



# Report of External Evaluation and Review

## Evolution School of Holistic Therapies

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 23 January 2013

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# Purpose of this Report

*The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.*

## Introduction

### 1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	Evolution School of Holistic Therapies (ESHT)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	115 Lower Cameron Street, Whangarei
First registered	23 June 2009
Number of students:	70
Number of staff:	Seven
Scope of active accreditation:	ITEC (International Therapy Examination Council) standards for three courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate in Beauty Consultancy (Level 3)</li><li>• Certificate in Beauty Specialist (Level 4)</li><li>• Certificate in Anatomy, Physiology and Swedish Massage (Level 5)</li><li>• Certificate in Electrical Epilation (Level 5)</li></ul>
Sites:	115 Lower Cameron Street, Whangarei
Distinctive characteristics:	ESHT offers an externally designed and assessed programme, with all resources and processes every feature subject to twice-yearly audit. This TEO has constructed a programme with enduring connections and influence in the local community, widely addressing the outcomes of the NZQA tertiary evaluation indicators.
Recent significant changes:	A project is presently under way to set up a similar

training unit in Australia.

Previous quality assurance history: No current risks. In 2010, at the first NZQA quality assurance visit since registration, ESHT met all requirements of the quality assurance standard in place at the time.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review (EER) of ESHT included:

- Governance, management, and strategy

This is a mandatory focus area.

- Certificate in Beauty Consultancy (Level 3), Certificate in Beauty Specialist (Level 4)

This suite of courses offers a staircase from a level 3 business-oriented course to a level 5 specialist course.

- Course delivery and assessment across all courses.

## 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 over two days by a lead evaluator and team evaluator, who jointly interviewed the statutory compliance manager, school manager, teachers, students, and the TEO patron. The team also examined course records, ITEC audit reports, testimonials from employers and graduates, and telephoned employers and community spokespersons.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Evolution School of Holistic Therapy**.

ESHT is accredited by the ITEC to deliver the four qualifications:

1. Certificate in Beauty Consultancy (Level 3)
2. Certificate in Beauty Specialist (Level 4)
3. Certificate in Anatomy, Physiology and Swedish Massage (Level 5)
4. Certificate in Electrical Epilation (Level 5).

Overall completion outcomes are well above the Tertiary Education Commission median for this range of courses, and graduate employment, including self-employment, is in the region of 90 per cent, an excellent outcome in an area with limited employment opportunities. The four courses also provide an effective staircase for students through levels 3, 4, and 5 to higher-level tertiary education.

Feedback from employers and other community members clearly indicates excellent performance of graduates. Learning is achieved in well-sequenced and delivered courses, strategically mixing theory and practice and containing a series of formative tests in preparation for the summative ITEC assessment. A generous range of individual support and guidance is available for students with learning challenges and disabilities.

The well-being and success of the students is part of the wider vision of the ESHT kaupapa, focused jointly on their preparation for employment and to the promotion of holistic health and well-being in the community. Outcomes in both are excellent. Community involvement is welcomed in the learning programme, especially in 'Client Day' events, in which students practise their range of skills in a public arena. Other involvement with the wider community includes the donation of courses for auction, demonstrations, and participation in a variety of public events.

Despite strong approval by a majority, there is some ambiguity in student feedback about the quality of day-to-day teaching, which may well reward further attention. Another challenge to performance may be the projected absence of the director, to set up a similar organisation in Australia. Her guiding influence and relationship with the students and the community have clearly been indispensable to the present success of the TEO.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Evolution School of Holistic Therapy**.

External assessment and moderation are mandatory. The TEO also conducts a series of formative internal assessments, an excellent feature, tracking student progress and providing for targeted guidance in preparation for summative assessments. Student course evaluations, midway and at the end of every course, are unanimous in their appreciation of this process.

Every course delivery is observed by the director, who writes a comprehensive and insightful appraisal of the teacher's performance. This is complemented by a financially supported professional development policy focussing on the maintenance of up-to-date knowledge in specialist areas, and in adult teaching skills.

Class situations and student needs are freely discussed among the teachers, and between teachers and management. Student representatives are currently being elected to provide a direct and continuous line of communication between students and management.

Review of students' and graduates' performance in practice is sought from employers and other sources, and informal feedback is received on ESHT participation in a wide range of community activities involving employers, schools, families, and community groups.

Some potentially valuable self-assessment features are presently being considered by ESHT management. They include ongoing peer observation, mutual evaluation among teaching staff (e.g. formal and informal feedback on performance), individual performance evaluation by teachers, and perhaps most importantly, the formal synthesis and analysis of an accumulation of internal and external assessment data for integration into longer-term strategy and improvement.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Learner achievement in ESHT is focussed on five of six outcomes identified by NZQA: 1) Completion of qualifications; 2) Employment; 3) Progress to further education; 4) Acquisition of meaningful skills and enhancement of well-being; 5) Community and iwi development. This is an excellent achievement, indicating ESHT's wide focus on educational needs and opportunities.

In the four qualifications offered, overall completion was 92 per cent in 2011 and 94 per cent so far in 2012. In actual student numbers, this means of a total enrolment of 70, 65 completed in 2011, and 66 may complete in 2012. This result is more than ten points above the median for Tertiary Education Commission-funded PTEs in the level 3-5 band. While these are clearly excellent outcomes in this scale of measurement, the wide spectrum of PTEs involved in the Tertiary Education Commission record says little about comparative performance in ESHT's sub-sector. Professional confidentiality makes specific comparisons somewhat difficult, but since ESHT's performance exceeds by a large margin its only known comparator in the Tertiary Education Commission record, it is reasonable to assume that the school rates highly in that group. It would nonetheless strengthen self-assessment to enquire in more detail about comparative performance, specifically among those delivering ITEC qualifications.

Of the 65 graduates in 2011, 55 are employed in the industry, five manage their own businesses, two have progressed from level 3 Beauty Consultancy to the level 4 Beauty Specialist course, and three have returned to their families. This is a clear indication of overall high achievement in employment outcomes, in this region, at this time. Written and oral feedback from a selection of employers is strongly positive about the performance of graduates, both in the range of their skills and their 'professional' presentation and bearing. At least two have said this TEO is their first choice for employees, one declaring that their graduates are 'top-notch', another that they are 'fantastic' and 'up to the minute' in their knowledge of the industry.

ESHT focusses strongly on the enhancement of student and graduate well-being in a whanaungatanga culture where personal attention to each student, and ongoing supportive relationships with graduates, target both their personal well-being and

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

their prospect of permanent employment. Students interviewed by the EER team, even those already competent and experienced in other professions, unanimously affirmed the importance of both outcomes.

Given the importance attached to outcomes relating to personal and community development, and the fund of informal feedback they receive, including student midway and exit evaluations, more organised attention to data collection and analysis may reveal emerging strengths and weaknesses, and furnish strategies for otherwise undetected opportunities for improvement.

## 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 value of the outcomes for graduates, personally and professionally, is evident in the preceding section, and further confirmed by the TEO's follow-up of graduates' careers in New Zealand and abroad. This value is also emphatically endorsed by written feedback from graduates, leaving no doubt that their tenure at ESHT has been enriching and profitable. Current students interviewed by the EER team repeatedly asserted that the programme had been a life-changing experience, both in the employment prospect it offered and in their growing confidence and self-belief.

Statutory agencies, employers, and community and social networks make three broad categories of external stakeholders. Their good performance in Tertiary Education Commission ratings, and continuing accreditation with ITEC, which audits ESHT twice annually, indicate better than satisfactory performance in the TEO's statutory obligations.

The TEO management is in constant contact with employers, both local and further afield, to locate prospective employment options and, if possible, to match students with opportunities fitting their gifts and skills. An example is an arrangement with a large cruise shipping company. Testimonials and telephone discussions with employers speak of excellent long-term relationships, high trust in the programmes, and respect for the quality of graduates. All those contacted by the EER team spoke warmly about the school, some, as already noted, stating that ESHT is their 'first and last' choice for recruitment, with graduates often quickly advancing to positions of seniority. One nearby supplier employs five graduates, some already in managerial roles.

For the second group of stakeholders, salon days are offered to clients on the TEO database, and there are workshops with local pharmacies and demonstrations of holistic treatments and products, mostly New Zealand-made, to provide students, clients, and the public at large with extensive and detailed local product knowledge.



Client Days, five for each course, are a prominent feature of the programme. These are practice days, open to friends, families, school groups, and the public, complementing theoretical learning with essential practical experience. They are also attended by employers, one of whom participates as a 'student'. Client feedback is sought and responded to. It is overwhelmingly positive from employers, a significant feature being a proposal for more Client Days.

For the third group, the community, ESHT maintains a broad network of relationships, for instance with the Pacific Islands Charitable Trust, Youth Transition Services, He Mataariki (school for teen parents), WINZ, Workbridge local case managers, and with schools and community groups, offering demonstrations, presentations, and health advice. A graduate is employed on a school road-show programme, giving demonstrations to students and exchanging information and feedback with students and careers counsellors. Time and resources are offered to community events, e.g. open days, where courses may be donated for auction. Telephone interviews with the EER team indicated that these initiatives were welcome and widely appreciated.

An expansive graduation ceremony welcomes families, friends, the media, and the public. While promoting the school as a tertiary education provider, this network of relationships is integral to the vision of advancement of community health and well-being. The school patron, a widely-known and respected kaumatua, stated to the EER team that his involvement with the TEO related specifically to that vision, and that he has witnessed its effect in the continuous growth and influence of the school in the community.

### 1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

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

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

ITEC conducts twice-yearly audits of ESHT, reviews all formative tests, and sets and marks summative assessments, leaving little room for adaptation for local needs or preferences. This is a key factor from the earliest point of contact with students. While no concessions are granted in the ITEC assessment process for individual learner difficulties, individual support for students with learning barriers is planned and meticulously carried out by ESHT. Comprehensive pre-enrolment tests and interviews explore applicants' histories, capabilities and potential challenges (e.g. dyslexia), personality issues, literacy or numeracy deficits, life situations, ambitions, expectations, and so on, and may refuse enrolment if the prospect of success is significantly compromised. & Choice of courses is discussed and recommended, with particular focus on the time and discipline required, the equal importance of practice and theory, and on beginning skills and preferences.

Once enrolled, needs assessment is continuous, often demanding, with the emergence of unexpected situations and challenges among students with widely divergent backgrounds and ambitions. Watchfulness, and one-to-one tutoring, in some cases despite repeated failures, is the rule for all courses, and especially relevant to the Student Achievement Component-funded level 3 Certificate in Beauty Consultancy with its open entry for students 16 years and older. This course is an excellent addition to the ESHT repertoire and a constant challenge for needs assessment. It addresses a social need and provides the first step in a staircase for students not yet ready for advanced tertiary learning.

Within the limits of accreditation, adjustments may be made for particular needs and priorities. While teachers use standard approaches for formative assessments, learning sequences and delivery methods may be adapted to the needs of the student group. Student evaluations seen by the EER team, while not unanimous, strongly agree on the relevance of the programme content.

Student representatives are currently being elected for each course, to represent student interests, conduct regular meetings, and report monthly to management meetings. Ideas mooted by students, for example changes in the sequencing and pace of programmes, may then be recorded and discussed in monthly staff meetings, formally responded to, and monitored as agreed. The director has also requested that ideas be reported more meticulously and promptly in weekly class reports by teachers. These initiatives underlie a current concern to improve the apparatus of self-assessment, to further support the TEO's drive for high quality and flexibility within an externally designed and audited regimen. Client Days and other community ventures are excellent media for exploring interests and needs in local client populations, the better to focus students on choices and preparation for employment.

#### 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**.

As briefly noted above, there are four courses:

1. Beauty Consultancy, a foundation course, level 3, lasting 19 weeks
2. Beauty Specialist, a level 4 course, also 19 weeks
3. Massage, 19 weeks
4. Epilation, level 5, 12 weeks intensive full-time study; or year-long, part-time.

ESHT has clearly exceeded the Tertiary Education Commission median completion rate of 84 per cent in all courses, and is on target in 2012 to meet the commission's

requirement of 39 students for the level 3 Student Achievement Component-funded Beauty Consultancy course.

Teaching is a compliance regimen in three respects: first, in the external design of the overall course structure; second, in external marking of summary assessments; and third, in the external audit of all resources, procedures, and formative tests. Within these parameters, ESHT still has scope to design and review its own teaching programme. This begins with a meticulous orientation to the learning culture, where students receive a company handbook, detailed information folders for each course, and workbooks for all standards, including any learning supplementary to ITEC or NZQA prescriptions.

From enrolment, students are treated as employees. They must dress and act professionally and manage all aspects of the learning environment. Student supervisors allocate 'housekeeping' jobs, especially in the extensive preparation for Client Days. This shared responsibility for the practice environment is an essential aspect of the learning, strongly approved by employers contacted by the EER team.

Pacing and spacing of theory and practice sessions make good use of time and concentration levels. A spiral curriculum reprises all essential learning in successive sessions, an excellent way to embed learning quickly, in relatively short courses. The five Client Days per course provide vital and effective praxis, integrating theory and practice in case studies, and in the management of client groups from all sectors of the community. Student feedback on client days recommends that there should be both more and less, but the consensus of employers is that the days are valuable and should be increased if possible. ESHT is exploring this prospect, and will likely go ahead with it.

As already noted, twice-yearly ITEC audits review the student practicum, lecture notes, and student folders, and examine sites and resources. ESHT conducts formative assessments on theory and practice, all reviewed by a summative ITEC examiner. Teachers moderate each other's formats for these. Feedback on the quality of the teaching seen by the EER team is strongly positive in most listed factors, with, as mentioned, some ambiguity about pacing, clarity, and organisation of material. Teachers must have five years prior salon experience, and all must complete unit standard 4098 *Use standards to assess candidate performance* (level 5, 6 credits). Professional development is focussed on teaching knowledge and skills (e.g. on completion of an ITEC diploma), and is financially supported. Positive ITEC reports reflect well on the contribution of teaching to student achievement. The director observes every new course delivery, giving an up-to-date insight into teaching quality, and compiles an excellent and extensive appraisal of methods and skills observed.

