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# External Evaluation and Review Report

Adventure Works Limited

Date of report: 2 March 2022

# About Adventure Works Limited

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*Adventure Works Limited is located in Auckland, delivering outdoor recreation education and skills development opportunities to secondary school students and tertiary students who are (or seek to be) outdoor recreation and outdoor education staff across the sector.*

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Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Unitec Mt Albert Campus, Carrington Road (Gate 3), Mt Albert, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 25 in the tertiary focus area programmes at the time of evaluation  200+ in secondary school unit standard offerings annually (numbers impacted in 2021 by Covid-19)
Number of staff:	10 staff plus contracted instructors as required
TEO profile:	See NZQA: <a href="#">Adventure Works Limited</a>
Last EER outcome:	Confident in educational performance and capability in self-assessment (December 2017)
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 4) (hereafter, the certificate) ID: 125482</li><li>• New Zealand Diploma in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 5) (hereafter, the diploma) ID: 126339</li></ul>
MoE number:	8035
NZQA reference:	C45787
Dates of EER:	23-25 November 2021 (virtual)

# Summary of Results

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*Adventure Works is a high-performing organisation focussed on quality. The value of outcomes is high for students and stakeholders. Adventure Works is well connected and active in industry and well meets the needs of the sector and strengthens the secondary school market. The organisation is led by an experienced and credible leadership team, who oversee consistently high-quality performance through a focus on self-review and improvement.*

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## **Highly Confident in educational performance**

Students achieve well and develop applied and practical knowledge and skills that are relevant to industry.

Adventure Works is developing industry-ready graduates with the required capabilities and technical expertise, which is critical for compliance and for the safety of those operating in this high-risk industry.

## **Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment**

Adventure Works is highly engaged and responsive to stakeholder and industry needs through its strong connection to and active work in the sector.

Effective programme review, and student and stakeholder engagement, enables informed changes and improvements to programmes. Assessment and moderation practice is sound. Improvements have been made, addressing the requirements in a recent NZQA monitoring report.

Adventure Works offers appropriate support and a culture which encourages growth of the individual on their student learning journey.,

The learner voice is used appropriately to guide strategy and the teaching and learning experience. There is an opportunity to better inform students about how their feedback has influenced change. This will enable this aspect to develop further.

Adventure Works is a highly reflective organisation with a quality improvement focus that is evident across all areas.

The organisation has a clear purpose and direction and a clear kaupapa of values which inform decision-

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making. The leadership team has enabled the mission to be fulfilled through robust strategic planning.

A systematic approach to ensuring consistency in the management of compliance responsibilities is evident. Adventure Works has met its important regulatory requirements to date. No compliance gaps were identified through this enquiry.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students achieve well, with most students completing their qualifications. Most prospective students come with no prior knowledge and develop applied knowledge, skills and attributes relevant to gaining employment in the outdoor recreation and education sector.</p> <p>In 2019, 100 per cent of students completed the certificate (the diploma was not offered). In 2020, 86 per cent (13 out of 15) of students completed the certificate, and 100 per cent (five out of five) completed the diploma, including one Māori and one Pasifika student. All five diploma students in the 2021 year to date have completed all their modules with qualification rates yet to be formalised. Enrolments have been increasing each year.</p> <p>Adventure Works staff know their students closely, given only a small number of students complete the focus area programmes. Whilst the Gateway-funded secondary school delivery was not in scope of the evaluation, NZQA acknowledge secondary school students complete unit standard delivery at a high rate (98-100 per cent).</p> <p>Adventure Works should consider looking to benchmark with similar private training establishments in New Zealand to strengthen the tracking of key metrics.</p>
Conclusion:	Nearly all focus area students achieve useful qualifications and develop relevant skills which are in demand in industry. Nearly all secondary students complete their modules. Effective self-assessment of achievement data could be further extended by benchmarking and thematic analysis.

