



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Bernard & Ya Holdings Limited
trading as Tree House

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 11 July 2016

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.....	4
Summary of Results	6
Findings	7
Recommendations	14
Appendix	15

MoE Number: 7851
NZQA Reference: C22448
Date of EER visit: 18 and 19 May 2016

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:	Bernard & Ya Holdings Limited trading as Tree House
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	15 October 2007
Location:	Level 1, 5 Nelson Street, Auckland CBD
Delivery sites:	As above, plus: Level 4, 169 London Street, Hamilton Level 1, Grand Hotel Building, 41-44 The Square, Palmerston North Level 2, 84 Tory Street, Te Aro, Wellington 106 Carlyle Street, Sydenham, Christchurch Level 2, Capitol Building, 67 Princes Street, Dunedin
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills for Industry (four weeks pre-employment training)• Training for Work (13 weeks pre-employment training)• Hospitality Training Programme (one or two-day fee-paying public courses)
Code of Practice signatory:	Not a signatory
Number of students:	Skills for Industry – 258 participants Training for Work – 350 participants Demographics: 53 per cent New Zealand Pakeha;

	30 per cent New Zealand Māori; 11 per cent Pasifika; 6 per cent Other
	Ages: less than 20 years, 36 per cent; 21-30 years, 56 per cent; over 30 years, 8 per cent
	Gender: female 67 per cent; male 33 per cent
Number of staff:	16 full-time staff
Scope of active accreditation:	Domains and unit standards in core generics, retail, customer service and hospitality up to and including level 4.
Distinctive characteristics:	Tree House's core programmes are employment outcomes-based learning, mainly for the retail and hospitality sectors – contracted to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).
Recent significant changes:	Nil
Previous quality assurance history:	The previous external evaluation and review (EER) of Tree House, held in August 2012, resulted in summative judgements of Highly Confident in educational performance and Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope for the EER consisted of the mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management, and strategy.

In addition, the following focus areas were selected:

- Skills for Industry – a four-week programme offered under contract to MSD at all Tree House sites.
- Training for Work – a 13-week pre-employment MSD contract. Offered at all sites.
- Hospitality training programme – one or two-day fee-paying courses, e.g. Food Safety, Sale of Liquor. Includes assessment of unit standards

The above focus areas encapsulate all of the teaching and programme delivery activities of Tree House.

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 EER was conducted in mid-May 2016. Prior to this EER, the lead evaluator visited the head office in Auckland and discussed the visit with the Tree House directors. Additionally, each of the evaluators visited one of the other Tree House sites (Palmerston North and Wellington). A one and a half-day EER visit was made to the Tree House head office and delivery site in Auckland, where the evaluation team, consisting of two evaluators, reviewed an extensive range of documentation and met with the directors, staff and students. The evaluation team also spoke with a range of stakeholders including employers, ex-students and MSD regional contract managers by telephone and in person.

The evaluation team is confident that a sufficient range of staff, stakeholders and students were interviewed for evaluation purposes.

During the site visit, Tree House provided the evaluation team with a range of documentation, including strategic planning materials, meeting minutes, student outcomes data, student achievement records, student evaluations (including collation and analysis), delivery and assessment materials and stakeholder feedback. This documentation complemented the self-assessment information that had been pre-submitted by the PTE. The evaluators reviewed all materials tabled.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance and **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Bernard & Ya Holdings Limited, trading as Tree House**.

The students who have enrolled at Tree House have achieved excellent results and good value from their training. For instance, 96 per cent of trainees in the year ended June 2015 completed their programme, against an MSD target of 80 per cent. (Refer Findings 1.1 and 1.2 for details.)

Highly effective processes that contribute to the excellent outcomes attained by Tree House include:

- Effective needs assessment and the tailoring of programmes to the identified needs of employers in their regions. Staff and management are closely attuned to the present and future needs of both students and employers.
- Training which is well contextualised to industry and student needs. Stakeholders confirm that Tree House graduates are well prepared for employment.
- Staff across all levels of the organisation are in regular contact with graduates. The results indicate that the organisation is preparing students well for sustained employment.
- Coaching and training is delivered by experienced, engaging teachers who use their own experience and networks to ensure the relevance and interest of the training.
- Excellent guidance and support is provided on a one-to-one basis.

Tree House has established a very reflective process of self-assessment across the organisation and a culture that encourages students, staff and external stakeholders to discuss their performance and put forward ideas for improvement. This information is then systematically used to make organisational improvements as well as to inform course structure, content and delivery. These improvements ultimately result in improved outcomes for students.

In summary, NZQA is highly confident in both the educational performance and self-assessment capability of Tree House as it has found clear and comprehensive evidence that Tree House is providing quality education and training that leads to positive outcomes for the majority of its students. The organisation is well managed and has a clear philosophy and purpose that is well integrated into the PTE's operations. Self-assessment at Tree House is ongoing, authentic and transparent, and leads to worthwhile improvements.

Final 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 **Excellent**.

Tree House is meeting the most important needs of its learners and stakeholders. It is achieving excellent results, averaging 96 per cent course completions overall.

Table 1. Tree House student participation and outcomes, 2013-2016

	Skills for Industry					
	Participation #		Completions		Into employment	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
2013/2014	446	446	401	444	285	225
2014/2015	257	257	231	254	164	159
2015/2016 (pending)	283	249 (34)	255	222 (33)	161	130 (31)
	Training For Work					
	Participation #		Completions		Into employment	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
2013/2014	430	435	348	401	278	260
2014/2015	443	423	338	408	253	260
2015/2016 (pending)	375	342 (33)	300	318 (30)	214	177 (37)

Note: Figures for 2105/2016 are year to date with pending numbers in brackets. Tree House is confident in achieving/exceeding the targeted outcomes for 2015/2016

The core business of the organisation is contracted MSD job placement programmes. This means that the primary focus of both the organisation and its staff is on job placement for sustained employment. Educational outcomes are secondary to meeting the principal obligation under these contracts, which is to coach students to get sustained employment. In this task, Tree House has been very successful (refer Findings 1.2 for further details). In the process of coaching students, some excellent educational soft skills are achieved, such as computer skills, confidence-building, interview skills, etc, although these are not formally assessed, measured or recorded.

¹ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

Many students also gain unit standards in basic food safety, work safety awareness and unit standard 4646 (Demonstrate knowledge of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012), which enables students to apply for a (liquor) Licence Controller Qualification. Feedback from employers to Tree House and to the evaluation team is that these unit standards, particularly the Licence Controller Qualification, are of real added value when applying for work in the hospitality industry.

Tree House has benchmarked itself against other organisations contracting to MSD and compares very well. For instance, MSD rates Tree House in the top five providers in every region in which they operate.

Māori and Pasifika students, who make up 30 per cent and 11 per cent respectively of the Tree House student population, have achieved course completion and employment outcomes similar to the cohort as a whole.

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**.

By achieving its contracted outcomes (to MSD) Tree House is making a valuable contribution to New Zealand's social and economic development by educating people and focusing them on a future where they are in employment and financially independent.

Tree House has specific conditions to meet in all of its MSD contracts. The likelihood of sustainable employment for clients who enter the job placement programmes are evaluated using the Likelihood of Long Term Benefit Receipt evaluation process to determine work-readiness. Clients are classified as low, medium or high risk² of remaining on a benefit. Only medium and high-risk clients are referred to Tree House. The value of Tree House's contribution was summed up in a statement by an MSD contracts manager interviewed during the EER: 'Tree House are my "go-to" provider for the particularly difficult or high-risk clients. They seem to be able to make progress with clients, particularly more mature clients, when nobody else can'.

The Training for Work programme is 13 weeks long, and Skills for Industry four weeks. Additionally, each student receives eight weeks of job search support after they complete the course. Skills for Industry graduates are expected to sustain employment for at least 91 days, and Training for Work graduates for 182 days. Tree House is in regular contact with graduates and employers through this period

² Low-risk clients are expected to gain employment relatively quickly, while high-risk clients may take longer to gain employment and need more help.

and often well beyond. During this time, the PTE is constantly gathering verbal and written feedback which is recorded, analysed and used to make continuous improvements to programme design and delivery. Graduates who are in employment are able to return to Tree House, often at no cost, to complete unit standards or other training needs identified since they have started work. Tree House offers this service to graduates as they see their responsibility as placing graduates into sustained employment, not simply 'any old job'.

Tree House has excellent relationships with employers, evident from the wealth of written feedback reviewed by the evaluators and from the evaluators' direct discussion with a sample of them. Several employers have repeatedly employed Tree House graduates. Two of those employers, both national organisations, have employed more than 50 graduates each over the past five years, some of whom have gone on to become supervisors and managers themselves. These employers are testimony to the fact that Tree House is meeting their and the graduates' needs by matching graduates who are well prepared for the workforce to jobs that are appropriate to their capabilities and aspirations.

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**.

Tree House's regular interaction with its stakeholders is a stand-out feature of the organisation. Mechanisms employed include ongoing contact with clients and employers; participation in industry/community fora such as industry associations³ church groups, etc; and weekly meetings with MSD case and contract managers.

The 'rolling entry' and 'coaching' style of Tree House's delivery means that the individual needs of each student are assessed and addressed. Programme design enables students to progress then exit at an individually appropriate level. Individual coaching is interspersed with formal lessons which are often determined by the needs identified by the students and coaches. For instance, if several students have had job interviews but not been successful in gaining employment, the lessons for the week might centre on interview technique.

Tree House's programmes have been regularly reviewed and tailored over the years to suit individual student needs, and are continually being refined to suit present student needs. An example of this refinement was the development of the

³ Tree House is an active member of Hospitality New Zealand, New Zealand Retailers Association, Restaurant Association of New Zealand and the Tourism Industry Association of New Zealand.

Health Challenge Injury and Disability programme specific to client needs in Hamilton and Masterton.

Current students said that coaches regularly and actively work with them to improve pre-employment skills appropriate to job placements, and this has helped them to get job interviews. Tree House staff hail from wide backgrounds, and have extensive personal and professional networks which they use well to open up opportunities for graduates.

The very positive verbal and written feedback by stakeholders, the repeated engagement with industry, and the retention of Tree House by MSD as a preferred provider affirm that the organisation is identifying and responding well to stakeholder needs.

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**.

There was evidence of excellent teaching practice taking place across the organisation, indicated by the ability of staff to meet the range of learning needs and abilities of learners in the class. All staff are enthusiastic and passionate about their roles and they are well supported by management. Staff and students relate well to each other.

Staff are experienced and well qualified, with all staff holding or studying towards the level 5 National Certificate in Adult Education and Training. Tree House management systematically supports staff in their ongoing professional development, either in industry-based courses or training to match identified needs in their work. For instance, all staff completed a course called 'MH101', designed to help them support students with mental health challenges. This training was a direct response to Tree House staff and management recognising that they needed to improve their capability in this area to match the needs of increasing numbers of students manifesting mental health challenges.

Students on all programmes said they value the open, friendly style of teaching and find their learning activities interesting and challenging. Students have access to all staff outside of formal classes and can make suggestions about improvements. Students noted that staff were responsive to any concerns or issues raised.

Tree House staff meet daily in their respective centres to discuss the progress and potential of students to find employment and get jobs. Communication between regional centres is regular and encouraged by management. All regional centres have at least one telephone conference with Tree House management each week. Staff work collaboratively, providing each other with support and using each other's strengths. Staff communicate regularly with their students' case managers and

send weekly reports to MSD. Tree House staff are uniformly reflective, both formally and informally, regularly gathering and analysing data then acting on opportunities identified for improvement.

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**.

Tree House staff and management are highly client and student-centred and committed to their success and well-being. The support systems at the PTE are well resourced and fit for purpose. Staff are available to students outside of timetabled sessions, and students report that staff are always helpful and supportive. Tree House has a 24-hour 0800 number for students to contact staff if needed, and staff across the six sites have rostered responsibility to staff this service. Assessment of support needs and evaluation of the effectiveness of the support provided are systematic and planned. Staff are very experienced and very good at anticipating the support needs of their students and providing that support in appropriate ways. Staff visit graduates in their workplace to provide additional coaching and support. This aspect has been directly linked to the success of graduates as it helps them to apply their learning and motivates them to achieve and sustain employment.

Learning support is focused on enabling students to achieve immediate and sustainable success. The literacy and numeracy ability of students is assessed at enrolment, and students with more profound needs are referred to specialist outside agencies. For others the focus is first, on improving their functional literacy, numeracy or language as much as possible within the short time they are enrolled, and secondly, on placing the student into a job that matches their capabilities.

The good retention and completion rates referred to previously indicate that the support and guidance provided has been generally effective in engaging students. Management and staff have a good understanding of student support needs and regularly discuss ideas for supporting individual learners and deliver this support. Often this support will involve a joint approach between the employer and Tree House.

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**.

Tree House is a privately owned and operated training provider with solid leadership and a clear vision and understanding of its business. The organisational strategy is formally documented and management and staff have a common understanding of the vision and direction. The organisation has developed and embedded effective systems for monitoring student achievement and supporting staff to improve outcomes. Quality is well embedded in the organisation.

Tree House is well resourced, financially sustainable and operates from six well-maintained campuses which provide good environments for learning. Effective resourcing is planned and provided for all activities.

The organisation has very strong industry and employer relationships that provide useful feedback to training which the organisation follows up on. Tree House's responsiveness to this feedback has led to repeat business and identification as a 'preferred provider'.

Tree House is responsive to changes in the operating environment. For instance, the PTE has successfully transitioned as government policy has tended more towards a job brokerage model, by adapting organisational and staff processes, operations and delivery. This type of reflective practice was evident in all areas of the organisation.

Tree House has over time employed a pool of very talented and experienced staff which it manages effectively and actively develops. The value that Tree House management puts on the experience and know-how of the team is clearly apparent and makes a positive difference to educational quality. The directors were open in their appreciation of the efforts, loyalty and dedication of staff. All staff are salaried and permanent, rather than contracted, as the directors believe that staff who are secure in their own tenure are better able to focus on the needs of their students. Staff said they enjoyed the environment and that they worked hard but felt highly valued and rewarded.

Monitoring of performance within Tree House is regular, transparent and robust, and the organisation encourages opportunities for reflection on its role and how to continue to make ongoing and continuous improvements to meeting the needs of students and other stakeholders. Self-assessment is being well led by management and is comprehensively understood and adopted throughout the organisation. Management and staff enthusiastically encourage opportunities for reflection on their roles and how to better meet stakeholder needs. This has led to an authentic and highly reflective learning environment and culture.

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: Skills for Industry

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: Training for Work

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

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

2.4 Focus area: Hospitality training 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**.

Recommendations

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

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/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz

Final Report