

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Air Hawke's Bay Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 16 November 2016

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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:	Air Hawke's Bay Limited (AHB)
Туре:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	19 December 2014
Location:	1591 Maraekakaho Road, Hastings Aerodrome, Hastings
Delivery sites:	One site – Hastings Aerodrome
Courses currently delivered:	New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (General Aviation) (Levels 5 and 6)
	Private Pilot Licence
	Commercial Pilot Licence
	Instrument Rating (IR) (Level 5)
	Integrated Private Pilot Licence (PPL) and Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) and Instrument Rating (IR) (Level 5)
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 36 enrolled students (41 Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) EFTS (equivalent full-time students))
	International: two
Number of staff:	12 full-time, two part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	Domains and unit standards in Aviation up to, and including, level 6.
Final Report	

Distinctive characteristics:	AHB's owner, the Hawke's Bay and East Coast Aero Club (see below) also owns and operates the Hastings Aerodrome.
Recent significant changes:	Technically, this is the first external evaluation and review (EER) for this entity. Previously, what is essentially the same organisation was registered and trading as Hawke's Bay and East Coast Aero Club Incorporated (MoE number 8594). Air Hawkes Bay, a limited liability company (wholly owned by the Hawke's Bay and East Coast Aero Club Incorporated) was registered as a PTE in 2015.
	AHB was, until recently, one of five flying schools in New Zealand chosen by Air New Zealand as a Flying Training Organisation partner. This meant that AHB's graduates were viewed favourably over graduates of other aviation schools when Air New Zealand was recruiting new pilots. However, Air New Zealand terminated this arrangement with AHB from March 2016.
	AHB was, for several years, offering the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) Diploma in Aviation (Level 6) under a partnership arrangement with EIT. This partnership ceased at the end of 2011, at which time AHB became directly funded by the TEC. All students enrolled at that time completed the EIT diploma and AHB began offering the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation from 2012.
	Along with direct TEC funding in 2012 came changes to the rules governing student loans for study towards aviation qualifications. All students are now required to personally fund approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000 of the cost. While AHB and other aviation providers acknowledge that the change has resulted in self-selection of more committed students, it has also led to exclusion of some students who simply lack sufficient resources. Providers have found it challenging to enrol a student cohort that accurately reflects the New Zealand demographic.
Previous quality assurance history: <i>Final Report</i>	The previous scheduled EER of Hawke's Bay and East Coast Aero Club was conducted in May 2012, at which time NZQA was Confident in the PTE's

educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

Other: The certification and operation of organisations conducting aviation training and assessments in New Zealand is prescribed under Part 141 of Civil Aviation Rules governed by the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand (CAA). All theory and practical (flight test) assessments are conducted independently by Aviation Services Ltd (ASL), which operates under licence to CAA. All pilot licences are issued by CAA.

> AHB was last audited against Part 141 (Flight Training Operations) by CAA in June 2015. There were no findings raised during this audit.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER consisted of the mandatory focus area:

• Governance, management, and strategy.

In addition, the following focus area was selected:

• Professional Flight Training including the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Levels 5 and 6), the Private Pilot Licence, and Commercial Pilot Licence.

This focus area encapsulates all of the teaching and programme delivery activities of AHB.

## 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 in mid-February 2016. Before this EER, the lead evaluator had telephone and email discussions with the chief executive officer of AHB to discuss the visit and agree the scope of the EER.

An evaluation team of two made a one and a half-day EER visit to the AHB site at Hastings Aerodrome. There, the evaluation team reviewed a range of documentation and met with:

- The chief executive and chief flying officer
- Training manager
- Course supervisor
- AHB board
- Two groups of instructors
- 10 students in five groups of two
- One external stakeholder/employer

The evaluation team had phone and email communication with five external stakeholders, including CAA, ASL, Service IQ (industry training organisation) and the Air New Zealand manager of pilot development.

# Summary of Results

#### Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is Confident in the educational performance of Air Hawke's Bay Limited.

The students who have studied at AHB have achieved excellent results (refer Findings 1.1 for details). For instance, annual course completion rates in the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation at AHB have ranged between 88 and 98 per cent over the past four years. In 2016, all of the 36 students currently enrolled in the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation are on track to successfully complete on time.

AHB provides good preparation for employment in the aviation industry, borne out by the fact that 92 per cent of graduates since 2004 are known to have since worked as commercial pilots, both in New Zealand and overseas.

Effective processes contributing to the positive outcomes attained by AHB include:

- Training is tailored to the identified needs of the industry and to the individual needs of students.
- Training which is well contextualised to industry and student needs. AHB pilots are well prepared for employment by the training environment, particularly through the internship programme available in the second year of the diploma.
- There is consistent evidence of good teaching throughout the organisation (refer Findings 1.4). Feedback from students indicates that they value the way in which AHB structures and delivers the programmes, and they have positive relationships with AHB staff.
- Good student support structures are appropriate to the needs of the students and contribute to the high and sustained level of achievement (refer Findings 1.5).
- Training is well resourced and AHB uses its resources effectively. The organisation's ownership of the airfield and pivotal role in the Hawke's Bay aviation industry ensures its ongoing relevance and engagement.

In summary, NZQA is confident in the educational performance of AHB as it has found clear and comprehensive evidence that AHB is providing quality education and meeting many of the most important needs of its students. This in turn leads to positive outcomes for most students. However, a lack of transparency was evident in the way in which AHB has managed key operational issues of late (refer Findings 1.6). The recent demise of the partnership with Air New Zealand, which was a significant drawcard for students, is disappointing for both AHB and its students.

#### Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Air Hawke's Bay Limited.** 

Key reasons for this judgement include:

- Records indicate that self-assessment has been practised within AHB for many years. AHB has good systems to regularly gather and collate feedback from students. Generally, the quality and validity of the information collected is sound and the information is then used to inform improvements to teaching practice and course structure.
- Although AHB has positive engagement with the aviation industry, a more systematic approach to gathering feedback from industry and graduates and using the information to bring about useful improvements is required to demonstrate excellence in self-assessment.
- Processes to critically analyse contributing factors to student achievement and other quality improvements are taking place across the organisation. Staff at AHB demonstrated a good understanding of the factors that lead to student achievement. They regularly discuss and assess ideas among themselves for improving achievement and making the courses more useful and enjoyable for students. Engagement with educators outside of the organisation is desirable as it would help AHB to better inform analysis, discussion and engagement, and would lead to improvements in delivery.
- The evaluation team identified an insular component to the culture at AHB. Almost all AHB staff began their training at AHB, and the majority of their experience since has been with AHB. Few of the staff have significant experience with other aviation providers and none have teaching experience outside of AHB. The evaluation team believes that a stronger emphasis on external engagement with other education providers will lead to significant and meaningful ongoing improvements in delivery and results. Self-assessment processes at AHB need to be organised into a planned and coordinated approach across the organisation and should be informed by engagement with external as well as internal stakeholders.

# 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 Good.

The students who have studied at AHB have achieved good results. AHB has benchmarked their course completion against other aviation providers, and although it scores above the average for the sector, the PTE still aspires to continuously improve student achievement. Course completion rates for the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation have ranged between 88 per cent and 98 per cent since 2012 against a PTE sector average of 83 per cent at levels 5 and 6.

AHB, and many other aviation providers, see an important measure of the success of their training in the number or percentage of 'first attempt passes<sup>2</sup>', which they are then able to benchmark against national averages of first time pass rates of all New Zealand aviation providers.<sup>3</sup> AHB's first time pass rate for commercial pilot licence tests is consistently above the national average.

