



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

English Language Partners New
Zealand Trust

Date of report: 26 January 2024

About English Language Partners New Zealand Trust

English Language Partners New Zealand Trust is a not-for profit, community-based provider, offering English language education for learners from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 7, Ranchhod Tower, 39 The Terrace, Wellington
Eligible to enrol intl students:	No
Number of students:	In 2022, English Language Partners had 6,665 domestic learners (506.09 equivalent full-time students), 1,267 from refugee backgrounds or as asylum seekers, 237 Pasifika learners, and 68 learners with self-identified health and disability needs impacting on their learning.
Number of staff:	46 full-time, 268 part-time and 57 casual staff
TEO profile:	English Language Partners New Zealand Trust
Last EER outcome:	At the last EER in 2019, NZQA was Highly Confident in English Language Partners' educational performance, and Confident in the PTE's self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESOL¹ Literacy; an intensive English language course• English for Employees (E4E); for learners in paid employment• Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring; an NZQA-approved training scheme to train volunteers to become qualified home tutors for adult learners.

¹ English for Speakers of Other Languages

MoE number: 8067
NZQA reference: C54686
Dates of EER visit: 30 October-3 November 2023

Summary of results

English Language Partners New Zealand Trust is meeting the most important needs of its diverse learners and stakeholders. The highly effective contributing processes support learners' strong achievement of English language. Comprehensive and well-embedded self-assessment practices are clearly identifying and reviewing all areas of priority need. Findings are used insightfully to make improvements and achieve valued outcomes. This provides NZQA with a high degree of confidence that the organisation's self-assessment practices will continue to guide and inform performance.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Learner achievement is very strong, and has been consistently maintained since the last EER. Learners are improving their English language skills, progressing to more advanced classes and applying their achievements in their everyday lives and work.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Learners' social participation, employment and study outcomes are positively impacting their settlement and everyday lives in Aotearoa New Zealand. English Language Partners' collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders adds value to learners and their communities.
- English Language Partners' programmes are well designed, regularly reviewed, continually improved and tailored to meet the needs of learners, their communities and employers. Well-qualified teaching staff, guided by effective academic frameworks, support quality teaching and learning.
- English Language Partners' learners experience a welcoming, safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment which effectively caters to their wellbeing and learning needs. English Language Partners engages with learners' feedback and continually seeks improvements to processes for collecting and responding to feedback.
- English Language Partners' trustees and senior management are providing clear direction and leadership and are effectively supporting the

strong educational performance. Structured and comprehensive evaluative self-assessment is practised across the organisation and contributes to the organisation-wide performance. Evaluative findings are used to made real improvements, and English Language Partners understands the impacts for learners.

- English Language Partners is effectively managing its important compliance accountabilities. No gaps were identified during this EER.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English Language Partners uses a range of external assessment tools, such as Starting Points Literacy and Numeracy assessment, and internally developed tools³ to gather data on learner achievement and progress.</p> <p>Comprehensive data sets are available for all programmes, and support English Language Partners' claims that their learners have consistently maintained high achievement and have improved their English language skills since the last EER (see Appendix 1, Table 1). Nearly all learners (97 per cent) reported improved confidence in their English language as a result of their classes at English Language Partners.</p> <p>Learner progression to other English Language Partners programmes is another indicator of achievement. The ESOL Literacy classes support learners' development of literacy skills, preparing them to advance to more specialised courses, such as ESOL Road Code.</p> <p>The number of learners progressing to other programmes has remained reasonably consistent across the last four years.⁴ This demonstrates that English Language Partners is preparing learners well to make positive steps and advance their English language skills.</p> <p>Over the last four years, English Language Partners has successfully implemented a range of data management and business performance tools, which have clearly</p>

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ 'Starter Can-Dos' is a tool developed by English Language Partners (piloted in 2022) for teachers to rate learners' literacy against a set of 'Can-Do' statements to provide an indication of their literacy level.

⁴ Proportion of learners progressing to other programmes: 2019, 22 per cent; 2020, 20 per cent; 2021, 19 per cent; and 2022, 24 per cent.

	<p>assisted with data capture and access across all programmes.</p> <p>English Language Partners staff at all levels across the organisation reflect on and use the data for reporting and continuous improvement purposes. Staff interviewed during this evaluation talked confidently about their learner data. They compared their learners' performance with targets and achievement at other centres and provided examples of making changes, such as altering assessments, based on the data. Access to real-time and interactive data is supporting informed decision-making by governance and management.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Learner achievement is very strong, and has been consistently maintained since the last EER. Learners are improving their English language skills, progressing to more advanced classes and applying their achievements in their everyday lives and work. There is clear evidence that achievement data is informing improvements and decision-making.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English Language Partners has further refined its outcomes model since the last EER. The inputs, activities, outputs and expected outcomes (social, employment and study) are clearly described, communicated and understood across the organisation. Staff have been supported to consistently collect and monitor learner outcomes. The recent introduction of a menu of learner outcomes goals has helped staff set learner goals and improved the robustness of the data.</p> <p>Most learners (95 per cent) achieved at least one social, employment or study outcome over 2019-22, supporting their settlement and integration into Aotearoa New Zealand society (see Appendix 1, Table 1). In 2022, 67 per cent of all learners achieved a social outcome, 21 per cent an employment outcome, and 12 per cent a study outcome.</p>

	<p>These outcomes align well with the purpose of the training and reflect high value for learners and stakeholders.</p> <p>English Language Partners is responding to the growing demand from employers and community stakeholders for bespoke programmes to strengthen situation-specific communication skills tailored to their worksite or business. At the time of the evaluation, English Language Partners had delivered 54 contracts compared with 15 in 2019. This has tripled the number of people supported, from 100 to over 300.</p> <p>English Language Partners regularly collaborates with national, regional and local partner organisations, such as New Zealand Red Cross, to improve the learners' settlement and lifelong learning opportunities. English Language Partners' proactive engagement with government stakeholders gives learners the opportunity to participate in community and government-related activities such as Census New Zealand and the Ministry of Health's Covid-19 vaccine programme.</p>
Conclusion:	Learners' social participation, employment and study outcomes are having a positive impact on their settlement and everyday lives in Aotearoa New Zealand. English Language Partners' collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders adds value to learners and their communities.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	English Language Partners conducts in-depth review of its programmes over a four-year cycle. The E4E programme was reviewed in 2022 against 11 teaching quality standards. Results showed a consistently high standard of delivery across all 22 centres, with some improvements required against three standards at a few centres. This robust process was conducted by external reviewers. The positive outcomes provide the organisation with a high level of confidence in the quality of the programme, and assurance that it is aligned to their learners' needs.

	<p>English Language Partners has temporarily paused the delivery of the New Zealand Certificates in English Language (Levels 1 and 2), due to reduced demand for the current format of these courses. A review was in progress at the time of the EER. English Language Partners is seeking to fully understand and address learners' changing needs. They are doing so through exploring various opportunities (such as smaller packages of learning, online delivery and more streamlined study pathways) and aligning with revised English language unit standards.</p> <p>The PTE's English language teachers are well qualified. The majority (99 per cent) hold English language teaching qualifications. One teacher has significant experience in New Zealand sign language and meeting the needs of learners with hearing disabilities. All active volunteer home tutors are either fully trained through the Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring, or have equivalent qualifications in English language tutoring.</p> <p>Teachers are well supported and are actively engaged in professional development/learning, via the annual conference 'Sharefest' and national workshops. Successful online delivery was achieved through effective professional development and the use of creative teachers as champions to support the use of technology. Learners continued to participate and achieve throughout the Covid pandemic. Some learners, particularly in E4E, continue to choose online classes as their preference when they could return to face-to-face learning.</p> <p>English Language Partners has a structured teacher observation programme that improves teacher practice and informs the professional development programme. The development of formal 'observation guidelines' in 2019, and workshops to enhance observers' confidence and skills have improved the consistency of this practice. Teaching staff reported valuing the observational feedback, and provided examples of improved lesson planning and providing more constructive feedback to their learners.</p> <p>English Language Partners' teaching and learning strategy provides a useful framework and guides teachers on the processes, tools, criteria and performance measures that support quality learning and teaching and drive ongoing improvements through evaluative activities.</p>
--	--

Conclusion:	English Language Partners' programmes are well designed, regularly reviewed, continually improved and tailored to meet the needs of learners, their communities and employers. Well-qualified teaching staff, supported by effective academic frameworks, support quality teaching and learning.
-------------	--

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English Language Partners supports learners well during the initial contact and enrolment process. Friendly, well-trained and supportive staff conduct needs analyses and guide learners into the right programme.</p> <p>Centres are easily accessed from local transport, close to commercial and shopping areas, and provide a welcoming and safe environment for learners.</p> <p>Programme information and feedback forms are available in key migrant languages, ensuring accessibility for most learners. Learner feedback gathered at the end of courses since the last EER shows that learners are highly satisfied and engaged in their learning – 99 per cent satisfaction rate, from a 80 per cent response rate (averaged). Based on advice from the ethnic advisory group, English Language Partners is piloting learner focus groups to gather more in-depth feedback.</p> <p>ESOL learners with low proficiency levels are supported by cultural language assistants. They provide a valuable link between the teacher and the learner. They translate as required, encourage participation and the practice of English, and help teachers understand the learners' cultures.</p> <p>The importance of learner wellbeing and safety is integral to English Language Partners' culture. The organisation's vision, values and pastoral care practices align well with the expected outcomes of the Code of Practice.⁵ English Language Partners' comprehensive self-review in October</p>

