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External Evaluation and Review Report



Bay of Plenty School of Welding
trading as NZ Welding School Limited

Date of report: 16 July 2019

About NZ Welding School Limited

NZ Welding School offers a range of entry-level training options in the welding, engineering, warehousing and allied trades as preparation for employment.

Type of organisation	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	30B Ash Road, Wiri, Auckland, and Scion Campus 49 Sala Street, Rotorua. 5 Owens Place, Mt Maunganui, Tauranga, and Swanson Towers, 20 Hobson Street, Auckland CBD
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 642 students – 249.41 equivalent full-time students International students: one at the Rotorua site
Number of staff:	17 full-time, 11 part-time
TEO profile:	See: NZQA - NZ Welding School
Last EER outcome:	In 2015, NZQA was Confident in NZ Welding School's educational performance, and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International students (included in governance and management discussions due to no or few short course students)• Career Preparation for Specialised Welding (Level 4)• Certificate in Warehouse and Yard Operations (Level 3) (Training Scheme)
MoE number:	8270
NZQA reference:	C34187
Dates of EER visit:	7 and 8 May 2019

Summary of Results

Students are well supported, and programmes are planned and reviewed. The majority of students complete their studies and gain employment. Management provides strong oversight and appropriate resources for the programmes offered.

Confident in educational performance

- Students achieve well. Course and qualification achievement rates are close to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) commitment of 76 per cent and the organisation's internal target of 80 per cent. It was less clear how well achievement is tracked over time (see Appendix 1, Table 2).
- Approximately one-third of all graduates gain employment. In the focus areas in 2018, 59 per cent of the welding and 42 per cent of warehousing graduates gained employment, somewhat below the aspirational target of 80 per cent.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Programmes are adapted in response to student and industry needs, and resources are updated and renewed as required.
- Students are well engaged in their programmes, with an appropriate mix of theory and practice and self-directed learning, closely monitored through logbooks and interviews.
- Student support includes pick-up vans and home visits when needed to support students getting to training and succeeding. Targeted personal support is provided.
- A wide range of processes are used to track student progress towards completion in the expected timeframe. There is a stronger focus on processes than on monitoring the effectiveness of the processes, but outcomes are the main indicator of effectiveness.
- Student surveys are used effectively to identify satisfaction rates, and any emerging issues are addressed. Staff engagement survey results are used to implement improvements.
- Meetings and communication across sites with staff are

purposeful and communications are clear and open, with a strongly reflective culture supported from the top.

- The organisation has clear and appropriate educational purpose and direction and has recently strengthened its academic leadership with new staff appointments.
- Ongoing improvements to the moderation of assessment practices and strengthening of self-assessment processes is evident.
- NZ Welding School has effective processes for managing its compliance responsibilities, including the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice, delivering its training schemes as approved and operating within NZQA Rules. No compliance concerns were identified.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Table 1 (Appendix 1) shows that qualification achievement rates are slightly below TEC commitments for 2015-2017. However, course completion rates have been above TEC commitments, although dropping slightly in 2017. Arguably, course completions are a better indicator of success because qualification completion is affected by a range of factors (for example, students gaining employment or otherwise leaving a programme early).</p> <p>The 2018 course completion rates for Māori (74 per cent) and Pasifika (91 per cent) are above the rate for all students (72 per cent). Course completion rates for Māori and Pasifika students were not available for the previous years. While tracking Māori and Pasifika students' needs closer attention, their achievement rates are good for 2018.</p> <p>Students are gaining a wide range of soft skills² which are supporting their transition to employment. NZ Welding School closely monitors the students' acquisition of soft skills, as well as their technical skills, along with attendance to ensure students are on-track to complete their programme within the expected timeframe. Students' improvement in literacy and numeracy are tracked but gains overall are not significant, prompting internal reviews of literacy and numeracy activities and closer data monitoring.</p> <p>NZ Welding School regularly reviews why students leave without completing their course or qualification and supports the students to achieve.</p> <p>Assessments are moderated internally to ensure achievements</p>

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

² Common skills employers are looking for, e.g. teamwork, a work ethic and problem-solving.

	are valid and external moderation plans are in place; the PTE is currently strengthening this external scrutiny. Memorandums of understanding with contractors and providers are in place.
Conclusion:	Overall, students achieve well, and the school understands student needs. A few of students do not complete for personal reasons or gain employment early.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>In 2018, 59 per cent of welding and 42 per cent of warehousing graduates gained employment. This indicates that graduates gain the skills and capabilities that employers require. Employment rates for Māori and Pasifika graduates were 49 per cent and 26 per cent respectively, but with small numbers of graduates, any changes have a disproportionate impact on these percentages, so they are indicators of success only.</p> <p>While employment success stories are written up and celebrated, there is no overall data analysis for employment rates for the previous years, indicating some weakness in self-assessment practice.</p> <p>Concerns raised by an employer since the previous evaluation – about graduates not having sufficient ‘mastery’ of some practical skills – have been addressed with the involvement of the employer. Employer feedback shows that they see the programmes as providing value. Graduates have a good grasp of the basic skills appropriate to the programme level, preparing them for entry-level roles.</p> <p>Students gain added value from the welding programme by completing welding tickets; and in the warehousing programme by gaining OSH certificates and in some cases an F endorsement on their Class 1 licence, allowing them to operate a forklift on a public roadway. These outcomes are well tracked along with employment.</p> <p>Student surveys are reviewed effectively, and the majority of students score 4-5 on a 1-5 scale, showing a high level of satisfaction.</p>

Conclusion:	Students are gaining value from programmes, contributing to gaining employment. While this is monitored, the lack of data for previous years is a weakness in self-assessment.
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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>Programmes are well planned, delivered at the appropriate levels, and developed to suit learner needs and employer expectations.</p> <p>A wide range of teaching and learning strategies are used with the appropriate mix of theory and practice, to embed skills. Students receive regular and timely feedback on their progress, and support staff are available on site. Drug testing is carried out to mirror industry practice, preparing students for work realities.</p> <p>External moderation of assessments is well documented and implemented. A few areas are being redeveloped and memorandums of understanding are being set up with suitable contractors and other tertiary education organisations with the technical capability. No industry training organisations are involved as the programmes are not based on unit standards. There is room for improvement in external moderation, but the impact on the validity of student assessments is low.</p> <p>Some aspects of the welding and warehouse programmes are subject to external scrutiny, for example students' work being tested for welding tickets, OSH certificates and 'F' licence endorsements. This provides extra checks which validate the training, at least to some extent.</p> <p>NZ Welding School has several industry advisory groups. However, the tutors' close contact with industry is arguably more effective due to the difficulty of industry personnel finding time to attend meetings. Industry feedback contributes to programme development, for example forklift training with large pallets and for wide loads as required in some warehouses.</p> <p>Appropriate programme planning and annual reviews and employer feedback processes are in place, maintaining the</p>

