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Report of External Evaluation and Review

PORSE Education & Training (NZ)
Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 8 November 2016

Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	3
Introduction	3
1. TEO in context.....	3
2. Scope of external evaluation and review	4
3. Conduct of external evaluation and review.....	5
Summary of Results	6
Findings	8
Recommendations	16
Appendix	17

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Final Report

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)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	17 February 1999
Location:	31 Napier Road, Havelock North
Delivery sites:	Learning is by distance
Courses currently delivered:	National Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 3)
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 217 Pasifika: 2 per cent (6) Māori: 10 per cent (26)
Number of staff:	Three full-time equivalents; 102 part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	Sub-field, Early Childhood Education and Care (to level 5) Domains, Core Health (to level 3) and First Aid (to level 3), and the following unit standards found at : http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=822442001
Distinctive characteristics:	PORSE provides learning materials and support for people to complete distance learning towards the National Certificate in Early Childhood

Education and Care (Level 3).

There are three groups of learners, of whom over 60 per cent are PORSE Educators working as in-home educators nationally for PORSE In-Home Care, a primary stakeholder of PORSE.

The remaining learners are nanny interns who undertake a training internship with PORSE, or are independent early childhood educators who work for other early childhood education providers.

Recent significant changes: Evolve Education Group Limited purchased PORSE in December 2014. Evolve also owns a number of other early childhood services in New Zealand.

The previous founder and owner of PORSE was appointed chief executive for the transition. A replacement general manager was appointed to replace the outgoing chief executive in December 2015. The management team reports to a sub-board consisting of two directors, who are also senior team executives for Evolve.

Previous quality assurance history: NZQA was Highly Confident in the educational performance and Confident in the capability in self-assessment of PORSE at the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2013.

PORSE has met NZQA national external moderation requirements.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus of the EER included governance, management and strategy, and the sole programme offered, the National Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 3).

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.*

The EER was conducted by two evaluators and an observer from NZQA over two days at PORSE's national service office in Havelock North. The EER team held evaluative conversations with recent graduates, current students, 10 programme tutors, an internal moderator, programme coaches, two master facilitators, the director of Evolve Education Group, the general manager PORSE In-Home Care, the general manager education and training, a Careerforce representative, and the in-house evaluator.

A range of documents was reviewed as part of the EER, including an evaluation report on the value of training, self-review of non-PORSE learners, a review of top-performing educator attributes, and the organisation's self-assessment containing analysis of achievement, graduate employment outcomes and learner satisfaction. The EER team also reviewed learning guides, PORSE statement of intent, the board's annual report, management dashboard reports to the board, and information on workshops and roadshows.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

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

The PORSE self-assessment report shows that the percentage of PORSE learners that completed their course over the last three years has been higher than the average national course completion rates measured by the Tertiary Education Commission. PORSE has analysed its achievement across the different groups of learners, including PORSE in-home educators, nanny interns and non-PORSE learners working for other early childhood education centres. The results of this analysis have been used to provide relevant learning support, which has led to improvements for learners. (See Findings, 1.1 for more information on achievement for different learners.)

PORSE offers distance learning towards the qualification with a multi-layered support system that supports the success of its learners. The programme activities are aligned to the qualification requirements and reflect the practical learning environment. Learners receive weekly assistance from allocated programme tutors to complete activities and document evidence in order to demonstrate their competency.

The programme is reviewed on a regular basis and is up to date with the latest version. The organisation is well placed to transition as planned to the New Zealand qualification in 2018. Feedback from stakeholders, including the learners, the programme tutors, coaches as well as PORSE families, is used to ensure the programme remains relevant and suits the learners. All stakeholders' feedback shows they are highly satisfied with the programme and the outcomes for the learners.

Families value the in-home care and the way in which the carers bring their learning to the education of their children. Learners value the opportunity to complete a national qualification that provides career opportunities within PORSE or other early childhood services. A number of learners report that the qualification has enabled them to go on to further study to become early childhood teachers.

PORSE's core values of concern, acceptance, respect, encouragement and success are demonstrated through the provision of community workshops and programmes for parents and educators. These provide information and resources to help parents with their children and for PORSE carers to demonstrate their learning and share practice with others.

There is comprehensive teaching and learning support. Learners receive regular support from programme tutors, who in turn are supported within their community

teams. Moderation of assessment is conducted centrally to help ensure consistency nationally. Information-sharing at roadshows and community team meetings helps maintain consistency of assessment. Staff are provided with tailored professional development activities externally and internally. Road shows are used to inform tutors and share practice.

The learners' literacy and numeracy needs are assessed at the start of their programme, and learning materials use embedded literacy and numeracy activities. An evaluation undertaken in 2012 identified the need for formal analysis of whether the strategies are effective and to identify support required, but this has yet to be implemented. PORSE offers staff the opportunity to complete the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education, although few staff have completed the qualification.

PORSE has also introduced a whanaungatanga approach which is used in internal interactions with staff as well as externally with families. This is part of the newly implemented strategy to encourage more Māori into in-home care and study. PORSE has provided tikanga training to staff to raise awareness of incorporating different cultural practices into their interactions with learners and families. A similar strategy has been developed to attract Pasifika learners to PORSE by more involvement in the community.

The organisation is responsive and uses evaluations of priority areas to gather qualitative evidence to understand whether learners are satisfied and that the programme is offering value to parents and their children, as well as the learners. There is a good governance structure with the new board having education experience and capably monitoring progress towards organisational targets. The management team responsible for the operation of the in-home care and the education and training services is well resourced and demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of the learners and stakeholders.

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 **Excellent**.

Overall PORSE completion and qualification completion rates have been above the median for all PTEs in the past three years. The organisation has good systems to identify any reasons for non-completion and seeks to make improvements. For example, course completion rates fell from 90 per cent in 2012 to 85 per cent in 2013. The organisation identified that the reason for this was the transition to a new version of the qualification, which had more unit standard credits and required detailed documentation of practical evidence and more written evidence for assessments. In response, the organisation provided more access to tutor support and training roadshows, and redesigned learning guides in response to learner feedback. The results show there has been a gradual increase in course completions – 87 per cent in 2014 and 89 per cent in 2015.

The 2015 educational performance indicator data shows a decrease in qualification completions from 91 per cent in 2014 to 89 per cent in 2015. The organisation identified the cause as the impact of a cohort of learners that transitioned from an iwi-based provider that had a low completion rate. This was an anomaly as previous groups of learners from this partnership had been successful. The staff at PORSE reviewed the reasons for the non-completion and found that the selection of learners was not the best fit. PORSE has since introduced more comprehensive interview and selection processes to ensure learners have the relevant academic ability and support to achieve a level 3 qualification via distance learning.

PORSE also demonstrated that it has an excellent understanding of achievement for the different learner ethnicities, with data collated and analysed to help maintain high qualifications achievement. PORSE has a higher enrolment of European/Pakeha learners, which it notes corresponds with a higher enrolment of European/Pakeha children in its in-home early childhood education services. Table 1 shows lower course completions for Māori and Pasifika learners compared with all other learners. The qualification completion rates for Māori and Pasifika are comparable, excepting the aforementioned drop in Māori achievement in 2015.

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

Table 1. 2013-2014 course completion and qualification achievement rates EFTS* by ethnicity

Year	Total	Māori		Total	Pasifika		Total	All other	
		CC**	QC***		CC	QC		CC	QC
2013	29	81%	88%	11	71%	70%	211	86%	93%
2014	34	87%	92%	2	100%	100%	194	87%	91%
2015	26	79%	76%	6	86%	100%	185	88%	91%

*Equivalent full-time students

**Course completion

***Qualification completion

The organisation also evaluated how it could improve the completion rate for non-PORSE learners, who make up 40 per cent of the learners historically. The issue of consistently lower rates of completions for this group was raised at the previous EER. This group of learners, of whom 33 per cent work in other early childhood services, are more likely to study in isolation. As a result, PORSE created a Nanny Intern programme that helped by taking younger non-PORSE learners and placing them with families that it could support, and providing targeted training support by programme tutors. It also increased the support with weekly phone calls and monthly programme tutor contact. The results show that this programme has been successful in lifting completions for non-PORSE learners from 65-70 per cent prior to the self-review in 2012, to 78 per cent in 2013 and 79 per cent in 2014 and 2015. The nanny interns also improved, with 2012 qualification achievement increasing to 86 per cent, with similar results in following years. The organisation would like to shift more non-PORSE learners to the nanny intern programme and is developing an online learning programme to help with this.

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 **Excellent**.

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

Learners gain a national qualification recognised for work in early childhood centres throughout New Zealand or to become an in-home PORSE Professional.² The feedback gathered by PORSE confirms this, as well as the added value that the programme helps build confidence to continue with further study.

Currently, 30 per cent of PORSE in-home educators, who make up 60 per cent of the total enrolments, are enrolled in the qualification programme. PORSE educators are that not required to complete a qualification, as the organisation

² See Findings 1.4.

recognises that not everyone wants to or has the means to study. The organisation is focused more on providing quality PORSE educators. However, once certified, educators can follow the internal career pathway and go on to become a PORSE Professional.

The qualification offers secondary school leavers a career option with good employment prospects given the national unemployment rate for under-25s, which was 12 per cent as at March 2015. Of the 89 nanny interns who completed the programme in 2015, 37 (42 per cent) were in employment after they completed, with half in full-time employment and 4 per cent in further study. Fifty-three per cent of the second intake of learners were in employment, with 10 undertaking further study. The outcomes are similar for non-PORSE graduates who are not nannies and are employed in early childhood education centres or are in higher learning, with 10 of the 21 non-PORSE learners completing.

PORSE demonstrated that it understands its community needs and provides value through the playschools and community workshops that community team leaders arrange for PORSE and non-PORSE learners, as well as parents. This helps to build a community of learning where graduates mentor attendees, demonstrating their leadership for future PORSE Professional roles. PORSE encourages parents to attend, as this engagement helps them to understand what the PORSE educators are learning and applying in the education of their children. The feedback collected by PORSE shows that workshops are contributing to the skills and knowledge of the wider community and are engaging parents who would not normally engage.

PORSE conducted a review in January 2016 to identify the attributes of a good educator, such as the skills and personal qualities required for recruiting purposes. The organisation found that top educators (identified by feedback from families, number of children they had cared for) were more mature, had their own children and had been registered with PORSE for an average of 5.7 years. This has helped PORSE to identify how to retain good educators with career pathways.

Overall, the feedback reported to the EER team and from the findings in the self-review documents provided by PORSE shows that the qualification helps them to do a job they are passionate about, as they learn new strategies to work with young children as well as their own. Parents' feedback shows that the children benefit from the close relationship developed between the educator and child, supported by the 1:4 ratio and the attachment with the educator, which builds secure relationships.

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 **Excellent**.

The programme is well matched to the learners' needs and meets the qualification requirements. Each year the organisation collates feedback from learners, programme tutors and coaches to review the programme activities and ensure that the activities are appropriate and relevant. The resources use embedded literacy and numeracy strategies. Learner surveys show a high satisfaction with the programme and, importantly, in 2015 the survey showed improved satisfaction from non-PORSE learners. An overall survey of all learners had a 61 per cent response rate, with 60 per cent of respondents rating the education materials as excellent and 28 per cent as good on a 5-point scale. Over 81 per cent rated the programme tutor support as excellent and 15 per cent as good. Fifty-eight per cent rated the training programme as excellent overall, and 30 per cent as good.

The programme involves a minimum of 15 hours practical work alongside the required reading, study and assessment work each week. Learners receive support from the community teams set up in each region, consisting of programme tutors and coaches to help with the learning. Non-PORSE learners can complete their assessments using their practical experience as parents, in other early childhood learning services or in play groups run by PORSE. Nanny interns, who are school leavers, receive more targeted support, as identified from the organisation's self-review process.

PORSE believes the success of the programme is due to the learners' engagement, because it is practical, on-the-job training with relevant theory exercises based on the individual learning plan. PORSE supports its learners with resources such as online references and a newly implemented toy resource. In addition, it sees the tutor home visits as key to supporting the learners to understand assessments, and for gathering evidence of learner competency in working with children.

PORSE is active in reviewing its programme to identify any improvements and to respond to changes in the sector. The transition from the previous version of the programme to the current one in 2014 involved updating the organisation's learning guides and assessments, developed to suit distance learners. The organisation is on track to deliver the new programme in 2018 for the certificates developed as a result of the targeted review two years ago. 'Schoolology' is another development underway. This is a platform used for online delivery to learners. The organisation sees this as a way to retain learners and respond to the increasing demand for online learning.

PORSE is providing fit-for-purpose training based on the knowledge it gathers from a range of sources to ensure that the learners are learning the skills and attributes required and that the programme meets the qualification's requirements.

Final Report

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**.

The support provided by the tutors is central to the success of learners studying by distance learning. PORSE provides a multi-layered support system for its learners. Feedback from learners shows that this support is working well and meeting their needs. The programme tutors develop a learning plan for each learner at the beginning to suit the context and the children they are working with. The tutors then meet at least monthly with learners to clarify questions and help ensure the learners can complete practical activities to demonstrate competency. The nanny interns receive more frequent visits as these learners are mostly recent school leavers who require more structured support to manage the distance learning in their working environment. The tutors also liaise with the secondary school Gateway coordinators to support Gateway students in the programme.

The programme tutors have practical experience and a relevant qualification to undertake their role. The regional community teams support tutors with mentoring and workshops to develop tutors' facilitation skills. They receive upskilling at internal staff meetings and tailored training to support their career goals, such as adult teaching certificates. PORSE has also developed a training programme in adult education as a training pathway for programme tutors to grow their knowledge and skill in coaching adult learners, assessing unit standard materials, undertaking moderation and supporting the delivery of embedded language, literacy and numeracy programmes. These initiatives aim to retain and extend staff.

PORSE provides learning guides that PORSE educators and nanny interns complete in their or their families' homes, or within other early childhood services for non-PORSE learners. The completed assessments are allocated to other tutors for marking for impartiality, and results are recorded at the national support office based in Havelock North. A sample of assessments is moderated by the centralised moderation team three times annually for consistency and to ensure they meet the national standard. PORSE has met all NZQA external moderation requirements.

The learners' literacy and numeracy is assessed at the start of their programme, but there is little information on the progressions made by the few learners who may need support, to understand whether the support is effective. An evaluation of literacy and numeracy needs in 2014 surveyed 27 learners, showing that many were unaware of the support available to them. The tutors have improved their understanding of literacy reports because of in-house training, and some have taken up the opportunity to study towards the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education or attended literacy and numeracy workshops.

Final Report

Overall, the tutors are well-resourced and have the appropriate training needed to provide effective teaching support. The organisation uses its analysis of learner progress to ensure learners can complete. The low number of withdrawals and non-completions is an indicator that the system is contributing to learners' achievements.

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 **Good**.

There are multiple sources of evidence that the organisation values its learners and provides suitable support to enable them to achieve. The enrolment practices are contributing to this including police checks up front so that learners are vetted early on to work in the sector. Once enrolled, learners receive a handbook that comprehensively covers information about studying with PORSE and the support available. Learners are allocated a programme tutor who conducts a learning needs assessment and develops a learning plan to suit. The ability to have one to one learning with their tutor is a key factor contributing to the learners' success. In addition, learners receive support throughout their study from the PORSE community with workshops, play schools and community events organised by PORSE community team leaders. A Facebook page for PORSE Educators was trialled using the nanny-interns and this was a successful way to help learners communicate with programme tutors and other educators for support.

Programme tutors' reports are reviewed by the staff at the national office to identify trends and where further support could be provided or strengthened. Learner feedback from surveys shows that they are highly satisfied with the information and support they receive.

PORSE has used its analysis of learner progress and success to improve its learner support and guidance. An example is the introduction of a pre-entry assessment for non-PORSE learners to identify additional support required to complete assessments in non-PORSE learning environments. The organisation also provided clearer study expectations in the learning guide to help learners plan their study. However, the organisation needs to strengthen its approach to increasing literacy skills using the data available to them.

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 **Excellent**.

PORSE was bought by Evolve Education Group in December 2014. The change of ownership has not brought about any visible changes in the organisations delivery of the programme. The new director has stated that the new board is interested in maintaining the core focus of the business on providing early childhood education in the home. The parent body has interests in other early childhood education services within New Zealand and aims to apply the practices PORSE uses to deliver training at its other services to upskill the educators and staff.

The management team report monthly to the board on learner achievements and enrolments in both in-home services and training. The directors' review results against performance measures and analyse the ratio of in-home children to educators with a focus on satisfaction of PORSE educators, tutors, and the families. Formal reporting is enhanced by the informal relationship the directors have with the general managers on an ongoing basis in order to be responsive and flexible to the needs of stakeholders.

PORSE communicates any changes and relevant information using the online newsletter, roadshows, and fortnightly community team meetings. PORSE supports the programme tutors with relevant, up-to-date resources and training. There was an unrelated decrease in children in home care coinciding with change in ownership, leading to a fall in the number of programme tutors in 2014. The decrease was attributed to increased competition in the in-home care sector. In response, the organisation has developed strategies for retaining staff, such as clearer career pathways and the provision of toy resources for in-home carers to use. In addition, the in-home care service arm of PORSE gained funding from the Ministry of Education through the Targeted Assistance for Participation initiative, which led to the recruitment of 80 new educators. Total learner numbers for 2016 are not yet confirmed, but there is a slight improvement in the number of educators.

PORSE has also developed a strategy along with the Māori and Pasifika policy that separately identifies the different supports needs and is offering teaching staff online learning module for tikanga. It is too early to determine whether the strategies are working to attract more Māori and Pasifika learners into training.

Overall, the organisation has good systems and processes in place to support staff in delivering a quality programme for early-childhood educators in the home or in early childhood centres. The organisation has clear responsibilities and lines of reporting to ensure that information about learner progress is timely and can be used to identify improvements to its education and in-home services.

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 **Excellent**.

2.2 Focus area: National Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (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 **Excellent**.

Recommendations

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

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are 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.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which 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.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 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 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 External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

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).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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