



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

Active Institute Limited

Date of report: 19 January 2024

About Active Institute Limited

Active Institute Limited is a small private training establishment providing English language education for adult refugees and migrants from non-English speaking countries. The institute also offers courses in preparation for employment for Ministry of Social Development clients. The courses are delivered from Active Institute's Panmure and Manukau City campuses in the Auckland region.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	23 Norman Spencer Drive, Manukau City, Auckland
Eligible to enrol intl students:	No
Number of students:	ILN/ESOL ¹ – funded to provide 25,079 learning hours in 2023. At the time of the EER, the PTE had consumed over 22,000 hours, and was allocated additional ILN hours and ACE ² places. Employment Preparation – funded to support 115 clients (July 2023-June 2024). At the time of the EER, 60 clients had been enrolled.
Number of staff:	Eight full-time and four part-time staff
TEO profile:	Active Institute Limited provider page on the NZQA website
Last EER outcome:	At the last EER in September 2019, NZQA was Confident in Active Institute's educational performance and self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	All of the organisation's activities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• English Language training for migrants and refugees, funded via the

¹ Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Fund - English for Speakers of Other Languages

² Adult Community Education

Tertiary Education Commission's
ESOL, ILN and ACE funds

- Employment Preparation and Placement Programme (EPPP), an employment-focused coaching programme to prepare clients for work and to place them into employment, funded by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

MoE number: 8204
NZQA reference: C54311
Dates of EER visit: 26 and 27 September 2023

Summary of results

Active Institute meets many of the important needs of its English language learners and MSD clients. The PTE makes a measurable difference in their lives, is meeting its contractual requirements, and supports local communities. Self-assessment is generally identifying and reviewing areas of priority need, including funding agencies' reporting requirements. There are opportunities to gather more extensive feedback to inform improvements and provide evidence of valued outcomes.

Confident in educational performance

- Active Institute has a strong understanding of learners' English language progression. Growing confidence and improved language skills enable learners to better participate in their everyday lives in New Zealand. Learners place a high value on these changes.
- Employment Preparation and Placement clients are gaining skills in preparation for employment. Placement ratios are strong, providing high value for both clients and the funding agency.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Active Institute provides structured and well-planned learning programmes, incorporating an individualised approach that aligns well with the key needs of its learners/clients.
- Active Institute is effectively supporting learners and creating a safe and engaging learning environment.
- Active Institute has a strong and long-term commitment to serving its local communities and supporting individuals to achieve their potential. There are opportunities to collect further feedback from learners/clients and stakeholders to inform improvements in teaching and learning and to provide evidence of valued outcomes for learners/clients.
- Active Institute has met most of its compliance accountabilities. It is required to complete a self-assessment review for the Code of Practice.

Key evaluation question findings³

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Active Institute closely tracks attendance and the learning hours of ESOL/ILN learners. This information indicates that the learners are regularly attending classes and improving their English language skills.</p> <p>Active Institute tests the learners' English language skills using the appropriate tool for diagnosing literacy and numeracy levels. For example, the Starting Points listening and reading assessment is used for learners with low and emergent language levels. The PTE uses the results to inform individualised programmes, and to monitor and track learner progress. Assessment results show learners are making progress from the Everyday English 1 class in reading and listening, to the Everyday English 2 class in reading, numeracy and listening. These progressions provide good evidence of individual achievement, and that effective teaching and learning is occurring.</p> <p>Active Institute coaches and mentors Employment Preparation and Placement (EPPP) clients to set individual goals, prepare job applications and a professional curriculum vitae, practise interview skills, understand dress and reliability expectations as well as the impacts of substance abuse on employment prospects. These activities are in preparation for clients seeking and moving into employment. At the time of the EER – three months into the annual contract period – 50 of the 115 clients had either completed the programme or were working through it, with 15 clients successfully moving into work. This is good evidence and supports the EER findings that clients are supported to achieve their goals of preparing for and finding employment.</p>

³ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

Conclusion:	Active Institute has a strong understanding of individual learner’s achievement. English language learners are developing their language skills; this progress is tracked using formal assessment tools. EPPP clients are gaining skills to find and enter employment.
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1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Active Institute serves its local communities well through the provision of relevant training, coaching and support, offering high value to its learners/clients, funders and other stakeholders.</p> <p>English language learners are gaining high value from the Everyday English, Foundation English and Digital Literacy courses provided by Active Institute. Learners develop improved language skills and greater confidence. These gains support them to better participate in everyday living and settle in New Zealand.</p> <p>Examples of value for learners included: managing banking transactions; helping with children’s education; using computers to communicate; inclusion in wider social circles and, for some, gaining employment. These outcomes also contribute to the government's strategic settlement objectives for migrants and former refugees.</p> <p>ESOL/ILN’s annually contracted hours have been consistently consumed and exceeded since the last EER. Based on this performance, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) has allocated additional hours to support learners’ continued English language development. The fulfilment of contracted hours in this context is a strong indicator of value to the learners and funder.</p> <p>The EPPP clients also gain high-value outcomes from completing the programme. These outcomes include employment-related skills, knowledge and resources, and increased confidence and motivation. Active Institute arranges external training courses that enable clients to gain specific certifications, for example forklift licences, and SiteSafe and first aid certificates. These licences and</p>

	<p>certificates support clients to achieve their goals of gaining and sustaining employment.</p> <p>Clients' achievements and contractual fulfilment provide the contracting agency with value, and ongoing confidence in the relationship with Active Institute. MSD confirmed that Active Institute's recent performance and consistent fulfilment of contractual commitments places Active Institute among their top-performing providers in the region.</p> <p>Active Institute provides value to local employers and the community. The PTE has seen the potential in some clients with aligned skills, values and experience, and offered them employment in administration roles and as coaches. These individuals have become valued employees and contributors.</p> <p>Active Institute has a long-term and in-depth understanding of the value of its contribution to individuals, funding agencies and the community. This commitment is embodied in the actions and values of the organisation. While improvements have been made to recording and graphically illustrating contract progress, collecting and presenting learner/client successes stories would provide Active Institute with a stronger evidence base to support this value proposition and its use for promotional purposes and to support contractual proposals.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Active Institute serves its local communities well. The achievements of the English language learners and EPPP clients provide meaning and value to individuals' lives, their families, communities and stakeholders. The PTE has a well-developed understanding of its learners/clients, the funding agencies and the communities it serves. Active Institute could collect evidence of learner/client success to show the value of the learning.</p>

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:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The ESOL course design meets the core needs of learners. The content is well structured and supports learners' skills development and engagement in a variety of tasks, social situations and employment to enable them to participate in everyday life. The NZQA-approved training schemes, Everyday English 1 and 2, were reviewed in 2020. The changes made included removing the specific numeracy unit standards; broadening the content; and focusing the learning on basic English at level 1 and intermediate English at level 2. Literacy and numeracy assessment was introduced using the TEC's assessment tool.</p> <p>A bilingual tutor provides classes in Mandarin and English for learners with beginner English language. This provides an effective context for introducing basic digital skills such as using a computer to send emails. Recent investment in digital resources, such as mobile devices, web cameras and large screen TVs has supported embedding digital skills in the learning. Learners are able to take devices home to continue their learning and engage their family in the learning.</p> <p>Individual learning plans (ILPs) are developed with each learner, capturing their goals relating to language as well as broader goals concerning family and community life. Diagnostic testing at enrolment informs placement in the appropriate level, and at specific points in time informs progression. Progress and achievement of goals is recorded, fed back and provides motivation for the learners. The ILPs present good evidence of the progress and value learners are gaining through their regular participation and structured learning programmes.</p> <p>The EPPP workbook exercises and examples, guided by the employment coaches sharing their life experiences, effectively support clients' preparation for employment.</p> <p>Tutors and coaches are well qualified, with a range of work and life experiences that align well with the programmes.</p>

	<p>For example, a recently appointed employment coach is an experienced corporate trainer, lives in the local community, and has had personal experience of seeking employment via the programme.</p> <p>Feedback is collected from learners using a simplified satisfaction survey with an expressive faces rating scale. Results from 30 learners in Everyday English 2 (February to September 2023) showed most learners were satisfied with the teaching and learning activities and how well their needs are understood.</p> <p>An improvement suggested by the respondents included more one-on-one conversations between tutor and learner and between learners. This is being implemented by the tutors. There are opportunities to seek more detailed feedback from both learners/clients and stakeholders, to ensure learning and teaching is meeting their most important needs.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Active Institute provides structured and well-planned learning programmes, incorporating an individualised teaching and coaching approach. This generally aligns well with learners' and clients' needs.</p>

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

<p>Performance:</p>	<p>Excellent</p>
<p>Self-assessment:</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Findings and supporting evidence:</p>	<p>Supporting and assisting vulnerable individuals from local communities has been, and continues to be, integral to Active Institute's core ethos. The supportive and safe environment, complemented by understanding and caring staff, creates a positive and engaging learning environment.</p> <p>Active Institute's support and guidance extends beyond the classroom. Learners and clients provided many examples of being helped with housing issues, medical appointments and engagement with agencies.</p> <p>Attendance is monitored, with learners' non-attendance followed up to check on their wellbeing and encourage continued participation. The central location of campuses on local transport routes and in community retail areas</p>

	<p>supports the learners' ease of access and attendance. Active Institute reports that a high percentage of learners stay engaged with their learning. This is evidenced by the high consumption of funded hours for English language learners.</p> <p>External stakeholders and providers of industry certification and licences reported that Active Institute is professional, well organised and encouraging of clients to achieve these additional useful skills and certifications in their preparation for work.</p> <p>The personal safety of staff and learners and the security of facilities is of utmost importance to the business owner. Investment has been made to ensure safety is maintained, such as security lights in parking areas and around the building. Staff are skilled at providing pastoral care. To support wellbeing and the focus on security, it would be beneficial for staff to have training in managing difficult behaviour and critical incidents, how to access support in these situations, and the ongoing impacts of trauma on learners/clients.</p>
Conclusion:	Active Institute is effectively supporting learners and creating a safe and engaging learning environment.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Active Institute's vision is to provide equal opportunities through a holistic approach to learning, recognising and respecting individuals' culture and background, and assisting learners to realise their potential.</p> <p>The owner and senior managers have a long-term and authentic commitment to serving recent settlers and those seeking employment in their local communities. The leadership has recruited tutors, coaches and support staff who share this vision.</p> <p>Active Institute has demonstrated the ability to adapt to changing contractual requirements while maintaining a focus on its core purpose and achieving outcomes. Strong historical performance and stakeholder relationships</p>

	<p>provide confidence that current performance is likely to continue into the future. Succession planning is being considered by the business owner.</p> <p>Investment in technology resources, facilities and security systems has provided a welcoming and safe learning environment and experience for English language learners and EPPP clients.</p> <p>Staff feel valued and able to contribute to the training business. Active Institute supports professional development in teaching and moderation and pastoral care. The head tutor provides English language tutors with clear academic leadership and structured curriculum advice, and supports induction for new tutors. The EPPP coaches work closely together, sharing practices and successes.</p> <p>The team at Active Institute 'know their world' and practise a cycle of reflection. This self-assessment practice would benefit from being systematically documented to show evidence of improvement and the positive impacts on learners'/clients' personal, educational and social achievements.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Active Institute's owner/managing director has a clear vision and a long-standing commitment to serving the local communities and supporting individual learners/clients to achieve their potential. The organisation is well managed and the team are valued for their skills, experience and contributions.</p>

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Marginal
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Tracking performance against contract requirements and regular compliance reporting is a core and embedded activity for senior management. Active Institute has a sound understanding of what is needed to keep agencies informed and to maintain funding streams. English language learner attendance and the associated consumption of contracted hours and employment programme completions are well monitored and recorded.</p> <p>All NZQA annual reporting requirements have been completed. However, no evidence was provided of a review of learner support practices against the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Students) Code of Practice 2021. Attestations have been submitted in 2021 and 2022 stating that reviews had been completed. This is a significant gap and Active Institute must complete a full self-review in the immediate future.</p> <p>The TEC audit conducted in November 2020 found Active Institute's systems, policies and procedures to be effective and meeting legislative and investment plan requirements.</p> <p>At the time of the EER, Active Institute did not present data relating to priority group learners as nominated by the Ministry of Education (Māori, Pasifika and disabled). While it is accepted that the English language learners may not fall into any of these categories, they may well have needs relating to disabilities, and these need to be collected and reported.</p> <p>Health and safety is well managed at the Panmure and Manukau City campuses. Induction is provided for new learners and clients, and expectations are clearly set out in the handbooks.</p>
Conclusion:	Compliance accountabilities have mostly been met. Active Institute had not completed a code of Practice self-review as it had attested to. This is a significant gap.

Focus areas

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

2.1 All of organisation activity

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

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:

- Provide staff with training on managing difficult behaviour and critical incidents, accessing support in these situations, as well as the impacts of trauma, to support the focus on health and safety, wellbeing and security.
- Systematically document self-assessment activities to demonstrate how these led to ongoing improvements and positive impacts for learners/clients.

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.

NZQA requires Active Institute Limited to:

- Meet self-review requirements outlined in the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (Part 3 clauses 8 and 9).

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 fraud⁴*
- *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.*

⁴ 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/>.

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