Numeracy programmes)

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

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

2.3 Focus area: First Line Management Training levels 3 and 4

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

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

The educational performance of learners participating in the first line management programmes delivered by TLW is good, with some cohorts of learners achieving excellent results. Achievement rates for the first line management programme delivered to TLW's major client have on average been meeting the expected internal target of 80 per cent since it was first delivered in 2008.

The first line management programme with embedded literacy is currently only in its second round of delivering the pilot. Achievement results of the first pilot programme have been excellent, and there is evidence to suggest from self-assessment of the pilots delivered by both TLW and another provider that this programme will be successful in meeting its goals and demonstrating consistently high educational performance.

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 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 (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/>

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E eeradmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz