



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

Fire Rescue and First Response
Limited

Date of report: 9 October 2024

About Fire Rescue and First Response Limited

Fire Rescue and First Response Limited (FRFR) provides short-duration fire, emergency response, rescue response and first aid training to workplaces, iwi, district/regional councils and government departments throughout New Zealand.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	2 Kagan Avenue, Mangawhai, Auckland
Eligible to enrol intl students:	No
Number of students:	Domestic to May 2024: 1125 learners (25 equivalent full-time learners) Māori learners 155 (14 per cent); Pasifika learners 73 (7 per cent); learners with a disability, data not collected International: nil
Number of staff:	Five full-time, seven part-time
TEO profile:	Fire Rescue and First Response provider page on the NZQA website
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Highly Confident in Fire Rescue and First Response Limited's educational performance, and Confident in the PTE's self-assessment capability as at 23 July 2020.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus area 1: Incident Management Micro-credential [ID: 118000] and unit standard 29554• Focus area 2: Chainsaw courses delivering unit standards 6916 and 6917
MoE number:	7882
NZQA reference:	C57439
Dates of EER visit:	16-18 July 2024

Summary of results

Fire Rescue and First Response delivers highly valued training to its stakeholders. Learners achieve at a very high rate. Regular contact with, and working alongside stakeholders informs inclusive, contextualised training and support that meets important needs. Increased collection and analysis of information will further support effective self-assessment and development.

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- FRFR learners have consistently high achievement rates. Māori and Pasifika learners are achieving at parity. Developing a more in-depth understanding of non- and delayed completions could support further review of achievement and support.
- FRFR delivers highly valued outcomes supported by strong working relationships with all stakeholders. Learners feel confident to use the knowledge and skills attained. Specific work with Māori communities has provided them with a valuable voice within their regions and has supported FRFR's own review of practice. Formalising collation of the anecdotal feedback could support additional decision-making around programmes and student support.
- Regular contact and working alongside stakeholders ensures relevant, current, contextualised training that meets the needs of the clients.
- Learners are effectively and well engaged in their training. Learners are assessed when they are ready, and moderation of those assessments is assuring validity and consistency.
- FRFR seeks to understand the learners' goals and creates an inclusive learning environment and contextualised training. Trainers respond promptly and appropriately to learning and pastoral care needs. Collecting and collating data about support needs could inform professional development opportunities for trainers and support further programme review.

-
- A clear organisational purpose and regular business planning has supported and sustained business growth and operations. Very experienced and qualified training staff collaborate with management to support effective resource maintenance, programme development and currency. Further consideration of an appropriate information management system, the sustainability of workloads, and targeted staff development is needed to maintain sustainable business growth.
 - FRFR is managing its compliance accountabilities very well and monitoring policies, procedures and practice to ensure they remain current, legal and ethical. Developing staff understanding of NZQA rules and regulations and collecting evidence of training being delivered as approved could support further review of course delivery and learner support.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Over 99 per cent of FRFR learners achieve and/or refresh their learning on the micro-credential or on bespoke unit standard-based courses. No learners withdraw, and less than 1 per cent of the learners do not complete. Benchmarking shows that FRFR learners are achieving at similar rates to those of like providers.</p> <p>The reasons for non-completion are understood. FRFR trainers work individually with each learner and their workplace to support their needs toward successful completion, even if this results in extended study timeframes. FRFR would benefit from capturing and disaggregating data about these extensions to understand trends and patterns that may support further review of delivery and support.</p> <p>Māori, Pasifika and migrant learners commonly do not complete as quickly as the other learners. However, once these learners complete, they are achieving on par with the others. FRFR is aware they have learners with a disability and have commenced collecting needs-related data in their sign-on sheets. To date, however, FRFR does not collate this data for analysis to understand these learner needs.</p> <p>FRFR is able to say non-completion is caused by either a learner not being interested in completing the course, or learners have English as a second language or literacy issues. It is acknowledged that with such a very small number of non-completions (eight people since the last EER), trends and patterns are difficult to determine. However, expanding this category to include delayed completions may provide insights that could inform further programme and support review.</p>

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

Conclusion:	FRFR learners consistently achieve at a high level. Māori and Pasifika learners achieve overall at parity with others. Analysis of the captured disability data and developing a more in-depth understanding of non- and delayed completions could strengthen current delivery and support review.
-------------	--

