



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Learn Plus Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 22 November 2016

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Final Report

Purpose of this Report

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

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	Learn Plus Limited
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1 September 2009
Location:	143 Saqa Way, Tutukaka
Delivery sites:	LearnPlus either hires rooms or uses rooms supplied by employers.
Courses currently delivered:	National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Level 4)
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: in 2016 LearnPlus had 50 equivalent full-time students. All students study part-time, with all in either full or part-time employment. Only 3 per cent of learners are Māori and 1 per cent are Pasifika.
Number of staff:	One full-time equivalent and two part-time.
Scope of active accreditation:	LearnPlus has a range of accreditation at levels 3 to 6 across the Business, Education and Humanities domains.
Distinctive characteristics:	LearnPlus is an owner-operated PTE which offers tailored learning to employers and individuals, including face-to-face, online and distance learning

options.

Recent significant changes:	LearnPlus relocated to Tutukaka, Northland in 2014.
Previous quality assurance history:	At the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in October 2012, NZQA was Highly Confident in LearnPlus's educational performance and Highly Confident in its capability in self-assessment. National external moderation results have been generally positive for several years. Some modification was required to two assessments in 2015.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The EER examined the following focus areas:

- Governance, management and strategy. This is a mandatory focus area.
- National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Level 4). This programme represented the greatest number of unit standards taught across the range of training delivered by LearnPlus.

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.

LearnPlus supplied the evaluation team with a self-assessment document and a range of other evidential documentation in the lead-up to the EER. For the on-site phase of the EER, the evaluation team of two spent a day at LearnPlus. The evaluation team met with the key staff, including the chief executive/director, co-director and the part-time academic administrator. A range of documentation was viewed including feedback from learners and employers, the quality management system, moderation reports, achievement data, attendance data and training workbooks. Phone interviews were conducted with a number of key clients.

Summary of Results

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

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance and **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Learn Plus Limited**.

Achievement is strong for those learners who study with LearnPlus. This is the result of careful tracking and effective follow-up with those who need extra support. Comprehensive needs analysis is a strong component of the training delivered, with the owner ensuring she has a detailed understanding of the employment context and the opportunities for learners to apply new knowledge and skills in their role. LearnPlus applies strong teaching and learning principles to delivery. The training involves activities that are project-based and outcomes-focused, using integrated assessment, with a range of related outcomes being assessed through the same task. Value is evident in the testimony of learners and employers and through the ongoing repeat business from clients. Evidence of valued outcomes could be strengthened by showing closer links between the learning and the graduate outcomes.

Ongoing reflective processes include internal and external moderation and reviewing learner feedback, learner samples and client feedback. Minutes of meetings and key emails are filed where appropriate, and this range of documentation informs programme planning and development. There is a focus on quality delivery and good systems to monitor inputs, processes and achievement and make improvements where required. NZQA is therefore highly confident in LearnPlus's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Achievement is strong for learners who study with LearnPlus. For those who do not withdraw, 98 per cent achieve. The withdrawal rate is low and for those that remain enrolled, monitoring and tracking is ongoing, with learners able to participate at their own pace with support from LearnPlus. There is good evidence that continued support to achieve is provided even if the learner changes employment status or location. For corporate clients, LearnPlus ensures there is a manager who holds some responsibility for ensuring trainees are engaging and achieving.

Applied learning assessments and client feedback attest to the learners gaining valuable knowledge and skills that they directly apply in their workplaces. Assessment and internal moderation practices are sound and give confidence in the educational results being achieved.

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**.

There is high value for the students and the organisation they work for in the contextualised learning that LearnPlus delivers, in that it is readily applied in the workplace. Repeat business, client feedback and student surveys over time indicate that the tailored project-based approach is valued and impactful. A range of positive client feedback was noted, with one writing, 'I have had some amazing feedback and spoken to some very excited learners who seem very motivated to go out there and do some amazing work with their new-found knowledge and skill'.

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

While there is good evidence of client testimony and student feedback, stronger systems to follow up with graduates and their employers will strengthen evidence to assure that graduate outcomes are being consistently met.

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

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

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

Thorough needs assessment ('your place, your pace, your style') is a key and effective feature of the approach taken by LearnPlus. Needs analysis meetings are used to understand needs and identify gaps. Training is then customised to the workplace using authentic work-based documents and projects. Delivery is also tailored to meet client or learner needs and can include workshops and distance learning, one-to-one Skype meetings and ongoing email and phone support. Recognition of prior learning or current competency options are also available if requested.

The owner keeps current through regular local and international conference attendance, including presenting on good-practice teaching and learning. In addition, there is good engagement with tertiary sector developments. This includes sitting on the Business Qualifications Advisory Committee and the unit standard review panels for adult education and management qualifications.

For a small organisation, LearnPlus has well-organised systems for understanding needs. There are a range of approaches to understanding stakeholder needs, including the in-depth needs analysis conducted before training is delivered, as well as follow-up processes including surveys when appropriate, email conversations and meetings. These approaches are all well documented and used to inform ongoing programme planning, review and improvements. Examples of improvements include minor changes made to assessment tasks and ensuring clients had a manager with some responsibility for ensuring learning tasks are completed.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

The owner of LearnPlus has deep knowledge and understanding of adult education and contextualised training and remains engaged in building on her practice. This knowledge and understanding is applied in her design and delivery of training and results in strong achievement and high levels of satisfaction from learners and clients. Stakeholders consistently noted that the training was never 'off the shelf', but rather was tailored to match the needs of the client company and those of the specific group of learners, adapted and contextualised to their context.

Assessments are contextualised and integrated, with real-world evidence of learning being used where possible. Work assessments require learners to get their managers' sign-off for further verification of learning. For example, the adult education learners had to design and deliver training intervention to staff in their workplace and review the effectiveness of their training.

While LearnPlus is a small organisation, a robust, authentic approach is taken to moderation, with both internal and external, pre- and post-moderation processes being systematically applied. While these processes were not happening with very much depth in 2015, this has changed in 2016 following targeted professional development in assessment for the administrator.

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**.

LearnPlus is clearly learner-centred, and there are a number of documented examples of how the owner has gone the extra mile to enable learners who have struggled to achieve. A key stakeholder noted that LearnPlus was diligent in following up with learners who are not achieving as expected. Learners who have had to take a break from study have been enabled to pick up their study at later points, and some have been able to defer or pay by instalments to enable them to continue. This support, along with tailored, contextualised training, has been effective in keeping nearly all learners engaged in their studies.

The organisation is explicit about asking learners if they have any particular needs during the course of their study. Stakeholders noted that the owner was quick to pick up if there were learners at risk of not achieving due to low literacy or learning

disabilities. Those learners are given the support and guidance they require to achieve.

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**.

This small organisation has a very clear vision and purpose, and the owner, who is also the main tutor, is focused on ensuring quality. Consequently, there are a range of quality systems in place and these are well documented. Important compliance matters are covered by the owner's close monitoring of the sector, for example through receiving and responding to regular sector updates and engaging in qualification development and reviews. Planning and responding to change is evident through the post-TRoQ programme development and a shift to online learning.

As noted above, the organisation has strong systems for documenting processes and outcomes, and this ensures an evidence-based approach to decision-making. The owner is well supported by the co-director on matters of technology, administration and finance, and an administrator helps with moderation, drafting documents and some assessment marking. Continuity plans are in place. In recognition of being a strongly performing PTE, LearnPlus won the Independent Tertiary Education New Zealand (ITENZ) provider of the year award in 2015.

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: Adult Education 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 **Excellent**.

Recommendations

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

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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Final Report