External Evaluation and Review Report

Multicultural Learning and Support Services Incorporated trading as MCLaSS

Date of report: 5 July 2019

About Multicultural Learning and Support Services Incorporated trading as MCLaSS

MCLaSS delivers a wide range of vocational and English as second language courses to migrants and refugees within the Greater Wellington region.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 1 Ranchod House, 39 Webb Street, Te Aro, Wellington
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 44 per cent Asian, 50 per cent African/Arabic, 4 per cent Pasifika, 2 per cent other
Number of staff:	18 full-time equivalents made up of four full-time and 31 part-time
TEO profile:	See NZQA - MCLaSS
Last EER outcome:	The previous EER (external evaluation and review) was held in September 2015 and the results were Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	Pre-employment training schemes (English for Work)

Informal and short courses |
MoE number:	8158
NZQA reference:	C34333
Dates of EER visit:	14 and 15 May 2019

Summary of Results

Improved self-assessment practice across the organisation is informing programme development and review. Professional development is now a feature of the organisation; this supports the complex needs of migrants and refugees towards achieving employment, further study and social outcomes.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- MCLaSS is clearly meeting the needs of priority learners across a variety of programmes, in multiple sites.

- Outcomes are highly valued by stakeholders, including learners.

- Learners are enabled and supported to gain entry-level employment, pathway to higher-level courses, and engage with their communities.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Highly effective support mechanisms contribute to consistently good learner satisfaction and confidence.

- The clear and well-understood strategic direction and purpose ensures there are processes in place to continue performance at the same level. MCLaSS is governed and well supported by an active Board and strong leadership.

- There is good evidence of improved self-assessment practice to inform programme development.

- Processes for the reporting of learner achievement and progression are more formalised, with plans for more investment in student management systems.

- Professional development is embedded across the organisation, leading to improved teaching practice.

Key evaluation question findings[1]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	MCLaSS rates its educational performance on the outcomes, progression, pathways, value gained and attendance of its learners. Courses show good outcomes, with funders' targets consistently met. The Employment Placement Service, for example, assists a maximum of 80 participants a year to develop the skills to find and retain employment for six months. MCLaSS has exceeded yearly targets since 2016. In the English for Work training schemes, learners pass unit standards, complete an assessed two-week work experience, and complete the course, gaining a Record of Achievement. In two of the three years since the last EER, MCLaSS has achieved a key performance indicator of 80 per cent of students either completing the course, withdrawing for employment, or taking a higher-level course. General English learners who attend frequently enough to make progress are awarded a Record of Achievement. MCLaSS has a comprehensive system to monitor individual progress over the four levels of English offered. Course completions over the four levels exceed the key performance indicator of 80 per cent completing or achieving a pathway outcome. Non-completions are tracked and understood across the organisation. In 2018, 79 per cent of the learners at the highest level of General English completed higher study or obtained a full-time job. Staff use data effectively to understand achievement at cohort level. This has led to improvements in programmes and teaching performance. The development of a new database will enable MCLaSS to track all outcomes with greater effect.

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

Conclusion:	High student achievement at MCLaSS is notable given the challenges presented by the sector the PTE represents. Systems are in place to monitor and support progression and achievement. These will be further extended through the introduction of a bespoke data management system.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Students at MCLaSS gain beneficial skills and contribute to the key objectives of government refugee and migrant resettlement strategies by 'helping to support refugees to fully participate in their new communities including helping them to find work, and improve their health and education outcomes'.

Six-monthly student evaluations give evidence of increased confidence and overall satisfaction. Students and graduates told the evaluators how improved self-confidence had led to community engagement and employment opportunities. Students in the English for Work programmes gain valuable feedback from employers. They also gain unit standards relating to their work experience. Graduates gain either one or two Leaving Reports detailing graded feedback.

Currently, 85 clients funded by the Ministry of Social Development and Work and Income are receiving employment coaching. On gaining employment, both jobseeker and employer receive support for six months.

The General English programme meets the key Tertiary Education Commission aim of raising adults' literacy and numeracy skills. Learners are tracked and counselled into appropriate pathways.

Intergenerational provision enables mothers with young children to access community support and improve their English skills. Other informal courses provide strong social and vocational outcomes, for example the driver licence course.

MCLaSS is represented on national and regional refugee stakeholder and reference groups. This keeps MCLaSS up to date with current policies, research and social trends. Close |

	affiliation with other migrant and refugee support agencies helps to provide learners with ongoing support and access to the community.
Conclusion:	Learners and stakeholders gain significant social and employment-related values.

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:	MCLaSS has strong relationships with groups that provide data on the needs of refugees and migrants within Greater Wellington. Courses are developed and reviewed in response to changing needs, sometimes in collaboration with other parties.
	Courses are delivered over many sites to best respond to the needs of local communities. Hours of delivery are flexible and structured to meet the availability of different cohorts of learners.
	On enrolment to the General English and English for Work courses, learners are assessed against the language proficiency profile and a thorough needs assessment is completed. This forms the basis of an individual learning plan to support progression of language and achievement of skills, often in multi-level classes.
	Regular learner feedback surveys and one-to-one meetings with tutors inform teaching and learning. Tutor and programme manager meetings allow feedback to be discussed and acted on.
	Since the last EER, MCLaSS has applied to split the Beginners Workplace Language and Pre Employment Skills Training Scheme into two training schemes. This was the outcome of learner and teacher feedback. As a result, the course allows greater flexibility for learners and provides improved scaffolded learning.
	The curriculum is regularly reviewed. At an organisational level, the courses benefit from alignment of curriculum delivery and assessment between courses and against other frameworks.
	Programme and course development is innovative; an example

	is the launch of the Tikanga Māori curriculum that is now fully embedded and is the recipient of the Tangata Tiriti Community Based Programme award for 2019.

Unit standards are moderated externally. Internal moderation is scheduled twice a year to gain consistency through the levels, and also results in the professional development of staff. |
| Conclusion: | MCLaSS effectively uses stakeholder feedback to develop and adjust the delivery of teaching and assessment to best match learners' needs. |

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Tutors are highly experienced and hold appropriate qualifications, the majority at postgraduate level. A thorough professional development programme is embedded across the organisation, leading to improved practice and consistency across sites.

Resources are fit for purpose. Recent additions include the Steps online spelling programme and developing learning tools to match the needs of the pre-literate learner.

MCLaSS supports learners by recognising and supporting cross-cultural understanding. Many staff are from a migrant or refugee background. Delivery sites are also used by refugee and migrant communities to teach their cultures and languages.

Interpreters assist the very low-level learners with the learner surveys. Volunteers provide additional in-class assistance. A recent change to the recruitment and development of volunteers has improved student evaluations.

Learner self-assessment surveys are conducted at the end of each semester, with key questions translated into the main learner languages. These show high rates of learner satisfaction and confidence.

MCLaSS delivers a number of informal courses developed in conjunction with, or in response to, migrant and refugee agency information. These courses are delivered across the Greater |

	Wellington region and learners are helped with the cost of transport.
Conclusion:	Learners are well supported and actively involved in their learning. MCLaSS has an organisation-wide, strategic view of student support that supports individuals in their courses.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	An experienced Board and knowledgeable, hands-on chief executive has led to significant changes in the operation of MCLaSS since the last EER. These include: a five-year strategic plan from which key areas of focus are decided annually, a calendared review of policy, substantial investment in improved technology and staffing, and improved professional development for tutors.
	Effective leadership has resulted in more funding, with well-managed and steady growth. Financial reporting has also improved.
	Staff feel valued and listened to. Regular meetings give them the opportunity to give feedback to the programme managers and to receive support in teaching practice. Since the last EER, peer and manager observations, an annual professional development week, annual performance reviews, and end-of-course self-reflections have built capability in teaching. This view is supported by student evaluations of tutors.
	The continued professional development of the role of the two programme managers will support succession planning.
	Representation by governance and management on key national and regional stakeholder groups ensures awareness of policy changes that impact funding. One example is the redevelopment of the Workplace English programme into a unit standard-based course that better meets the vocational training needs of migrants.
Conclusion:	Governance and management support the educational performance of the organisation through strong self-assessment

	practice embedded across the organisation.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	MCLaSS effectively manages its compliance with the rules and regulations of its major funders (the Tertiary Education Commission and Ministry of Social Development). Reporting is timely and based on careful monitoring of the hours being delivered against the allocated hours. Careful monitoring of attendance and clear policies for non-attendance support the monitoring of courses. Compliance with NZQA rules appears to be current. Delivery sites were approved by NZQA. External moderation poses no significant issues. Monitoring and understanding of compliance accountabilities could be strengthened through internal review. There were some minor gaps identified (a miscalculated annual attestation , the 2018 change of a unit standard not indicated for external moderation, and the education policy not matching current practice). These gaps have already been rectified or are in the process and do not constitute any major issue or concern to NZQA.
Conclusion:	MCLaSS's leadership effectively manages its funding compliance obligations. Improved internal processes will ensure more proactive management of compliance across all regulatory agencies.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Training schemes (English for Employment)

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**

2.2 Focus area: Informal/short courses

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**

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.

Final report

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[2]*

- *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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[2] 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). 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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