

Report of External Evaluation and Review

PORSE Education & Training (NZ) Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 20 March 2013

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Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	PORSE Education & Training (NZ) Limited (PORSE Education and Training)
Туре:	Private training establishment
Location:	31 Napier Road, Havelock North, Hawkes Bay
Delivery sites:	PORSE Education and Training delivers distance education from its national support office in Havelock North. Distance delivery is supported by 38 community teams nationwide.
First registered:	17 February 1999
Courses currently delivered	National Certificate in Early Childhood Education (Level 3) (NCECE)
Number of students:	227 domestic students enrolled in 2012.
	In 2012 the Tertiary Education Commission funded 112 equivalent full-time students.
Number of staff:	27.3 full-time equivalents
	Approximately 100 programme tutors support the learners. Programme tutors are employed by PORSE In-Home Childcare and also support educators employed in in-home childcare roles.
Distinctive characteristics:	PORSE Education and Training was established specifically to support educators to gain a nationally recognised qualification. It partners with and is supported by PORSE In-Home Childcare which provides in-home early childhood education.

Approximately 80 per cent of learners (180) are			
PORSE educators, employed by PORSE as in-			
home child educators.	They enrol in the NCECE		
after a period of employment with PORSE in this			
role.			

The other 20 per cent (46) of learners who are not affiliated to the organisation pre-enrolment ('non-PORSE' learners) are a combination of nanny interns (a new initiative in 2012) and individuals throughout the country embarking on the NCECE as a distance learning programme.

The NCECE is delivered by distance learning over a 19-week period (this will change to 21 weeks in 2013). Learners are supported by programme tutors and benefit from a range of delivery support options, including face-to-face support, email and telephone communication, and attendance at evening tutorials.

PORSE in-home child educators are supported to develop professionally by an associated company, For Life Education and Training (NZ) Ltd.

Recent significant changes: Marking support roles were introduced in early 2012 to support programme tutors with assessment.

PORSE Education and Training recently employed a researcher and writer based at the national office who is responsible for the design and development of PORSE programmes and courses.

The organisation has recently rewritten its course materials and resources for release in 2013 following the NZQA-led national review of the qualification.

In 2012, the organisation piloted two small intakes of a nanny internship programme in Havelock North, targeted at learners aged 17-25 years. It is intended that this programme will be rolled out in Hawkes Bay, Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch in 2013. Previous quality assurance history:

PORSE Education and Training met all requirements of the quality assurance standard as assessed by NZQA in July 2008.

In 2011, PORSE Education and Training met NZQA's national external moderation requirements for some, but not all, of the standards moderated. Some external requirements were not met for two Core Health standards; however, PORSE identified that these had been discontinued and were no longer being delivered.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The two focus areas evaluated were:

- Governance, management, and strategy, being a mandatory focus area
- The National Certificate in Early Childhood Education (Level 3) (NCECE), being the sole qualification delivered by PORSE Education and Training.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction. 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.

Two evaluators conducted the external evaluation and review over two days at the national office site. Staff, learners, and stakeholders were engaged with from Hawkes Bay, Tauranga, and Christchurch. The evaluators interviewed:

- The chief executive of PORSE Education and Training and PORSE In-Home Childcare
- Management at national office
- Programme tutors
- Regional coaches
- Regional marking supports

- Support staff at national office
- Learners and graduates
- A parent
- A secondary school stakeholder.

The evaluators also reviewed supporting evidentiary information, including the organisation's self-assessment plans and information, training programme evaluation forms, and a sample of responses, the post-course questionnaire form, the student handbook, 2012 and 2013 learning guide, and the organisation's 2012-2017 Statement of Intent.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **PORSE Education** & **Training (NZ) Limited.**

Most learners who enrol in the National Certificate in Early Childhood Education (NCECE) with PORSE Education and Training complete the qualification (90.3 per cent in 2011 and 2010). Strong achievement reflects the high level of support provided by programme tutors and the relevance of the qualification to learners, who are mostly completing the NCECE while employed by PORSE In-Home Childcare as in-home early child educators.

Different learning options available to support learners to complete the programme by distance delivery (including face-to-face support) minimise barriers to learning and ensure the programme is responsive to learners' differing needs. Learners are regularly engaged and supported by tutors and guided in their learning by relevant, user-friendly learning materials.

The governance and management team has implemented a number of mechanisms in recent years to support strong educational performance, including tutor assessment support and programme tutor support roles. These roles combine to ensure individual learner progress is well understood at local, regional, and national levels and that individual learning needs are identified and responded to.

Across the interviews conducted for this evaluation, it was apparent that the completion of the NCECE significantly enhances learners' understanding of children's development needs. For the majority of learners who are in in-home childcare roles, this knowledge is applied directly for the benefit of children and their parents and families.

PORSE Education and Training identifies that it is considering how it might systematically gather and collate information to specifically capture the value of the NCECE qualification for parents and families.

Identification of the longer-term value of the qualification for non-PORSE learners should equally be an area of ongoing focus for the organisation, alongside the continuation of work to identify how it should respond to the small number of non-PORSE learners who do not achieve as well as other learners – 70 per cent of non-PORSE learners completed the qualification in 2011 (28 out of 40).

The governance and management team is proactive in looking to the future and has initiatives planned or underway. These include research with educators, parents, and families, with the view that this will add insight into the value of the qualification.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **PORSE Education & Training (NZ) Limited.**

Self-assessment is embedded across the organisation, including through the selfreflection encouraged of learners, observation and assessment of learners undertaken by programme tutors, programme and tutor evaluations conducted and analysed at local, regional, and national levels, and the analysis of student progress and assessment results undertaken at national level, and which is used to identify areas for the provision of specific tutor and learner support.

At an organisational level, focus areas of importance to educational performance are selected for annual self-review, with results used to inform changes aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. Recent changes implemented by the organisation include an in-depth focus on providing tutors with assessment support to ensure the quality and consistency of assessment, and mid-point analysis of individual learner progress undertaken by national support staff to provide a further mechanism to identify individual learner's support needs.

In 2012, PORSE piloted a nanny internship programme to develop a pathway option for younger learners in line with government priorities. Learners' completion of the NCECE while in dedicated nanny roles, coupled with face-to-face support from PORSE, was also seen as a way to enhance the nature of support provided to some non-PORSE learners.

The organisation intends to continue to focus on non-PORSE learners as an area for self-review in 2013. Areas that require specific focus include the collection of solid data to inform how the organisation can respond to enhance course completions for these learners. Currently, there is also an absence of collated information to understand the value of the programme to non-PORSE learners, including how completion of the NCECE benefits these learners in the longer term.

The value of the qualification for PORSE in-home learners appears to be well understood at the local level through tutor observations and assessment of learners' progress and engagement with parents and families. As identified in the above section, PORSE is currently considering how it might systematically capture this understanding at a national level from the perspective of parents and families. Currently PORSE collates survey feedback from learners regarding what they liked about the NCECE programme. Collating more specific information about what learners gained from the training and analysing this against key training objectives, would also enhance the organisation's understanding of the value of the training.

More recently, PORSE has been focused on better formalising its approach to selfassessment, including a recent decision to introduce additional roles at a management level to enable more efficient reporting between regional and national leadership. Over the last two years the organisation has also developed the functionality of its student management system to improve data reporting and analysis of learner achievement at local, regional, and national levels.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good.**

Most learners achieve well and complete the NCECE. The overall course completion rate was 91 per cent in 2011 and for qualification completions, 90.3 per cent. In 2010 the course completion rate was 90.3 per cent. This was a slight increase from 2009 when the course completion rate was 86 per cent and for qualification completions, 82.6 per cent. The organisation identifies that this improvement resulted from its decision to move away from 'rolling enrolments' in 2010.

Completion results in 2010 and 2011 were on a par with the organisation's internal target of 90 per cent and were largely consistently achieved across the organisation's 38 community team sites nationwide.

PORSE Education and Training attributes these strong completion rates to the strong and supportive relationships established between learners and programme tutors. These relationships are assisted by the fact that approximately 80 per cent of learners are already established with the organisation as PORSE in-home child educators and have made connections and developed familiarity with the organisation. The direct relevance of their study and its practical applicability to learners' employment as in-home child carers is highly motivating. A significant amount of support is also offered to learners.