⁵ [The Tertiary and International Learners Code of Practice](#)

	2022 illustrates this alignment. The Code and the related obligations have been well socialised with staff, including the board of trustees.
Conclusion:	English Language Partners' learners experience a welcoming, safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment which effectively caters to their wellbeing and learning needs. English Language Partners is interested in the learner voice and continually seeks improvements to processes for collecting feedback and responding.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English Language Partners' organisational vision, purpose and strategic goals are clear, well documented, aligned to all activities, and effectively communicated to staff.</p> <p>English Language Partners has effective and focussed reporting mechanisms and communication channels. Management uses its newly instigated 'Top Ten for 2023' scorecard to rate their progress on the priority goals, and advise the team on how their work contributes to English Language Partners' strategy and planning.</p> <p>English Language Partners is governed by an experienced board. The members bring a range of professional and community experiences to their roles, contribute to the board's oversight of the organisation through the four committees⁶, and provide valued support to the management team. The ethnic advisory group includes former refugees and migrants from non-English speaking countries. They provide an authentic mechanism for informing English Language Partners about key issues and changes affecting learners and ethnic communities. This ensures a clear focus on the learners' needs and goals. The board of trustees' academic committee provides strong</p>

⁶ The board committees include an academic committee, evaluative self-assessment committee, finance and audit committee, and the health, safety and wellbeing committee.

	<p>governance oversight of the programmes, achievement and outcomes, and quality assurance activities.</p> <p>The recently appointed chief executive and the experienced team of senior leaders effectively lead and manage the staff at the national office and across the 21 centres around New Zealand. Strong academic leadership and oversight is provided by the senior managers and their teams based at the national office. Centre managers, supported by dedicated programme coordinators, provide valuable operational and quality management of the programmes.</p> <p>Staff are highly engaged and feel their work is valued. The 2023 staff survey results show that 96 per cent are proud of the work they do, 97 per cent believe in what the organisation is trying to accomplish, and 95 per cent feel inspired to do the best they can every day.</p> <p>Evaluative self-assessment is well embedded in all activities and the culture of the organisation. The evaluative practices are guided by a well-considered evaluative self-assessment framework with the outcomes model at the centre. The evaluators concluded that English Language Partners' self-assessment practice is exemplary, is leading to the ongoing identification and review of all areas of priority need, and is now fully implemented across all centres and programmes.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>English Language Partners' trustees and senior management are providing clear direction and leadership and are effectively supporting the strong educational performance. Structured and comprehensive evaluative self-assessment is practised across the organisation and contributes to organisation-wide performance. Evaluative findings are used to make real improvements, and English Language Partners understands the outcomes of improvements for the learners.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English Language Partners effectively uses organisational systems to assist in meeting its legal and regulatory obligations. A compliance schedule is used for tracking activities, allocating responsibilities and deadlines, and as a robust system for recording.</p> <p>The English Language Partners board reported having a high level of confidence that the PTE's important compliance accountabilities are well managed and met in a timely manner. This confidence is drawn from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the chief executive's oversight and management of the risk register, updated in 2023 to include inherent and residual risk ratings • the board's active role in risk management via the PTE's recently updated risk management framework to expand on health and safety risks • regular discussions between the chief executive and board chair, quarterly reviews and annual compliance reporting to the board. <p>The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) audit of the Workplace Literacy and Numeracy fund was underway at the time of the EER. The TEC has confirmed to English Language Partners that there are no outstanding issues, and the review has been closed off.</p> <p>English Language Partners understands and adheres to NZQA rules and regulations relating to programmes and training schemes. Organisational policies and practices are regularly reviewed, and are accessible to staff on the intranet.</p>
Conclusion:	English Language Partners is effectively managing its important compliance accountabilities. No gaps were identified during this EER.