<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.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Adventure Works provides the outdoor recreation and education industry with work-ready, entry-level graduates who have the required certification to operate in a compliant and safe manner in a high-risk industry.</p> <p>Students highly regard the value of outcomes beyond attainment of qualifications, including the development of skills and knowledge such as: communication, teamwork, health and safety, kaitiakitanga (guardianship of land), confidence in self, and leadership.</p> <p>The majority of graduates from the certificate programme are progressing to the diploma programme in 2022. Many graduates have gained work in related employment. Stakeholder interviews conducted during the evaluation indicate that Adventure Works graduates are well regarded and there is a clear demand for them in the industry.</p> <p>At the time of the evaluation, there were a limited number of graduates from the diploma programme. Further analysis of graduate outcomes data once more students complete will be beneficial in preparing for future quality assurance activities, and to analyse educational trends.</p>
Conclusion:	Adventure Works is developing capable outdoor recreation and education practitioners who are ready for relevant work in the outdoor recreation industry. Further analysis of graduate outcomes will strengthen self-assessment.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Adventure Works has developed new programmes in response to industry demand for entry-level employment. Graduates are exiting the programmes work-ready as a result of the strong experiential learning model.</p> <p>Adventure Works personnel are highly engaged and responsive to industry needs. Robust self-assessment practice occurs in programme design and delivery. Course reviews and focus groups enable management to make any changes necessary to better meet the needs of students and stakeholders. The approved programmes provide a delivery model that works well for industry and graduates. Courses delivered to school clients are tailored to meet the needs of the students and unit standards in focus.</p> <p>Theory is closely aligned to application in practice, which offers students a well-planned experiential learning experience. Subject matter expertise is brought in from industry to complement the knowledge of current staff in the teaching and learning model. Students learn and apply their knowledge in relevant ways which prepares them well for the work context. The experiential approach to learning effectively engages the students in their studies. Student interviews and completions validate this conclusion.</p> <p>The recent NZQA programme monitoring report (September 2020) identified the need to strengthen some areas of moderation; no significant gaps impacting achievement outcomes were identified. Adventure Works is using this as a learning tool.</p> <p>Opportunities for work placement on the diploma programme and ongoing feedback from placement employers also provide pathways to future employment. Tertiary instructor staff have appropriate oversight of the internship component of programmes to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students.</p> <p>Teaching and learning were seamlessly moved, with NZQA approval, to an online platform in response to the national and regional Covid-19 lockdowns. The certificate programme was</p>

	<p>amended to restructure the theoretical and practical components. The diploma programme was extended which allowed students to complete their qualifications.</p> <p>Currently, Adventure Works is developing a level 6 qualification to produce capable outdoor instructors. The programme is meeting an identified need in the outdoor recreation and education industry.</p>
Conclusion:	The certificate and newly delivered diploma programmes and the school delivery are meeting the needs of students, schools and industry stakeholders well. Self-assessment of programme design, delivery and moderation practice is effective and strong, leading to clear improvements.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Adventure Works offers appropriate student support. Positive feedback from students and high completions demonstrate that the organisation is highly effective in supporting and involving students in their learning to enable them to complete their studies.</p> <p>A comprehensive initial orientation helps students understand which avenue of academic and pastoral support is available through the course of their programme. Processes, such as for complaints, are outlined in an easy-to-use student handbook.</p> <p>Pastoral care is a salient feature of the support offered to students on tertiary programmes, given the complexity and challenge of student support in the context of outdoor education; for example, overnight tramps taking place in remote locations. The director has pastoral expertise and offers oversight, mentoring the instructors where necessary.</p> <p>The tertiary instructors interviewed were professional, empathetic and well respected and appropriately experienced. Female students valued the recent appointment of a supportive female tertiary instructor. These instructors lead students in the classroom and accompany them through outdoor excursions,</p>

	<p>enabling fully immersed and safe learning experiences. The organisation also funds counselling sessions for all students.</p> <p>The focus area programmes are capped to ensure safety and also to deliver quality teaching and meet student needs. The instructors (and guest instructors) have the technical expertise required to teach the content well. Student feedback on teaching and learning is used effectively to inform change and design improvements through focus groups and course evaluations. Students would benefit from understanding how their feedback was used to inform any changes made (when appropriate).</p>
Conclusion:	Students are well supported to stay engaged during their time learning in the classroom and outdoors. Pastoral and academic support mechanisms are thoughtfully planned and implemented.

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Adventure Works is a highly reflective organisation with an effective leadership team supporting generally first-rate educational performance. The purpose and direction are clear: 'growing great people through learning and leading in the outdoors'. The period since the last evaluation has been focussed on developing and strengthening the PTE, with the mission statement of 'getting people outdoors to live a healthy life and to support self-growth' at the centre of decision-making and goal-setting, through robust strategic planning.</p> <p>Most notably, Adventure Works has developed two tertiary programmes that meet industry requirements. It has also developed trades academy-funded and Duke of Edinburgh delivery (not in scope).</p> <p>The PTE is led by a capable leader who has recognised mana and expertise in the industry. The experienced and competent leadership team is responsive to change, is agile, and is focused on quality improvement. Adventure Works has recruited and is developing respected staff.</p> <p>Professional development opportunities are available to all staff given that the work takes place in a challenging outdoor</p>

	<p>educational context. Regular leadership meetings discuss and analyse student achievement trends and student wellbeing, key to the success of students on tertiary programmes.</p> <p>Flexible and sufficient resourcing is available to provide equipment to students and enable high-quality delivery to students and stakeholders. Staff are appropriately qualified. All assessing staff are due to complete the relevant unit standards to upskill in this area.</p> <p>Self-assessment activities are based on a strong kaupapa of values informing all areas of the business where quality is expected. Data is used and analysed insightfully to inform change through a range of systems across multiple areas to enable effective self-assessment and identification of areas for improvement. For example, the director conducts discussion groups to gather richer data, and industry snapshot surveys and course surveys are analysed to gauge learners' views to guide improvements.</p> <p>Adventure Works intends to continue to develop and strengthen the organisation and meet the changing needs of industry. For example, the leadership is working with the sector to develop outdoor instructor qualifications.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Adventure Works has a highly reflective quality improvement focus that is evident across all key areas. The organisation balances continuity with ongoing innovation and responsiveness. The leadership team has established educational and industry networks that enhance the quality of their performance and support educational achievement.</p>

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Adventure Works sustains a strong and effective culture of compliance emerging from long-term experience in a high-risk industry where health and safety is a critical dimension. A systematic approach to compliance ensures currency with NZQA, Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and Adventure Activities regulatory requirements through actively participating and supporting industry and outdoor education sector networks.</p> <p>The key evidence of effective management was found in a number of external audits and internal management practices.</p> <p>The TEC desktop audit report (April 2020) found that Adventure Work's systems, processes and practices were effective and met legislative and investment plan requirements. There were no key findings and recommendations.</p> <p>The QUALWORX OutdoorsMark Adventure Activity audit report (18 September 2020) found the operator's safety management system under which adventure activities are delivered conforms to the safety audit standard(s) in intention and practice.</p> <p>A compliance calendar supported by an automated system supports any absence of staff in ensuring consistency of compliance activities and actions.</p> <p>The interim domestic Code<sup>2</sup> self-review was used to effectively identify areas that are well implemented.</p>
Conclusion:	Compliance responsibilities are managed effectively. Health and safety are a core focus of self-assessment activities.

<sup>2</sup> The Education (Pastoral Care of Domestic Tertiary Students) Interim Code of Practice 2019 <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/domestic-code-of-practice/>

# Focus Areas

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

## 2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 4)

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>

## 2.2 Focus area: New Zealand Diploma in Outdoor and Adventure Education (Multi-skilled) (Level 5)

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>

# Recommendations

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

NZQA recommends the following to strengthen the organisation as enrolments increase:

- Consider benchmarking against similar educational establishments to better understand achievement trends and outcomes.
- Consider the value of further analysis of graduate outcomes to strengthen self-assessment.
- More clearly monitor Māori and Pasifika achievement and outcomes to support parity.
- Consider ways to strengthen the learner voice, including sharing with students how their feedback is used to inform changes made.

# Requirements

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

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

# Appendix

## Conduct of external evaluation and review

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.*

### *Disclaimer*

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

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

- *Identify organisational fraud<sup>3</sup>*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

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

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.*

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

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

*The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.*

*In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. 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)). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.*

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