At present, there is no other periodic class observation or peer review, or ongoing self-review, which would provide the feedback requested by the director. Formal mid-term and exit evaluations, while generally strongly positive about the teaching, include a small but significant number of critical comments, e.g. about pacing,

delivery, and clarity of information, which might be more effectively addressed by a formal self and peer review process. The plan to expand and coordinate the self-assessment process may well bring improvements to quality and effectiveness and provide solid data for analysis of trends and future planning. These matters aside, most course evaluations, and all students interviewed by the EER team, emphatically confirmed the vital contribution of teachers to their learning.

## 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 vision of ESHT, to build an international reputation as an educator with a positive impact on the health and well-being of communities, is anchored in a whanaungatanga culture, which assists students throughout their studentship and beyond.

Within the statutory requirements of the school's ITEC accreditation, support for students is focussed on individual needs and challenges, and towards overcoming barriers, e.g. literacy and numeracy, for which expert help may be engaged. Although no concessions for disability are made for summative tests, students are guided through the succession of formative assessments and rehearsals with special attention to learning needs, for example with oral presentation, or a reader-writer for a student with dyslexia or a serious literacy and numeracy problem. The school manager may join a class to mentor a struggling student, and specialist help may be engaged if required.

Confidence is a primary consideration, especially in the level 3 open-entry Beauty Consultancy course. Students interviewed by the EER team repeatedly asserted that the responsiveness and support of the teacher was critical to their realisation that achievement was possible. This was confirmed by a large majority of formal student evaluations viewed by the EER team, and by the rapturous comments from graduates already mentioned.

TEO management gives practical help to students in many ways, e.g. with transport, administrative and compliance issues, guidance and funding for repeated summative assessments, and discounted or even free enrolment for deserving students in need. Personal stresses, illnesses, or bereavements are acknowledged and cared for, transport may be provided if needed, and TEO resources may be borrowed for home use.

While students are the primary focus, the local community is included in many activities. Families and friends of students may often be clients, or become involved in student support, and are welcome in the learning environment. Successes are celebrated and publicised, and there is an open invitation to families and community to graduation celebrations and other social occasions.

## 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**.

The ambitious vision of ESHT has three overlapping elements: 1) To achieve excellent employment outcomes in a high-compliance environment; 2) To promote personal and community holistic health improvement; 3) To fulfil a ten-year strategic goal for expansion in New Zealand and Australia.

Governance is shared between the director, who is strongly student and community-focussed, and the statutory compliance manager, who deals with compliance and internal assessment issues, and shares, with the director, enduring links with the community. The school manager is a graduate of the programme and has immediate responsibility for the teaching environment. Another programme graduate is responsible for promotion and stakeholder relations, especially in the conduct of school road-shows and employer relations.

This delineation of areas of responsibility is rational and practical, and is enhanced by a 'flat' management policy by which all staff members, including the director, are intimately involved in the education programme, ideas are freely exchanged, and no new initiative is made without mutual consideration of possible outcomes. An excellent teacher appraisal for every course is conducted by the director, and a range of formal and informal feedback is received, but as noted elsewhere, a more organised system of internal self-assessment would be worth attention, especially in an expanding and likely more complex field of operation.

Besides her focus on teaching quality, the director has a passion for the pastoral care of students, for which she is highly commended by employers, community representatives interviewed by the EER team, and especially by graduates. This focus is shared by the statutory compliance manager who has life-long ties with the local community. It is a feature of the ESHT culture, which by all available evidence has given the school a unique character in an otherwise highly regulated environment. This culture may now be facing a major challenge. Both members of the governance team are resident in Australia, establishing a new education centre. The manager is now responsible for day-to-day management, and for relationships with the local community, with daily distance contact with the directors by telephone, Skype, and email. Systems and responsibilities are being adjusted to cope with the change and, given the shared passion for the kaupapa and its outcomes focus, there is reason for confidence that ESHT will manage the transition well and profit by it. It is nonetheless an ambitious step and may bring unforeseen stresses and risks, especially to the valued tradition, established by both the director and the compliance manager, of face-to-face relationships with employers, students, graduates, families, and community.

# 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: Certificate in Beauty Consultancy (Level 3); Certificate in Beauty Specialist (Level 4)

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

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

## 2.3 Focus area: Teaching across all courses

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](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

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

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