The organisation identifies that course and qualification completion rates have not been as strong for some learners who are not employed by PORSE as in-home carers, and in particular for those learners who elect not to have regular face-to-face programme tutor contact or the small number who are not connected to a community team (six out of 46 learners in 2012). This is indicative of the importance of regular engagement between learners and tutors, and while PORSE offers this to most of its learners, specifically asking learners why they may not access this support, or what alternative engagement options would better suit learners without a pre-existing relationship with the organisation, could enhance the organisation's understanding in this area.

Completion rates have consistently averaged between 65 and 70 per cent over the last few years for non-PORSE learners, who currently make up approximately 20 per cent of the total number of learners (46 students). In 2011, course completions were

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

70 per cent and this equated to 28 of 40 non-PORSE learners who completed the NCECE. Previously, non-PORSE learner enrolments were much greater (around 100), but PORSE has had a purposeful approach to decrease non-PORSE enrolments as the NCECE has become an embedded part of the learning pathway for PORSE educators.

Recently, PORSE Education and Training has used the findings of a literature review and an overview of non-completion data to identify possible reasons for learners not completing the NCECE. However, it is yet to do an in-depth assessment of the factors affecting non-completion (e.g. engaging specifically with learners who do not complete or to understand what might enhance learning experience) and to identify what the organisation can do to comprehensively respond to this issue.

At the same time, the nanny internship piloted by the organisation in 2012, and intended to be rolled out in 2013, is potentially an approach that will result in fewer non-PORSE learners enrolling in the NCECE purely by distance learning and without face-to-face learning support. The nanny internship provides a learning option that offers more structure and compulsory face-to-face learning support for non-PORSE learners, and particularly younger learners. This approach appears to have worked well, with all seven nanny interns from the first intake completing the NCECE and six of seven completing in the second intake in 2012.

In terms of learners' progress during the programme at local, regional, and national levels, every block of learning is monitored to the 90 per cent completion target. A weekly report provided to the national support office identifies the progress of each learner. Recently, national office implemented a mid-point review of every learner's progress. Learners and programme tutors are contacted if any concerning trends are identified, and additional support is recommended.

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

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is Good.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good.**

Learners and graduates interviewed for this evaluation indicated that they strongly value the theoretical knowledge they acquire. This knowledge is directly relevant to their childcare practice and enables learners in childcare roles to immediately apply their learning in practice. This includes play ideas, recognising certain behaviours, behaviour management techniques, giving structure to children's days, and providing safe childcare environments.

Learners and graduates identified that the knowledge they acquire is significant as it enables them to better understand and respond to children's needs. This enhances the contribution they are able to make as child educators to the learning, development, and growth of children in their care. They also impart this knowledge

to parents to help support them to understand their children's growth and development. As such, the acquisition of this knowledge is empowering and gives learners increased self-confidence in their engagement with parents and families and in their own childcare practices.

The attainment of the NCECE is affirming and empowering for learners who have not before completed an educational qualification. Completion of the qualification affirms the professional nature of the in-home child educator role and gives learners credibility in their own employment or business.

Graduates employed by PORSE as in-home child educators are eligible to become PORSE Certified after completing the NCECE and are regarded as trained by the Ministry of Education for the purposes of funding for the home-based service type. The training provided by PORSE Education and Training enables PORSE In-Home Education and Training to meet this requirement through the delivery of the NCECE. The qualification can also enable graduates to attract a higher hourly rate per child educated.

PORSE employees who have completed the NCECE can continue their learning through access to an internal professional pathway. This provides ongoing training and development opportunities in early childhood education through PORSE's associated company, For Life Education and Training (NZ) Ltd. Between 10 and 15 per cent of graduates go on to complete this pathway option.

PORSE Education and Training identifies that providing the qualification to non-PORSE learners has enabled a number of learners who left school without a career focus or tertiary study pathway to go on to complete a qualification in an area that interests them.

At a national level, the organisation is yet to systematically collect information to demonstrate the longer-term value of the qualification and the learning outcomes learners have obtained specifically from the qualification. However, the organisation is currently considering how it might extend its national survey of families to capture such information. It has also recently commissioned research which it identifies will provide added insights into the value of the qualification from the perspective of parents and educators.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good.**

The programme is of high relevance to most learners, who are also employed as child educators. They are able to complete a qualification that directly aligns with their employment. The programme is also at no cost to PORSE in-home learners and nanny interns.

The distance delivery model provides a mode of learning that matches the needs of those whose circumstances are best suited to this approach. PORSE Education and Training offers a variety of delivery options to support this learning, which learners choose in alignment with their needs and circumstances.

Delivery options include home visits from programme tutors, tutor support via phone, text message, or email, attendance at study evenings, or attendance at playschools. The organisation is also currently looking at e-learning options, including a portal through which tutors can engage learners (and which could reach both PORSE in-home and non-PORSE learners).

PORSE Education and Training identifies that non-PORSE learners are offered the same delivery support options as in-home learners (although face-to-face support and home visits would be limited if the learner was not based in a community team area). However, it considers that the reason why a small number of learners do not do as well may be because they do not benefit from the strong relationships preestablished between programme tutors and PORSE in-home learners. It also considers that learners' motivations for enrolling may be a factor affecting some non-completions.

The intended focus on non-PORSE learners as an area for self-assessment in 2013 should provide the organisation with an informed understanding about this matter and inform whether it needs to make any changes to the enrolment process or to programme delivery support methods.

This may also provide an opportunity for the organisation to review how it engages specifically with non-PORSE learners to gain an understanding of learners' satisfaction with the programmes, as currently student questionnaires do not differentiate between in-home and non-PORSE learners. Gathering specific and direct feedback from these learners could validate PORSE's understanding of the contributing factors and/or guide effective strategies to respond.

Regular student evaluations are undertaken throughout the year and at the end of the programme to gauge overall learner satisfaction with the programme and activities. Response rates average between 30 and 50 per cent, with the majority of the respondents identifying satisfaction with the programme (96 per cent in 2011).

Survey results are made available to learners and tutors on the organisation's website and are analysed annually by the national management team. Students, staff, and management identified that a number of changes have been made to learning materials as a direct result of evaluation feedback, for example changing the design of a particular assessment after students indicated that they struggled with the assessment activity required.

PORSE Training and Education delivers the NCECE, or components of it, to secondary school students through the STAR initiative. This provides students with the opportunity to begin studying towards the qualification and to transition to a career pathway.

A secondary school stakeholder interviewed for the evaluation identified the responsiveness and care PORSE Education and Training has shown towards students and shared examples where the organisation has gone the extra mile to support and encourage several secondary school learners to complete the qualification (although PORSE Education and Training does not actively monitor the number of these learners who go on to complete the NCECE).

As identified at section 1.2 above, PORSE Education and Training's delivery of the NCECE matches PORSE In-Home Education and Training's need for educators to meet the Ministry of Education's trained status for the purposes of funding for the home-based service type.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

Learners feel well supported by the programme tutors and identify that tutors are readily available to provide guidance and support and regularly make contact to ensure students are progressing well or to provide assistance where this is needed. Programme tutors make weekly contact with learners through the learners' preferred communication channels.

Learners are highly appreciative of the learning materials and mostly find these to be engaging and relevant. The inclusion of relevant readings and references within each learning book is particularly valued. A secondary school stakeholder also identified that the learning materials are highly relevant for secondary school students.

Consistency and quality of assessment has been a core focus for PORSE Education and Training over the last couple of years and was identified as a focus area following the organisation's analysis of student and tutor feedback. The organisation has implemented assessment support roles to develop tutors' assessment capabilities and has specifically focused staff on providing in-depth feedback to each learner after each assessment, including through the development of an assessment feedback form. PORSE Education and Training identifies that the quality of assessment has improved as a result and has been observed through internal moderation processes.

The organisation has a robust moderation process. All learning materials are premoderated by an external moderator experienced in early childhood education. Three samples of assessments marked by all programme tutors are reviewed three times a year and across three learning guides. Assessments are moderated at national office level. Where any issues are identified, programme tutors are contacted and supported by marking coaches. The organisation has a policy allowing reassessment opportunities, which is utilised as a learning tool to either focus learners on revising specific areas of learning or to identify where additional training and support may be required. It identifies that reassessment is only used in a small percentage of cases and actively monitors reassessment activities across learners, programme tutors, and areas, to identify any trends that might be of concern.

Learners interviewed for this evaluation identified that their feedback is regularly sought on the quality of learning materials and the quality of tutor support, and that they value these feedback opportunities. They feel confident that their feedback is valued by staff and pointed to staff engagement with learners in the present re-write of the programme to demonstrate that feedback is valued and used to make improvements.

To maintain an understanding of the quality of teaching, student evaluation feedback is monitored across all sites at national office level, as are weekly programme tutor progress reports. Programme tutors record all contact they have with learners and this is reviewed at national office level to ensure that all learners are in receipt of ongoing contact and support. Formal programme tutor appraisals are undertaken which are centred on ensuring role descriptions are met and tutors are supported to meet pre-identified goals.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent.**

A strong level of guidance and support is available to learners. Support is both proactively offered on a regular basis and readily available if requested.

In 2011, PORSE Education and Training reviewed the entry requirements of the programme and introduced a requirement for some learners to undertake a preentry assessment where there are doubts about learners' preparedness to undertake the study. This involves completion of one of the learning modules within a set timeframe.

Learners are given information upfront about the level of study required and the time this is likely to take.

PORSE in-home learners are encouraged to enrol in the NCECE only after they have had the opportunity to settle into the PORSE environment as in-home educators.

The national office support team makes contact with each non-PORSE learner one month after enrolment to see how they are progressing and to ensure that they have had contact from their programme tutors and are receiving the support they need.

Learners and graduates interviewed for this evaluation said there was always somebody available to answer questions and to provide support in a timely way. Proactive follow-up is provided if learners have not submitted work for a period of time, or if there has been an absence of contact.

A key focus of the nanny internship has been a weekly Wednesday session to actively monitor progress and to focus on learners' support needs. The interns also have ongoing access to PORSE staff for help with any matters arising while in placement.

To add to the monitoring of potential support needs, the national support office has recently implemented a process of contacting learners at the mid-point of their studies to signal any concerns about their progress at an early stage and to offer support to get them back on track. This also provides tutors with a back-up to ensure they are engaging with learners in a timely way to ensure support is put in place sooner rather than later.

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

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good.**

In recent years the organisation has implemented a number of strong processes and key roles and supports to ensure consistency and strong support for educational achievement across the delivery of the NCECE across its 38 community teams.

New tutors are peer-mentored by other programme tutors and receive in-depth support to ensure they reach a certain standard of assessment quality before undertaking the assessor role. An assessor support role was established in 2012 to ensure quality and consistency of assessment, and to ensure that an appropriate level of in-depth feedback is provided to learners. As identified in section 1.4, observed improvements have been noted in the quality of assessment.

The programme tutor support role based at national office enables mutually beneficial results for tutors and learners. Review of individual learner progress from analysis of assessment data enables trends to be observed and advised to programme tutors, who are then able to tailor additional support to individual learner needs. This oversight at a national level provides added insights at the local level.

Internal and external professional development opportunities are readily provided to programme tutors. The organisation is strongly focused on supporting programme tutors in the development of their abilities as adult educators within the context of early childhood in-home education. This arises from a concern that the early childcare education qualification nationally required for tutors does not focus specifically on teaching adults to educate other adults in early childcare education.

The organisation is continuing to enhance and formalise mechanisms to support its approach to self-assessment and review, including current plans to implement an additional reporting structure between management and senior management to enhance efficiencies.

PORSE Education and Training has recently reviewed several key focus areas important to educational achievement and made several changes to enhance performance, including the increased focus on assessment quality. Other recent improvements include the requirement that some learners undertake further preenrolment assessment to ensure their ability to complete the NCECE, and the midpoint review of learner progress by national office to ensure the timely provision of learner support.

The organisation's recent and ongoing implementation of advanced web-based and information technology has already resulted in improved reporting and analysis of learner progress on a 'live' basis across the organisation. This capability is also being investigated to identify e-learning options to enhance educational delivery for both PORSE in-home and non-PORSE learners.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is Good.

2.2 Focus area: National Certificate in Early Childhood Education (Level 3)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is Good.

Recommendations

It is recommended that PORSE Education and Training:

- Continue to develop the quality, collection, and analysis of data to inform how it responds to the needs of non-PORSE learners.
- Further develop its data collection and analysis to systematically understand the value of the completion of the programme for learners, parents, and families.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of programme approval and accreditation (under sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the Criteria for Approval and Accreditation of Programmes established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act and published in the Gazette of 28 July 2011 at page 3207. These policies and criteria are deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under the new section 253.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual programmes they own or provide. These criteria and policies are also deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under section 253. Section 233B(1) of the Act requires registered PTEs to comply with these rules.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes and/or 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 EER process approved by the NZQA Board.

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). Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/

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