	ASL first time pass rate 2014	AHB 2013	AHB 2014	AHB 2015
Commercial Pilot Licence Flight Test	53%	82%	76%	82%
Instrument Rating Flight Test	63%	85%	84%	86%
C-CAT (Instructor) Flight Test	71%	75%	87%	75%
Multi Engine Instrument Flight Test	-	79%	90%	92%

#### Table 1. First Attempt Pass Rate – Flight Tests

<sup>&</sup>lt;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.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This measure refers to the number or percentage of students who pass external theory or flight test examinations on the first attempt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> ASL has recently made national average information available to all providers on a quarterly basis.

	ASL first time pass rate	AHB 2013	AHB 2014	AHB 2015
Private Pilot Licence exams	-	86%	90%	92%
Commercial Pilot Licence exams	-	82%	91%	93%
Instrument Rating exams	-	95%	87%	83%
Airline Transport Pilot Licence exams	-	84%	81%	90%
Total average	72%	87%	87%	90%

#### Table 2. First Attempt Pass Rate – Theory Exams

AHB has made a concerted effort since the last EER to attract more Māori students into their courses. Strategies have included visiting local Māori secondary schools and ensuring that Māori are role modelled in promotional material and employed as instructional staff. As discussed in the Introduction to this report, the changes to student loan regulations and the significant financial contribution now required from students has made it very difficult to recruit students from low-decile circumstances. This demographic unfortunately includes many young Māori and Pasifika who might otherwise aspire to become career pilots. Despite these challenges, AHB has managed to maintain Māori students at approximately 10 per cent of the cohort. It is also commendable that these students have succeeded in their study at least as well as their non-Māori counterparts.

The organisation has a strong focus on, and commitment to, student achievement. Students reported that they received timely, accurate and supportive feedback on their progress from AHB staff. Students are debriefed by their instructor after every flight to identify what the student did well, what he/she did not do so well, and where improvements could be made, either in the student's performance or AHB's instruction.

Staff at AHB demonstrated a good understanding of the factors that lead to student achievement, and being a small team they informally and formally analyse and discuss ideas for improving achievement. The current staff members have a very collegial approach and all share the same office space, so they communicate and share information informally on a daily basis. However, as they have limited opportunities for external engagement with other educators to discuss ideas for improving course delivery and learner achievement, the organisation is not maximising the benefits it could receive from the insights that staff have gained.

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

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

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

The immediate outputs from this training, in addition to the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation, are licences and ratings as awarded by CAA. All students are undertaking this training in preparation for a career in commercial aviation. AHB ensures that the study period is as efficient as possible to enable students to complete in the minimum time while still ensuring that they meet all requirements.

AHB has established an internship programme whereby second-year students are encouraged to complete their C-CAT instructor qualification early in their second year and are then encouraged to apply for the internship programme. If successful they are appointed as intern instructors. They are then given responsibility to instruct between one and three first-year students under the supervision of a staff instructor. The advantages of this arrangement include improved performance, motivation and confidence for the interns and a greater level of individual tuition for first year students – both of which lead to better outcomes for students. Of particular value to graduates is the high number of flying hours they are able to accumulate through the internship programme. Many AHB students graduate with between 400 and 500 logged flying hours, including over 100 hours of instruction which qualifies them to instruct without direct supervision. This is a real advantage when they are applying for employment – graduates from most flying schools graduate with about 250-300 hours.

Seventy-three of the 79 graduates since 2004 (92 per cent) are known to have since gained employment as commercial pilots.

The excellent level of graduate employment is due to the focus that AHB has put on preparing graduates for the aviation workforce. AHB considers that the merit of the programme lies not only in the long-term professional outcomes for students, but also in attributes such as the professionalism, confidence and positive attitudes they acquire on the course. However, to date the PTE has not formalised these characteristics into a graduate profile, or determined how they will know whether graduates have actually acquired these attributes.

AHB knows the immediate destination of all graduates and communicates with them from time to time through a variety of media, both formal and informal. However, there was no evidence that the information that AHB gains from this engagement is gathered and discussed. There is a need for greater systematisation and analysis of this engagement.

The Air New Zealand partnership programme has been a significant attestation to the quality of AHB's training and a substantial drawcard for intending students. It is disappointing to note that Air New Zealand has terminated this arrangement with AHB from March 2016.

AHB adds value in its community by, for instance, hosting school and early childhood visits; participating in STAR and Gateway programmes for schools; and assisting the local marae with major events.

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

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

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

A strong feature of the training at AHB is the way in which individual programmes of study are constructed for every student. Students interviewed valued the fact that their first involvement with AHB entailed an in-depth discussion with the chief executive, chief flying officer or course supervisor about their aspirations and their experience to date so that an individual programme could be tailored to their needs. The result has been that the students are better motivated and their training is more efficient, ultimately costing them less. Students gave numerous strong and clear examples of how programmes and teaching were meeting their needs.

The overall delivery structure of the New Zealand Diploma in Aviation programme at AHB is designed to enable students, once they have completed the first two weeks of the Private Pilot Licence theory, to complete the remaining theory component of the qualification simultaneously with their practical flying. After trying several different combinations of theory and practice, AHB reports that it has adopted this structure as they have found that it engages students well and enables them to immediately apply the theory learned to practical application. Students interviewed agreed that they liked the mix of theory and practice, and that they found that it motivated them and enabled them to better understand the theory as it is put it into practice.

Training at AHB is enhanced by being in close proximity to major controlled and uncontrolled airfields and airspace. Hastings and Napier airfields are separated by only five minutes flight time, where advanced navigation aids are available. The training environment is further augmented through the topography of the region, with mountains only 10 minutes flight time away, and a low flying training area on the edge of the airfield. This proximity minimises flight times, therefore maximising in-air training time.

The chief executive regularly participates in aviation and education sector fora and activities, for instance the Aviation Industry Association and Education Hawke's Bay. However, there are no processes for sharing information learned and very few staff have substantial or organised engagement with outside organisations. This lack of engagement contributes to the insular nature of the organisation previously referred to and needs to be addressed to enable AHB to understand whether and how it is meeting the needs of its stakeholders.

#### 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.

The EER team found evidence of good teaching taking place throughout the organisation. Instructors are enthusiastic and passionate about their teaching and they are well supported by management. Every staff member at AHB has a role in ensuring that all students achieve. Through the Moodle online learning system, AHB has a systematic process for students to provide immediate feedback after the delivery of each subject. There was evidence of the whole organisation purposefully engaging in meaningful discussion about instruction and student progress, both informally and at the weekly meetings for instructors. The good rapport between students and staff was confirmed from discussions and student survey results. Students have access to staff outside of formal classes and can make suggestions about improvements. Students noted that the staff were responsive to any concerns or issues raised.

There is a well-established process for briefing prior to, and debriefing after, practical flights. Students and staff interviewed at this evaluation commented that instructors build trusting relationships with students which facilitated the giving and receiving of frank feedback, confirming the value of this process and its contribution to the overall learning environment. AHB is planning to install cameras in the cockpit of some of their training aircraft to enable instructors and students to review the lesson and the instructional techniques used, and identify where improvements could be made.

To AHB's credit, once a year for the past two years the PTE has contracted an experienced external facilitator to lead a half-day reflective practice workshop for instructors. Instructors report that they found these sessions useful and led to improvements in teaching practice. AHB staff are well qualified with A-CAT, B-CAT and C-CAT instructors on permanent staff. Although they have extensive industry and professional experience, and an obvious natural passion and ability to engage students, none of the current instruction staff holds an adult teaching qualification apart from the 'instructional techniques' component of the C-CAT course. The evaluation team believes that stronger policy and practice in this area – for instance sending instructors to various courses on adult teaching<sup>4</sup> – would better demonstrate excellent practice.

