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External Evaluation and Review Report

Active Institute Limited

Date of report: 14 November 2019

About Active Institute Limited

Active Institute provides language learning to migrants to support their successful integration into everyday New Zealand life and improve their employment opportunities.

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| Type of organisation: | Private training establishment (PTE) |
| Location: | 23 Norman Spencer Drive, Manukau City, Auckland |
| Code of Practice signatory: | Not applicable |
| Number of students: | Domestic: 80 EFTS (equivalent full-time students) Intensive Literacy and Numeracy: 79 per cent Asian, 10 per cent Pasifika, 8 per cent MELAA ¹ , 3 per cent other Preparation for Work: 48 per cent Māori, 29 per cent Pasifika, 23 per cent other |
| Number of staff: | Six full-time, four part-time |
| TEO profile: | See NZQA-Active Institute |
| Last EER outcome: | Confident in educational performance Confident in capability in self-assessment |
| Scope of evaluation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NZQA-approved Training Scheme: Everyday English – funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) under the Intensive Literacy and Numeracy fund. This is a 12-week, part-time training scheme which caters for migrants and refugees with limited English. Students improve their language skills and are introduced to New Zealand culture.• Preparation for Work – funded by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). This is a three-week programme to prepare clients for employment by creating CVs, teaching interview techniques, and arranging external training for licences for the likes of forklift driving, safe food handling and |

¹ Middle Eastern, Latin American and African

construction site safety.

MoE number: 8204
NZQA reference: C36191
Dates of EER visit: 17 September 2019

Summary of Results

Active Institute meets the most important needs of migrant students and MSD clients, along with key stakeholders. Good support from staff helps students and clients meet their education and employment goals. Self-assessment is mostly effective and centres on meeting the requirements of the funding agencies. Extending self-assessment would further inform the organisation on education quality.

Confident in educational performance

- Clients and students make progress towards achieving their learning and training goals, successful integration into New Zealand life and, in some cases, employment.
- Well-established support processes contribute to high levels of client and student satisfaction.
- Improved resources and effective monitoring help staff to deliver contract outcomes.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Management has a strategic focus that supports the purpose of the organisation.
- Achievement is well understood at the individual level, but not clearly represented organisationally.
- Data shows good outcomes for the MSD programme.
- Better reporting of learner achievement and progression would inform self-assessment of the Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Everyday English programme.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

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| Performance: | Good |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>Active Institute measures success against contractual outcomes from funding agencies and through following individual students' and clients' progress on programmes.</p> <p>Clients undertaking the three-week job placement programme (Preparation for Work) gain useful skills and knowledge to improve their recruitment prospects and re-engage with the employment market.</p> <p>Progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the job programme are reported to management and MSD weekly and tracked through individual learning plans with clients. Since the reduction in length of the programme (to three weeks), 433 clients have completed the programme, an additional 31 have completed and gained employment, and 21 have withdrawn.</p> <p>Active Institute arranges enrolment with external training providers for clients to gain certificates or licences specified on the MSD letter of referral. Successful completion of these is tracked and reported.</p> <p>Client exit surveys confirm that the Preparation for Work programme helps them to gain confidence and self-esteem as well as life skills such as punctuality, managing self, and working with others. Improving the clarity of the survey tools would provide better evidence of achievement and outcomes.</p> <p>Intensive Literacy and Numeracy students attending the Everyday English training scheme are mostly migrants with varying and complex linguistic and social needs that are well met by experienced tutors.</p> <p>Progression of language ability is well understood by the tutors, and students interviewed attest to their improved levels of English use in everyday New Zealand settings. More</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.

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| | effective collection of this evidence would provide useful information about teaching and learning progressions across levels and against frameworks. |
| Conclusion: | Students and clients make good progress. Achievement is assessed by completion of tasks and gaining licences and unit standards. Progression is well understood at the delivery level; more effective analysis and reporting would aid evaluation of teaching and learning. |

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

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| Performance: | Excellent |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>Active Institute is one of the largest providers of the MSD Preparation for Work programme in the greater Auckland area. The PTE deals solely with clients who are classified as medium or high risk of remaining on a benefit. Many of the clients have been out of the workforce for several years. Active Institute provides a safe community of learning to help individuals to achieve valued outcomes and enhance their abilities. (The likelihood of sustainable employment for clients who enter the job placement programmes is evaluated using the Long Term Benefit Receipt evaluation process to determine work readiness.)</p> <p>MSD specifies the required outcomes for clients. Preparation for Work clients return to MSD with a current CV, an understanding of the job market and how to access it, certificates and licences related to their chosen field of employment, and workplace digital literacy. For 2018-2019, 135 people gained one qualification and three people gained two qualifications, 33 per cent of the total clientele. Self-assessment would be improved with the reporting of the proportion of clients who achieved their required certificates.</p> <p>Everyday English students develop language proficiency to engage in New Zealand-specific knowledge and skills to help them integrate into society, i.e. accessing healthcare, banking, engaging with their children's school education, gaining digital literacy. Families and extended communities are encouraged to become involved in the institute's programmes. Students said gaining employment was their long-term goal. Self-assessment</p> |

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| | <p>would be improved by the PTE understanding how the training scheme had improved the students' employment possibilities, for example gaining a driver's licence or improving digital literacy.</p> <p>Tutors and management confirmed that students return for additional learning in subsequent years, although the number of students taking advantage of this was not defined. Connections with other migrant and refugee stakeholder or reference groups is less evident.</p> |
| Conclusion: | <p>Clients complete programmes and training schemes and are well supported to gain qualifications through external training. Everyday English students can access a wider range of social settings and therefore improve their wellbeing. Providing evidence of the effectiveness of outcomes by tracking pathways would inform self-assessment.</p> |

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

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| Performance: | Good |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>Active Institute delivers programmes that are appropriate to the needs of each individual. A letter of referral accompanying each Preparation for Work client specifies the outcomes required, for example gaining a forklift licence or updating their CV. On arrival, learning challenges are assessed and clients receive an individual learning plan. Learner autonomy is encouraged, and the training supplied caters for a variety of learning preferences and modes of delivery. The location is easily accessible for many clients and the resources are fit for purpose, with computers for each client.</p> <p>Experienced staff have good knowledge of the relevant employment areas and have experience in social services and employment recruitment. Reflection on what worked in previous longer programmes has informed and improved the current three-week programme.</p> <p>Client surveys provide evidence of high levels of satisfaction with the programme and staff, although survey participation rates are not currently available. Staff encourage clients to complete the comments to improve the programme and inform their practice.</p> |

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| | <p>Everyday English was recently approved as an NZQA training scheme which has led to the inclusion of two numeracy unit standards to be assessed. Evidence of programme and lesson planning shows delivery is aligned with the training scheme and is flexible enough to meet students' needs.</p> <p>Diagnostic testing is undertaken early in the programme and throughout to ensure the programme meets students' needs. Ongoing assessment of skill development occurs during class and is evidenced through completion of real-world tasks. Tutors meet weekly to discuss students' progress and to share good practice to aid student learning and engagement. Learner-focused teaching and flexibility in the classroom means that learning is designed to meet individual learner needs.</p> <p>Formal review of the Everyday English programme has not yet been undertaken as it is the first year of delivery. Moderation of assessment is in progress. External moderation will be undertaken by NZQA this year.</p> <p>Educational oversight of staff in applying teaching and learning frameworks would benefit teaching staff to better understand progress beyond the individual level.</p> |
| Conclusion: | Students and clients gain useful skills and attributes through attending the programmes and training schemes which are matched to their individual needs. |

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

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| Performance: | Excellent |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>Students and clients are well supported at Active Institute. In both programmes, the staff are the first point of contact for clients and students. Experienced staff come from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds and speak a range of languages.</p> <p>Attendance is well monitored and reported weekly for both programmes. Absent students are contacted quickly and supported to return. A good induction process identifies educational and social needs. Staff respond well to meeting these needs.</p> <p>Since the last EER, resources have been improved – there are</p> |

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| | <p>now enough computers to cater for each individual, and an intranet allows for the sharing of resources among staff. Student handbooks have been simplified and translated into the main languages represented. Individual learning plans are developed and reviewed weekly, and self-directed study is encouraged. Learning materials are consistent with Auckland and New Zealand living situations and are in line with programme aims.</p> <p>Completed student and client feedback forms on staff support are highly positive, as was feedback from the graduates and training providers interviewed by the EER team. Staff review each feedback form and the results are discussed and some changes to delivery have resulted from this. Survey data is not aggregated to inform the organisation of trends or responses over time.</p> <p>In the Preparation for Work programme, employment coaches contact clients 31 days after the programme to offer support and guidance in gaining employment. Staff continue relationships with clients long after the programme is completed and take an active interest in their welfare and employment. Graduates interviewed attest to the care and support they received. External training providers confirm that the clients are well prepared and organised and mostly ready for training. Those that struggle with success in their training return to the employment coaches for continued support and re-enrol to successfully complete certificates or licences.</p> <p>Family, whānau and extended groups are encouraged to be involved in Active Institute, offering cultural diversity days to encourage family and whānau to be involved in the learning.</p> <p>Staff communicate daily with MSD and there are regular management meetings to ensure funding and individual outcomes are being met. Teachers meet weekly and monthly for teacher-only days to discuss student support. While staff spoke about changes they had made to better support student achievement, there is no formal overview.</p> <p>Students' needs are met primarily by individual staff members, and there is limited evidence of formal organisational self-assessment. However, the daily contact with MSD, regular management and funder meetings, weekly staff meetings, and positive survey responses give confidence that the organisation is reflecting, monitoring and working to make ongoing improvements to the programme and training scheme, and the achievement of outcomes.</p> |
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| Conclusion: | Staff are committed to supporting individual students and clients. Active Institute understand their needs and provides support to improve their lives. |
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1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

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| Performance: | Good |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>Strategic direction is clear and supports the mission and goals of the organisation. Diversity and inclusion of all ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, ages (staff as well as students/clients) is a point of difference for the organisation. There is a continued shift in funding focus for the organisation towards MSD contracts which now make up most of the funded programmes.</p> <p>Resources, including the updated quality manual, intranet and course books support the teaching and training.</p> <p>Tutors and employment coaches are satisfied with their support, and a number of staff have long tenure. Staff reported support for their external professional development and a new tutor attested to a clear induction process. In the Everyday English training scheme, the self-managing tutors support each other well to improve their practice and delivery. Additional leadership and mentoring from management could further support the tutors to improve and develop their practice.</p> <p>The PTE measures its delivery and performance against MSD funding requirements.</p> <p>The organisation is strongly led by the director who shows clear understanding and commitment to be resilient, resourceful and innovative in his response to funding changes and challenges.</p> |
| Conclusion: | Active Institute has effective leadership and a clear, strategic vision of its business. Improved educational oversight would support teaching staff to enhance their practice. |

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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| Performance: | Good |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | <p>All major compliance responsibilities appear to be well managed. Attendance is recorded and followed up. A clear process has been implemented to ensure hours are recorded accurately internally and to funding agencies. Responses made by Active Institute to the 2017 TEC investigation into learning hours delivered appear to be working well. Regular communication with MSD supports accurate reporting and Active Institute retains level 4 provider status with MSD.</p> <p>Unit standards are completed and reported. The TEC/NZQA liaison person is responsible for ongoing checking for unit standard versions and reporting updates on the TEC and NZQA websites. A moderation plan has been submitted and pre- and post-moderation is in process. The new training scheme will be reviewed by staff at the end of the year. Lesson planning records support the programme overview. Student files record all required information.</p> <p>An annually updated quality manual outlines policies and processes.</p> |
| Conclusion: | Compliance management has improved and weekly reporting supports accurate reconciliation of provision. Training scheme reporting is managed adequately. |

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Training Scheme

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| Performance: | Good |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | Student progression and achievement is followed at the individual level and is well understood by tutors and students. The focus for this group of learners is becoming better informed and integrated into New Zealand life. The title of the programme accurately reflects the goals of the learners. Educational oversight, either provided by an external mentor or through management, would strengthen performance and self-assessment. |

2.2 Focus area: Preparation for Work programme

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| Performance: | Excellent |
| Self-assessment: | Good |
| Findings and supporting evidence: | Educational performance and self-assessment is measured against MSD contracts. A shorter programme gives less of a learning journey to capture, but the programme is well delivered by very experienced staff with tenure. Few withdrawals, well supported by external training, provide clear measurable outcomes. |

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 that Active Institute Limited:

- Improve educational oversight of the training scheme programme to support tutors and students.
- Increase stakeholder involvement in the organisation.
- Consider ways to collect and aggregate data that will continue to inform organisational self-assessment.

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 fraud³*
- *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.*

³ NZQA and the 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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