



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Southern First Aid Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 10 October 2012

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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:	Southern First Aid Limited (SFA)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	65 Goldfields Heights, Queenstown
Delivery sites:	At various workplaces
First registered:	24 August 2009
Courses currently delivered	Workplace First Aid
Number of students:	Domestic: 23 trainees to date in 2012
Number of staff:	Sole owner operator
Scope of active accreditation:	First Aid unit standards 25459, <i>Provide first aid for young children</i> (1 credit), 26551 <i>Provide first aid for life threatening conditions</i> (1 credit), 26552 <i>Demonstrate knowledge of common first aid conditions and how to respond to them</i> (1 credit)
Distinctive characteristics:	Workplace-based training to meet the needs of business and the community in Queenstown and Central Otago.
Previous quality assurance history:	SFA had an adverse moderation report in 2010 and had an action plan accepted by NZQA's Tertiary Assessment and Moderation team. The organisation received a favourable national external moderation report on 23 August 2011. At its first NZQA quality assurance visit, an audit in March 2010, SFA did not meet two Policies and Criteria for PTEs. The policies not met related to governance and management, specifically public

information and the quality management system. The audit report noted that the quality management system needed to be updated to include policies and information on management, risk, and internal moderation. In addition, public information required editing to remove reference to unit standards for which SFA does not have accreditation. The website was amended during the audit and the student handbook was amended as part of an action plan to address the audit findings. These issues were re-checked as part of the external evaluation and review (EER) and SFA was found to be in full compliance.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The mandatory focus area selected was governance, management, and strategy, and the programme selected was Workplace First Aid, the only programme offered by SFA.

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 evaluation team consisted of two evaluators who visited the owner for one day at his home in Queenstown, from where he undertakes administration and maintains resources, such as his van and mobile trailer. The evaluators spoke to the sole owner, managers of organisations who have sent staff to be trained by SFA, and a selection of trainees. A range of documentation was also sighted, including trainee feedback, employer feedback, course booklets, and assessment materials and an extensive internal audit document that included health and safety, maintenance of training equipment, and customer satisfaction information. The updated quality management system was also sighted and included policies and information on management, risk, and internal moderation – requirements dating from the 2010 audit.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Southern First Aid Limited**.

SFA has trained 100 trainees over its three and a half years of operation. Of these trainees, 97 per cent have successfully completed the training. Most trainees are sent by their employers as their work requires an up-to-date first aid certificate. The eight-hour course is delivered over one day. Classes have a maximum of 14-15 trainees to ensure the trainer has sufficient time to observe all the final assessments. Trainees are allowed two re-sits and, if still unsuccessful, are offered attendance at another class at no charge. The first aid certificate is valid for two years and three months and SFA is now at the point of re-contacting previous clients to book them in for the renewal of their certificate through attendance at a refresher course.

The company founder, sole manager, and trainer is highly experienced, with 32 years front-line service with St John Ambulance as an advanced paramedic with a mixture of urban, rural, and helicopter experience as well as experience as a first aid trainer for St John. While the trainer does not have a formal adult teaching qualification, the evaluation team received consistent feedback from trainees, employers, formal written evaluations, and informal unsolicited communications indicating that the trainer possesses a well-developed set of training skills. These include the ability to use trainees' experiences to engage them in the learning, using a variety of training approaches to accommodate different learning styles, using up-to-date audio-visual equipment, using his own experience to illustrate teaching points, and fostering a classroom atmosphere where the trainees are comfortable in asking questions, taking part in role-play, and working effectively in small groups.

While SFA has competitors in Queenstown, it has found a niche in the local first aid training market. To meet this niche, SFA provides training that is targeted to the clients' needs, is held at clients' workplaces, is offered at times that suit staff and management, and has no minimum class numbers. In addition, SFA is a mobile service, with all resources and equipment being transported to the client's workplace. Stakeholders spoken to by the evaluation team noted that SFA was their provider of choice because the trainer was easy to contact, responsive at short notice, had a reputation for running interactive and engaging training, and contextualised the training to each workplace.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Southern First Aid Limited**.

SFA has processes and procedures that allow effective self-assessment to occur. These include regular feedback from trainees and their employers (which is collated and analysed to inform future training) and an annual audit that addresses a wide-ranging number of areas of the business, such as health and safety, customer satisfaction, data storage, and organisational purpose and direction. Regular review and updating of training materials has led to trainee workbooks that are comprehensive and easy to understand. SFA also provides additional information to trainees if required.

SFA understands that a sole operator requires external input to challenge and advise the business. This is achieved academically by an experienced moderator who assists SFA with preparation for NZQA moderation and the review of national external moderation results, and financially through an accountant. SFA undertakes an internal audit of the business annually, and as a result of the last audit has written up a new health and safety policy. Other ways the manager of SFA maintains currency is by attendance at New Zealand Resuscitation Council biannual conferences and through NZQA updates, St John updates, and relevant websites.

SFA also hires and sells first aid equipment such as automated external defibrillators. This represents 20 per cent of the business, with training accounting for the other 80 per cent. An excellent example of the interrelationship between the training and selling arms of SFA was provided by a stakeholder: ‘SFA is flexible enough to incorporate company-specific issues into the training as well as providing vital advice on how we could improve the business in terms of first aid equipment’.

There is a clear vision for the business where the trainer wants to increase training occurrences but prefers to stay as a single operator without employees or contract staff. The only exception to this policy is one-off events such as an upcoming golf tournament where SFA may need to employ other appropriately trained people to meet requirements. The trainer is able to call on local people to work with him for this occasion. The evaluation team was impressed by SFA’s readiness to seek and accept external input and the organisation’s understanding of the importance of this input in evaluating the quality of its training product. An excellent example of this was the 2012 NZQA national external moderation results received on the day of the EER. The results were discussed briefly at the EER, and SFA will analyse them further with the external moderator and make any required adjustments to training materials and assessments.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do trainees 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**.

SFA has trained 100 trainees over its three and a half years of operation, with trainee numbers increasing from two in 2009, to 39 in 2010, 36 in 2011, and 23 to date in 2012, with three more courses booked for the week following the EER. Of these trainees, 97 per cent have successfully completed the training. Most trainees are sent by their employers as their work requires an up-to-date first aid certificate. The eight-hour course is delivered over one day. Classes have a maximum of 14-15 trainees to ensure the trainer has sufficient time to observe all the final assessments. Trainees are allowed two re-sits and, if still unsuccessful, are offered the option of attending another class at no charge. After successful completion of the course, trainees are sent an attendance certificate in the mail a couple of weeks after the training is completed. It is valid for two years and three months, and SFA is now at the point of re-contacting previous clients for a renewal of their certificate. Queenstown has a transient workforce, often seasonal, so some former clients have moved out of their employment and out of the area. However, the manager reported that he is getting good uptake.

Trainees and employers contacted by the evaluation team confirmed that SFA training is targeted to the trainee's workplace, linked to trainees' previous experience, and helps them to acquire useful skills and knowledge. SFA has used this feedback to improve the way it records trainee results. Previously, trainee results were ticked off on a sheet, but SFA thought this could lead to errors so it now requires trainees to sign off on their results as a double-check for them and SFA. While the trainees spoken to hoped never to have to use their first aid skills, they reported increased confidence in their ability to know what to do should the occasion arise. They also appreciated that their colleagues had completed the training alongside them and that this built their collective first aid confidence and contributed to the knowledge of first aid in their work community.

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

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

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**.

SFA trains a wide range of corporate and community groups, such as hotel employees, adventure tourism clients, and an organisation that offers home-based childcare. SFA adds value to this training by being easy to contact and responsive at short notice, having flexible training days and times, having the ability to bring all the equipment to a client's workplace, and by contextualising the training to the needs of the client. Sometimes this means teaching beyond the unit standard requirements. As a sole trainer, the manager of SFA is able to control the quality of the training and resources offered.

A good indication of the positive regard in which SFA is held is that some of the organisations he trains in Queenstown have national agreements with other first aid providers but have decided to use SFA. This informal benchmarking reflects the flexibility and responsiveness that a small business can offer compared with a larger organisation. The evaluation team spoke to a variety of stakeholders and the feedback received was similar and consistently positive. For example, all the stakeholders noted that the training was practical, interesting, and related to their previous experiences with first aid, and that the trainer used his extensive experience to illustrate and emphasise training points.

In one day of intensive training, trainees can gain two level 2, 1-credit unit standards: 26551 *Provide first aid for life threatening conditions* and 26552 *Demonstrate knowledge of common first aid conditions and how to respond to them*. These may help them to be appointed as a safety officer in their workplace, undertake employment, or help them to gain a role in an early childhood centre or effectively manage a first aid incident with their own children. SFA contributes to a safer community as the greater the number of trained first aiders the greater the possibility that there will be a person available to assist others in an emergency situation.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of trainees 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**.

Trainees enrol when they attend the class. The unit standard and assessment requirements are carefully explained. Trainees spoken to by the evaluation team said they were well prepared for the assessments and confident that they would pass, with several trainees noting that there were no surprises. They also noted

that the relationship between the trainees and the trainer was relaxed, that the trainer gave clear instructions and was easy to understand, and that the expectations of the course were made explicit. The programmes and activities match the needs of stakeholders by having maximum class numbers of 14-15 trainees, by running classes for very small numbers of trainees, and by SFA charging competitive fees.

Besides first aid training, SFA also sells and hires out first aid equipment such as automated external defibrillator machines, devices that send an electric shock to the heart and can restore the natural heart rhythm to a person suffering a cardiac arrest. These machines do not need experts to operate them and they significantly increase survival rates. All of the equipment sold or hired complies with New Zealand government standards such as those for OSH (Department of Labour Occupational Safety and Health), Maritime New Zealand, and the Civil Aviation Authority. This part of the SFA business accounts for approximately 20 per cent of overall business and is an important aspect of SFA's commitment to making the community a safer place.

SFA has successfully responded to its clients by being flexible around delivery times and locations – for example training in the evenings and weekends – and by having a mobile trailer complete with resources and mannequins which can be used on site at client workplaces. The organisation has also been quick to offer the new first aid unit standards, 25459 *Provide first aid for young children* (1 credit), 26551 *Provide first aid for life threatening conditions* (1 credit), and 26552 *Demonstrate knowledge of common first aid conditions and how to respond to them* (1 credit). SFA has sought stakeholder feedback on standards 26551 and 26552. These two standards form the workplace first aid certificate and can be completed in one day compared with the two days required for the standards they replace. Stakeholder feedback from both trainees and their employers has been positive – the new standards are more appropriate for community first aid requirements.

1.4 How effective is the training?

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 company founder, sole manager, and trainer is highly experienced, with 32 years front-line service with St John Ambulance as an advanced paramedic, and with a mixture of urban, rural, and helicopter experience as well as experience as a first aid trainer for St John. In addition, he was also a front-line first aider at a hydro electric power station, was part of a communications team, and has attended many types of emergencies. While the trainer does not have a formal adult teaching qualification, the evaluation team received consistent feedback from trainees, employers, and through formal written evaluations and informal unsolicited communications indicating that he possesses a well-developed set of

training skills. These include the ability to use trainees' experiences to engage them in the learning, using a variety of training approaches to accommodate different learning styles, using up-to-date audio-visual equipment, using his own experience to illustrate teaching points, and fostering a classroom atmosphere where trainees are comfortable to ask questions, take part in role-plays, and work effectively in small groups. The trainer uses this wide-ranging experience in a number of first aid roles to provide practical, interesting, relevant training that is planned and structured for the benefit of learners. A good example of the effectiveness of the training was noted by a trainee who stated: 'I found the oral questioning very helpful as a reinforcement of the day's learning. We forget about 90 per cent of what we learn by the next day, if not revised'.

Trainees and their managers spoken to by the evaluation team described the training as fun, comprehensive, interesting, and related to their own experiences and real life. They enjoyed the variety in the training approach which included working with others, role-plays, and understanding the written material. The course workbooks are well written in plain English, updated regularly to reflect the latest unit standard requirements, easy to understand, and can be used as a resource post-training. The 2012 NZQA national external moderation results were received on the day of the EER. These were discussed briefly at the EER and SFA will analyse the results further with the external moderator and make any required adjustments to training materials.

1.5 How well are trainees 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**.

SFA provides guidance and support to trainees by having access to a reader/writer if required, promoting an inclusive learning environment, and by taking extra time with trainees on a one-to-one basis. Several stakeholders noted that the trainer is particularly supportive of non-native speakers of English, working with them after class and individually to help them to understand training concepts. Several trainees in this situation had been very reluctant to attend the training but had successfully completed the day with increased confidence and first aid awareness. The ability to listen actively to trainees, adapt the training accordingly, and minimise barriers to learning is a strength of the training that SFA provides.

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**.

SFA supports educational achievement by collecting, collating, and analysing stakeholder feedback for any trends, maintaining collegial contacts through attendance at New Zealand Resuscitation Council biannual conferences, gaining external input about the validity and consistency of assessment through an experienced external moderator, keeping up to date with the latest resources, and by having direct contact with all the stakeholders involved in his business. This includes the trainees, the managers of the organisations he trains for, the businesses that hire his first aid equipment, and the community contacts that he has gathered after living in the area for some time. He also conducts an annual audit of the services SFA offers, which is used to reflect on all aspects of the business, from advertising to data storage to the risk management policy.

SFA takes an approach that is practical, friendly, open, and organised. Courses can be run at short notice with no fixed minimum trainee numbers, giving the organisation an edge over the competition. Excellent resources and word-of-mouth recommendations, in combination with the Queenstown location, have enabled SFA to offer targeted training to a wide range of tourism and community businesses, all of whom have a significant and ongoing demand for staff with first aid training certificates.

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: Workplace First Aid

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, 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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