Given that all summative assessment is through external examination, AHB does not require a moderation system. The course supervisor does, however, monitor examination results and matches these results with the various instructors to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For instance, courses and workshops offered in Hawke's Bay by Ako Aotearoa or adult teaching courses at Eastern Institute of Technology.

identify trends, positive or negative, which may indicate good practice or areas for improvement.

AHB has a peer observation procedure in which all the instructional staff participate. Teaching staff commented on the value of the peer observation process. Several of the teaching staff interviewed were able to cite examples of how they had improved teaching delivery as a result. All staff members are performance reviewed formally on an annual basis, but this does not preclude regular and ongoing feedback of a formative nature. The evaluation team saw lots of evidence of regular feedback being gathered from students and the information being used effectively to bring about improvements to content and delivery and ultimately to student outcomes. For instance, the upgrade of the technology in teaching and briefing rooms is a direct response to student and staff feedback.

#### 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

The support services that AHB provides are appropriate to the courses delivered. AHB staff and management are student centred and committed to the success and well-being of their students. The organisation is providing a safe and supportive learning environment and is in contact outside of the normal hours of tuition if required. The small numbers of students means that they are given individual support. The consistently positive feedback from students confirms the effectiveness of guidance and support systems.

Pre-enrolment information is comprehensive and designed to ensure that students make informed decisions before committing to a significant personal and financial investment. The biggest single barrier to success is the financial resources needed, so AHB provides good guidance and support to students if required to help them manage this aspect.

Students are provided with a comprehensive student handbook which provides information on courses; examinations; assessments; rules, regulations and policies; facilities; and services. It also includes grievance and complaint forms and a useful study contract. AHB has detailed and robust procedures for resolving complaints. Feedback from students was that any complaint or feedback was addressed reasonably promptly and appropriately.

# 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 **Adequate.** 

AHB is a limited liability company owned by the Hawke's Bay and East Coast Aero Club. The organisation has developed and is embedding effective systems for monitoring student achievement and supporting staff to improve educational achievement.

Students have good access to ample teaching and learning resources, including aircraft – both high and low wing single engine aircraft and at least one twin engine aircraft. The organisation has developed appropriate financial planning and budgeting to allow for the expansion of resources as required, and for appropriate ongoing repairs and maintenance. Students have access to excellent teaching and social amenities.

The evaluation team observed coherence across all staff in their focus on giving students the best experience possible to equip them to perform and achieve. The organisation encourages opportunities for staff to reflect on their roles and how to continue to make ongoing and continuous improvements to meeting the needs of students and other stakeholders.

Management regularly monitors organisational and individual performance at all levels of the organisation. However, management was reluctant to disclose issues around an unresolved complaint which appears to have significantly contributed to the termination of the preferred partner agreement with Air New Zealand. This example points to a lack of openness and transparency in the management of AHB.

AHB is governed by an established and experienced board which directs the organisation to ensure it is meeting member, industry and learner needs. Meeting minutes and discussions with board members indicates that the AHB board is meeting regularly and receiving good information from the organisation.

Although formalised self-assessment is still in its early stages at AHB, the evaluation team saw authentic and transparent self-assessment being practised and is confident that as these processes continue to be implemented, and the organisation further engages with the key evaluation questions, significant and meaningful ongoing improvements will continue.

## 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 Adequate.

#### 2.2 Focus area: Flight Training

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

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

# Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Air Hawke's Bay:

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive, whole-of-organisation self-assessment regime that leads to knowledge and actions around improvement in student outcomes.
- Implement systems for the monitoring of teaching effectiveness.
- Investigate and effect ongoing opportunities for instructors to further develop their teaching qualifications and practice.
- Investigate and effect ongoing opportunities for AHB staff to increase their professional contact both with aviation providers in other regions and with education providers outside of the aviation sector.
- Ensure that the information gained from students is appropriately analysed and used to improve teaching and programme design.
- Develop a system to formally and systematically gather feedback from external stakeholders about the graduates and the quality of their training. Ensure that the information is appropriately analysed and used to improve teaching methods, programme design and relevancy of courses.

# 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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