	<p>currency of programmes and their relevance to local employers' needs.</p> <p>Regular meetings are held to discuss students' progress and review any changes needed, and decisions are shared with relevant staff.</p>
Conclusion:	Programmes are well planned and reviewed, and meet students' and other stakeholders' needs well. Where concerns have been raised by employers, the issues have been appropriately addressed.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students are well supported and engaged in their learning. As noted, vans pick up students where needed and petrol vouchers are available to support students to get to training. Food is available on site as there is a need across the student group.</p> <p>Students' learning needs and goals are well understood, and help is provided to develop CVs and interview skills towards gaining employment, and to provide employer contacts for students seeking work.</p> <p>NZ Welding School strives to make the learning sites inclusive, with kaupapa Māori aspects used to provide a safe and familiar place for Māori to learn, including karakia and pōwhiri to begin and end programmes.</p> <p>Students said they are supported by tutors and other staff. Being co-located with sister organisation the Solomon Group provides opportunities for sharing on-site student support.</p> <p>There is room for closer attention to tracking the effectiveness of some aspects of student support. The school is yet to define how to determine the success or effectiveness of its new Pasifika and Māori strategies.</p>
Conclusion:	Students receive a high level of support and there is strong evidence that they appreciate this support and feel engaged in the learning. There is room for clearer processes to monitor the success of the Māori and Pasifika strategies.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>NZ Welding School has a clear purpose and underpinning principles focused on education and business with quarterly reviews of progress in each area. Processes for monitoring and supporting educational progress are well resourced and implemented. Governance and management are provided through the associated Solomon Group and Aspire2 Group, with regular meetings and communication of decisions and actions to all relevant personnel. There is evidence of open communication and a reflective culture across the organisation, supported from the top.</p> <p>Academic leadership has been recently strengthened with new staff appointments. Staff performance reviews and professional development are effectively implemented and focused on students gaining the skills and knowledge to gain employment.</p> <p>Staff engagement survey results show some variation across sites; management is using the results to inform future planning.</p> <p>Programme resources are included in financial planning and are renewed and updated as required. Appropriate staff are hired and supported to undertake professional development related to their roles towards improving educational outcomes.</p> <p>While educational performance data is tracked and collated, there is room for more complete analysis and use of this data to inform ongoing improvements. This was a finding at the previous evaluation. A change of ownership was approved at the end of 2016 and some repositioning occurred in 2018 to align the school with the Solomon Group (both Aspire2 PTEs). The intent, as noted in NZ Welding School's self-assessment, is to improve outcomes for Māori and Pasifika. Further strengthening of self-assessment still needs to be a priority, to more closely track success in some areas.</p>
Conclusion:	Organisational oversight and operational management are focused on educational achievement, but more work is required to further strengthen organisational self-assessment.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Processes and practices for monitoring and managing compliance are robust. NZ Welding School uses a range of methods to alert management to regular checks: a compliance calendar, checklists and plans. These are proactively and effectively implemented. All required attestations are received by NZQA in a timely manner. Programmes and training schemes are delivered as approved.</p> <p>Only one international student is currently enrolled, and all processes and checks are in place and well documented, including an annual review of compliance with the Code of Practice.</p> <p>Staff are appropriately experienced for the areas they are teaching, and most are in the process of undertaking training in assessment and moderation. There is a moderation plan for internal and external moderation of assessments.</p> <p>No major gaps in compliance management were noted, but the implementation of moderation in previous years showed some variability.</p>
Conclusion:	The management of compliance accountabilities is robust, but there is room for tighter oversight and review of moderation.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Career Preparation for Specialised Welding (Level 4)

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: Certificate in Warehouse and Yard Operations (Level 3) (Training Scheme)

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 NZ Welding School:

- Strengthen the review and analysis of programme results and trends and how they link to decision-making about changes being made.
- Strengthen the tracking and analysis of Māori and Pasifika student achievement data year on year.
- Strengthen the tracking and analysis of employment data year on year.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

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

Appendix 1

Table 1. TEC published educational performance indicator data (for all students)

	2015	2016	2017	2018*	Interim 2019 rates
Qualification completion	65%	74%	66%	-	-
All PTEs	65%	66%	63%		-
Course completion	78%	78%	71%	72%	76%
All PTEs	83%	82%	81%	-	-
Student numbers	441	419	399	-	-

This table shows qualification achievement rates are slightly below TEC commitments (76% for qualification and course completion), and at or above the rate for All PTEs. Course completion rates – arguably a better indicator of success due to some students gaining employment or leaving the programmes early – have been above the TEC commitments but dropped slightly in 2017.

*Provided by NZ Welding School. The TEC has not yet released 2018 educational performance data.

Table 2. Programme/training scheme course completion rates 2018

Programme/training scheme	Course completion rate
Career Preparation for Specialised Welding (Level 4)	82%
Certificate in Warehousing and Yard Operations (Level 3) (Training Scheme)	91%
Career Preparation for Engineering Trades (Level 3)	80%
Certificate in Foundation Trades Training (Level 3)	61%
New Zealand Certificate in Mechanical Engineering (Level 3)	87%

Table 2 data supplied by NZ Welding School

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud³*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

³ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, training schemes and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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