Focus areas

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

2.1 ESOL Literacy

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Finding and supporting evidence:	<p>ESOL Literacy is an intensive English language course, offered for 10 hours per week in all centres, and at times in community venues, to support easy access for learners. The programme focuses on establishing the building blocks needed to read and write and aims to develop English language proficiency and confidence, as well as literacy and numeracy skills. Learners enrol for each term and may continue in the programme for multiple terms, and often over a number of years.</p> <p>ESOL Literacy learner achievement and outcomes data for 2019-22 shows strong results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91 per cent improved their English literacy and numeracy skills • 99 per cent improved their proficiency in English listening skills • 98 per cent reported improved confidence in using English as a result of attending classes. <p>Learners are also achieving other valued outcomes. In 2022, 95 per cent of learners achieved one or more outcomes, including social (90 per cent), employment (4 per cent) and study (5 per cent). ESOL learners reported to the evaluators that they had increased confidence in using English with their families and friends, using local transport, and engaging with professionals at their children’s school and medical appointments.</p>
Conclusion:	ESOL Literacy learners are gaining English language skills and growing their confidence as a result of attending English Language Partners’ classes. These achievements are having a positive impact on their learners’ settlement and everyday lives in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This report is draft only and is subject to checking by English Language Partners New Zealand Trust for factual accuracy.

2.2 English for Employees (E4E)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Finding and supporting evidence:	<p>English for Employees (E4E) is a 30-45 hour course for learners in paid employment, focusing on improving workplace communication skills by developing spoken and/or written English.</p> <p>Ninety-five to 97 per cent of the E4E learners made numeracy gains on the TEC's literacy and numeracy assessment, and 99-100 per cent made reading gains. These gains supported the learners' improved workplace communication skills and an understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand workplace expectations and culture. Learners provided examples of increasing their working hours and being able to engage in small talk with their customers and work mates as a result of their course. English Language Partners' outcomes data shows the majority of E4E learners (91 per cent) achieved valuable employment outcomes, such as getting a new job.</p> <p>Employers were highly satisfied with their employees' achievements, and recognise the value gained for both their employees and their business. Employers provided examples of improved communication skills and increased confidence and understanding of health and safety, which creates a safer and more productive workplace.</p>
Conclusion:	E4E learners are gaining high value from their English language achievements. Employers recognise the value of these outcomes and the contributions to their businesses.

2.3 Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Finding and supporting evidence:	<p>The Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring is an NZQA-approved training scheme to train volunteers to become qualified home tutors for adult learners.</p> <p>A total of 1,441 volunteers enrolled in the ESOL home tutor programme during 2019-22, with 93 per cent completing the facilitated learning component. The number of volunteers successfully completing all certificate</p>

	<p>requirements dropped from 56 per cent in 2019 to 41 per cent in 2022. The lower completion rate and the recent decline is well understood by English Language Partners. This relates to the challenges of volunteering, conflicting life priorities and changing demands, the rigorous matching process, and for some volunteers the impact of not being able to meet face-to-face during the pandemic.</p> <p>Volunteer home tutors gained high levels of personal satisfaction from their work once they are trained. English Language Partners' survey data showed that almost all (97.5 per cent) of active volunteers valued the opportunity to contribute to learners' success and would recommend volunteering to a friend.</p> <p>Volunteers are well supported during the training. The programme has support sessions at key points. This includes a recall session for the volunteer home tutor part-way through 12 sessions with their learner, an interview at the conclusion, and regular contact with their tutor. Home tutors are also well supported in their work, particularly around managing boundaries with their learners.</p> <p>The appointment of a national volunteer coordinator and a new collaboration tool for volunteers to use for peer support, expert advice and to find resources will complement the effective support mechanisms currently in place.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>The volunteer home tutors' achievement of the Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring reflects the challenges associated with the role. English Language Partners provides the volunteers with effective support while training and during their ongoing work with their matched learner/s.</p>

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.

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

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 1

Table 1. Combined enrolment and achievement data for all English Language Partners programmes

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total learners enrolled	7080	6526	6401	6665
English improved	97% (9032 of 9334 responses)	97% (6726 of 6911 responses)	97% (10,077 of 10,399 responses)	97% (10,400 of 10,708 responses)
Outcomes achieved*	93% (5771 of 6198 expected learner outcomes)	96% (5239 of 5443 expected learner outcomes)	96% (5273 of 5483 expected learner outcomes)	96% (5378 of 5597 expected learner outcomes)
Social	66% (5125)	67% (4651)	68% (4585)	67% (4650)
Employment	21% (1617)	21% (1420)	21% (1440)	21% (1478)
Study	13% (978)	12% (851)	11% (753)	12% (828)
Left course early	12% (2186 of 18,001 enrolments)	14% (2397 of 16,578 enrolments)	11% (1960 of 17,179 enrolments)	14% (2538 of 17,756 enrolments)

*Learners may achieve outcomes in more than one category.

Data provided by ELPNZ.

Appendix 2

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 fraud⁷*
- 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.*

⁷ 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 2021, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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 2021, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2021 and the Training Scheme Rules 2021 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2021 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

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 2021. 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). 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/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz