

Report of External Evaluation and Review

AA Solutions Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 17 October 2012

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MoE Number: 7855
NZQA Reference: C07980
Date of EER visit: 7 August 2012

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:	AA Solutions Limited
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	13 Robbies Rd, Cockle Bay, Auckland
Delivery sites:	Training is delivered at clients' worksites.
First registered:	26 November 2007
Courses currently delivered	AA Solutions delivers a range of occupational health and safety short courses. There are nine non-unit standards-based courses and 17 unit standards-based.
Code of Practice signatory?	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 12 trainees/course
Number of staff:	1.5 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	AA Solutions is accredited to offer a wide range of cleaning, hygiene, and health and safety unit standards, from levels 1-4, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17599 – Plan a confined space entry (level 4)• 17600 – Explain safe work practices for working at heights (level 3)• 17601 – Produce an occupational health and safety incident investigation (level 4)• 17602 – Apply hazard identification and risk assessment procedures in the workplace

(level 3)

- 18408 – Demonstrate knowledge of fire and emergency warden duties in the workplace (level 3)
- 20645 – Describe the requirements of the HSNO Act 1996 relevant to approved handlers (level 3)

The cleaning unit standards are not being delivered at the moment.

Distinctive characteristics: This organisation is a small, family-run business. In addition to training, the company offers consultancy in health and safety, and hygiene and cleaning.

All training is offered at clients' worksites and courses run from half a day to a maximum of a day and a half.

Recent significant changes: NA

Previous quality assurance history: At the 2009 audit, AA Solutions met all the requirements of the quality assurance standard.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review (EER) included the mandatory focus area: governance, management, and strategy. The other focus area chosen was the course that had been mostly recently offered, being a short course entitled Health and Safety: Confined Spaces.

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.

AA Solutions provided a director's report and annual self-review in advance of the EER.

The evaluation team of two visited the Auckland site over seven hours spread over two days. Interviews were conducted with the two directors. Phone interviews were also conducted with external stakeholders, including clients and a representative from the New Zealand Industry Training Organisation (NZITO). A range of documentation was reviewed including the business plan and course evaluations, client surveys, and analysis. Moderation reports and meeting minutes were also viewed.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **AA Solutions Limited**.

AA Solutions is focused on the value that it adds for its clients. Consequently, training is tailored to the clients' needs, delivered at the clients' worksites, using the clients' equipment and paperwork, at a time that suits the needs of the workplace. The organisation has close to a 100 per cent pass rate for students who elect to be assessed against the unit standards, and students report that the training is relevant and useful.

Feedback from clients and trainees attests to the trainers' flexibility, engaging approach, and willingness to go the extra mile to meet trainees' needs.

This business is very small and the training component even smaller. Therefore, the sustainability of the provider is of some concern. Forward bookings, confirmed by clients, gave the evaluation team confidence that the organisation will be able to continue to operate into the foreseeable future.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **AA Solutions Limited**.

AA Solutions has good processes for collecting, recording, and using information. Feedback is collected from key stakeholders on a regular basis and informs reviews and improvements. Examples include increasing the number of visual aids available to the trainer, changing the pace of delivery, and improving the process to gather client feedback.

The organisation is focused on determining whether it is delivering valued outcomes to clients and ensuring that it has processes in place to understand whether it is meeting their needs.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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 courses offered by AA Solutions can be tailored to be delivered with or without unit standards. Either way, the trainer has a number of approaches to assess whether trainees are achieving new knowledge and skills. From the evidence supplied – through assessments and feedback from trainees – it is clear that trainees are gaining a good understanding of the knowledge required to meet health and safety standards. Close to 100 per cent of all students who elected to be assessed gained the unit standard.

All the assessments have passed pre-moderation with NZITO, giving assurance that competency is being appropriately assessed. External moderation would further increase confidence in the standards being assessed.

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**.

The valued outcomes for clients from investing in training by AA Solutions are that employees gain a good understanding of health and safety processes and procedures, thus ensuring the company is complying with health and safety regulations and proactively promoting safety in the workplace, which in turn reduces insurance costs.

AA Solutions has good evidence that it is delivering positive outcomes, based on formal and informal feedback from clients and continued repeat business. Clients noted that the training was very informative and relevant to their sites.

While the feedback gained from trainees is useful, there is currently no question that directly asks about knowledge shifts or outcomes for trainees. AA Solutions changed its processes and practices to improve the response rate of feedback from clients. The response rate for 2012 appears to have improved.

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

1.3 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 **Good**.

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

As noted above, AA Solutions works to tailor training to individual workplace needs. An example is delivery in the workplace at a time that is convenient for employees. The booking form demonstrates that the trainer is seeking to understand the specific needs of the workplace and the trainees being enrolled. Trainees with learning disabilities or literacy issues are identified early in the training, and appropriate engagement and assessment methods are used.

Using the information gathered from trainees and clients, the training and courses are regularly reviewed and updated to improve relevance and engagement.

The owner/trainer is well connected and ensures that the organisation remains current with workplace standards and practice and legislative requirements. The connections with industry are less strong, and AA Solutions acknowledges that it could improve its marketing and work to understand the needs of a wider range of clientele.

However, AA Solutions does act proactively, talking with return clients about their changing training needs and incorporating these into future planning and delivery.

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**.

A key strength of AA Solutions is the trainer, who engages well with all learners across a variety of workplaces and skill levels. The courses are well planned and adapted to ensure the content is engaging and readily understood.

Formative assessment is used to ensure concepts and new information are being understood. Summative assessments are well aligned with learning outcomes, and marking schedules guide internal moderation processes.

Feedback is gathered systematically and is used to improve delivery. Examples include changing the pace of one course and the addition of DVDs to support another.

Having only one trainer available leaves the organisation vulnerable, although there are plans to recruit others.

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 **Good**.

AA Solutions has clear processes and procedures which ensure that clients and trainees have a good understanding of the learning outcomes and expectations for each course.

The trainer has processes in place to understand whether trainees require any extra support to complete the course. The evaluation team heard from stakeholders that the trainer was able to relate well to all people and deliver complex material in a way that all trainees could understand.

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

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**.

AA Solutions has effective policies and processes in place which would enable the organisation to operate well if it were to grow and expand the business. There is good evidence of attention being given to important quality review processes, including an annual review informed by useful feedback and analysis. There is also good evidence of planning and implementation, including the decision to gain accreditation for a wider range of unit standards and encourage clients to offer them to trainees. Resources are adequate and there is regular investment made in professional development for the two-person team.

The consultancy side of the business links it to industry and ensures the training is current and up to date with changes in policy and legislation.

The company is planning to grow and has some strategies in place to support this goal. Growth is required for sustainability and to spread the risk of having only one trainer available. The positive responses from current clients as to the value of the training delivered by AA Solutions and their confirmation of forward bookings assured the evaluation team that this growth is possible.

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 **Good**.

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

2.2 Focus area: Health and Safety – Confined Spaces

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

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, other than those expressed or implied within the report.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of programme approval and accreditation (under sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the Criteria for Approval and Accreditation of Programmes established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act and published in the Gazette of 28 July 2011 at page 3207. These policies and criteria are deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under the new section 253.

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 programmes they own or provide. These criteria and policies are also deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under section 253. Section 233B(1) of the Act requires registered PTEs to comply with these rules.

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 EER process 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/>

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