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR staff are highly experienced and continue to work in rescue and emergency operation roles. This supports FRFR to maintain strong, reciprocal relationships with industry and community bodies. This enables FRFR to understand the needs of communities and individuals. This in turn supports ongoing review which ensures training continues to prepare communities to respond appropriately when needed and desired outcomes are achieved. Training delivery incorporates scenarios and role plays that provide contextualised exemplars from which the learners and communities can draw.</p> <p>FRFR communicates regularly with its clients to understand how the training of their staff has been received. These anecdotal conversations have enabled FRFR to begin building profiles of each workplace, council or government department they work with. This could support their current understanding of what is valuable to the client and allow for proactively providing training opportunities. Formally capturing this understanding and the feedback received at these times could provide evidence further supporting management decision-making.</p> <p>Learners and graduates, though rarely able to speak with experience about using the learnt emergency response skills and knowledge, attest to feeling more confident about being able to respond appropriately and communicate their understanding effectively. Workplaces and councils attest to having appropriately trained staff available who can support a response effectively and efficiently.</p>

	FRFR has had long-standing relationships with Māori iwi and mana whenua throughout New Zealand. FRFR is providing training to the people of these communities, which supports their aspirations and gives them new directions and opportunities in the wider region.
Conclusion:	FRFR's strong working relationships with all stakeholders informs delivery of needed knowledge and skills that are important for individual and community safety and survival. Specific work with Māori communities has provided them with a voice within their regions. Formal collection of the anecdotal feedback could support further understanding of value and decisions about the programmes and support provided.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR training staff meet regularly with stakeholders and continue working within organisations that support emergency, fire and rescue response. This helps FRFR to design and deliver relevant, current, tailored training. Trainers gain an understanding of learners' individual working environments when training is booked, and adjust scenarios and group tasks to simulate contexts similar to their particular workplaces. Such tailoring is fed back, by the trainers, to support resource and delivery review.</p> <p>FRFR provides the trainers with the necessary base resources to ensure consistency of training, but allows for contextualisation to stakeholders' needs. Trainers and learners share their experience and take part in group work and scenarios/role playing. This provides opportunities for theoretical knowledge to be applied and ensures learners remain engaged. Stakeholder feedback attests to the benefits of such activities and further resource and delivery review.</p> <p>Learners are assessed throughout the training when actions taken in role plays and responses to questions indicate they are ready. Supervision of the theory-based</p>

	<p>assessment, and trainer observation of the practical aspects ensures academic integrity is maintained. Even though learners are assessed as being competent or not for defined skills and knowledge, relevant feedback is given after marking. This provides learners with areas where they can improve or extend their knowledge. FRFR needs to refresh its assessment policy and procedure to reflect this competency-based assessment practice.²</p> <p>Regular external moderation from standard-setting bodies is occurring and informs training review. During 2021, external moderation indicated the need for assessment redevelopment, particularly where FRFR has relied on purchased material. Since then, FRFR has been undertaking significant development of all the assessments delivered. FRFR is writing its own assessment material (enabling prompt updates where needed) at the same time as responding to the findings made. Subsequent pre- and post-assessment moderation and feedback indicates increasing improvement in the assessment material and alignment to the evidence requirements within the unit standards.</p> <p>An internal moderation team of trainers and external advisors also ensures new assessments and trainers are operating as expected. This assures assessment is valid, consistent and appropriate. A moderation schedule to ensure that not just the high-frequency assessments are reviewed regularly will support the significant design and delivery review that has been occurring.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Learners are effectively and well engaged in relevant, current and tailored learning opportunities. Learners are assessed when they are ready, and moderation of those assessments is assuring validity and consistency. Newly developed assessment material and scheduled moderation will ensure all assessments have regular oversight for alignment with learning outcomes.</p>

² Currently, FRFR's assessment policy and procedure outlines grade-related assessment only.

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR learners are sent to the training by their workplaces to gain the skills and knowledge that will support their response in time of emergency. Understanding where the learners come from – plus sharing experiences and goals during the introduction – enables the trainers to incorporate relatable learning activities. This helps the learners to apply knowledge immediately and build connections with people undertaking similar roles. FRFR has sought the services of a Māori advisor to further develop the cultural inclusiveness of training and support activities.</p> <p>FRFR is aware that the progress of some learners is affected by learning impairments. Trainers are prepared to respond when such a need is identified. A recent addition to the learners' sign-on form asks about any barriers to learning. This is now providing some data about learners with a disability. FRFR needs to analyse this data to inform learner support, staff professional development and programme review.</p> <p>FRFR chunks the learning into small blocks so that learners can monitor their progress through regular revision and ask questions before progressing further. If learners require additional help, trainers use different teaching and assessment methodologies that better meet the need. Trainers are also available after hours to provide one-to-one support so these learners can succeed.</p> <p>Collecting and collating data about learners who require extra time to complete after the training session has ended could support FRFR's review of support needs. This could also inform targeted provision of professional development opportunities that support trainers to respond appropriately to learning differences and mental health issues.</p> <p>Management speaks with all staff regularly to understand their identification and learner support needs. This</p>

	understanding is captured in the minutes of each meeting and used to inform annual self-review of the Code of Practice. The greater breadth of data collection and analysis, as discussed earlier in this report, would also further inform FRFR's annual Code self-review.
Conclusion:	FRFR actively seeks to understand learners' goals and create an inclusive learning environment by contextualising training and incorporating learners' experiences. Trainers respond promptly and appropriately to need. Collecting and collating data about that need could inform professional development opportunities for trainers and support further review of support and programme development.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR is growing as an educational organisation. To date, the PTE has responded effectively to enable that growth to occur. More full-time trainers and some administrative staff have been employed to meet demand and accountabilities. A clear organisational purpose remains embedded in and drives the training provision and meeting of community need. Regular meetings with staff, stakeholder feedback, activity reporting and an external business consultant now support management's strategic planning and decision-making.</p> <p>FRFR receives a lot of anecdotal stakeholder feedback that is not formally captured. Also, the limited long-term overview of trends and patterns around achievement and stakeholder needs could limit FRFR's decision-making. FRFR recognises this with its plan to update the learning management system to provide better data collection and reporting capability. Considering getting additional support from a 'critical friend' (with tertiary education experience) may also support FRFR's continued planning and needed decisions around succession planning and the viability of the current workload.</p>

	<p>Teaching and learning resources are provided to support consistency of practice. FRFR management respects the very experienced, qualified trainers currently employed, so regularly engages with them to update these resources and the business plan. Being able to share their expertise and support decision-making means staff feel they are valued parts of the organisation.</p> <p>FRFR carefully considers the recruitment of training staff to ensure continuation of the high quality training currently being delivered. All staff are mentored until they are ready to deliver training by themselves. However, the regular staff meetings provide continued oversight and allow for emerging needs to be discussed and addressed promptly.</p> <p>FRFR ensures staff meet consent and moderation requirements and supports further professional development in adult and tertiary training. Formal capture of the annual teaching observations could support further targeted development.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>A clear organisational purpose and regular business planning have supported and sustained business growth and operations. Very experienced and qualified training staff collaborate with management to support effective resource maintenance and currency. Further consideration of an appropriate information management system, workload sustainability and targeted staff development is needed to maintain sustainable business growth.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>FRFR regularly reviews its policies and procedures to ensure effective compliance management and effective maintenance of legal and ethical practice. This is now further supported by a staff member dedicated to monitoring compliance accountabilities and ensuring timely attestations and submissions. Further professional development for this staff member in NZQA's rules and requirements will support them in effectively fulfilling their role.</p>

	<p>FRFR is aware of delivering training as per the approved or notional hours for the courses they provide. However, capturing evidence around expectations before, during and after the training could further support course review. For example, such evidence could have alerted FRFR to a possible Type change (notifiable to NZQA) needed for the micro-credential, to include the regular delivery of the additional unit standard.</p> <p>The high-risk elements of some of FRFR's training means sound procedures are followed to ensure learner and staff safety at all times. An incident register and monitoring of complaints (to be added to a register) are maintained, indicating that no critical incidents or formal complaints have occurred since the previous EER. FRFR has been advised to add this knowledge and definitions of complaints/critical incidents to their annual self-review of the Code of Practice and its publication (on the organisation's website).</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>FRFR is effectively managing its compliance accountabilities and updating policies and procedures to ensure their practice remains legal and ethical. Evidence of the monitoring of the PTE's compliance could support procedures that reflect FRFR's actual practice, as well as supporting further self-review of course delivery and student support.</p>

Focus areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 Incident Management Micro-credential (Training Scheme) [ID: 118000] and unit standard 29554

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Chainsaw courses delivering unit standards 6916 and 6917

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings	<p>Fire and emergency-related organisations require these unit standards to ensure response teams have the skills and knowledge to maintain and safely operate the chainsaws used in response situations. A highly integrated theory and practical course is run over most weekends throughout New Zealand. Stakeholders attest to the value of the learning and the confidence it builds to respond effectively when needed.</p> <p>A low student-to-staff ratio is maintained to ensure that health and safety regulations in such a high-risk area are maintained. Collation and analysis of data and feedback resulting from this training – as outlined in the body of this report – could support course review.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Fire Rescue and First Response Limited:

- Develop mechanisms for longer-term data and feedback collection and reporting (including that for learners with a disability), enabling analysis and understanding to further inform the organisation's review of its programmes and student support.
- Review the current staff workload to ensure business growth can be maintained and continued.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

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

Appendix

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. 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.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud³*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

³ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials and consents to assess and 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 Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. 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). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz