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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Step By Step Computer Services Limited trading as Step by Step Training

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 12 May 2016

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MoE Number: 8367
NZQA Reference: C22033
Dates of EER visit: 3 and 4 February 2016

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, learners, prospective learners, 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:	Step By Step Computer Services Limited trading as Step by Step Training (SBS)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1996
Location:	Suite 2, level 1, 399 New North Road, Kingsland, Auckland
Delivery sites:	Training is delivered across Aotearoa New Zealand, mostly from SBS trainers' approved home-based training facilities.
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computing Essentials• Computer Training• Personal Growth (Literacy and Numeracy Skills)• Employment Skills
Number of learners:	Domestic: 205 students enrolled (as at 18 January 2016); total number of students in 2015, 825 (13 per cent Māori and 3 per cent Pasifika). Learners attend short courses of one or more, two to three-hour sessions per week for a number of weeks which vary according to learners' needs.
Number of staff:	Four full-time staff, two part-time, 56 contracted trainers
Scope of active	Computing Essentials Training Scheme (Level 2)

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Accreditation:	<p>was approved September 2012.</p> <p>Consents to assess several domains to level 4, including computing and digital technologies, oral and written communication skills, business administration and management, retail and sales. Consents to assess unit standards levels 1-4 in business, finance, marketing, communications, and work and study skills.</p> <p>For further details, refer to: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=836731001</p>
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>SBS delivers mainly computer training at foundation level. It also provides training in retail, sales and office administration. Computing, retail and sales often require complementary knowledge and skills. Most of SBS's training is purchased by the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) or ACC-funded vocational providers. These clients are seeking new vocational skills for people who have been injured and cannot return to their previous work.</p> <p>Learners can achieve unit standards subject to ACC approval. This practice is increasing but is not a main focus for all of these learners. SBS also delivers computer training to private business clients who more commonly want their learners to complete unit standards.</p>
Recent significant changes:	<p>The current owners took over ownership of SBS in March 2011. NZQA approved the ownership change in May 2012.</p> <p>SBS's core programme is the Computer Essentials Training Scheme approved by NZQA in 2012.</p> <p>SBS has had significant growth in student numbers (2013 – 401 learners, 2014 – 599 learners, 2015 – 810 learners), mainly as a direct consequence of growth from its two main referral sources.</p> <p>The owner-directors are members of Career Development Association of New Zealand (CDANZ).</p>
Previous quality assurance	At the previous external evaluation and review

history:	<p>(EER) in 2012, NZQA was Confident in SBS's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.</p> <p>SBS met NZQA national external moderation requirements in business and management and core skills in 2015. It has met NZQA national external moderation requirements in computing levels 1-4 since 2013. Previously, SBS also met one out of four national external moderation requirements in core skills in 2013, and one out of two in 2014.</p>
Other:	<p>SBS is 50 per cent owned by Two Tales Limited, a social enterprise management company with a portfolio of endeavours to improve the lives of New Zealanders. It has connections with Human Capital Development, which has expertise in occupational assessment and a 20-year history delivering vocational rehabilitation under various ACC contracts and WINZ job placement schemes.</p>

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The following focus area was selected:

- Computing Training (which includes the Computing Essentials Training Scheme)

This comprises most of SBS's training and is a core requirement of vocational rehabilitation funded by the two main funders (ACC and vocational providers as fees for service).

In the accordance with NZQA policy, the scope also included the mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management, and strategy.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in the 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-the-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 EER over two days at the Auckland head office. They interviewed the two owner-directors (one of whom is also the general manager), the lead coordinator and two training coordinators, internal education consultant, trainers, trainees, graduates, ACC managers, vocational provider representatives, and employers.

The evaluators considered a wide range of documents including self-evaluations, training resources, assessments, internal and external assessment moderation, training needs assessments, appraisals, key learning steps, learner progress monitoring, trainer performance management guidelines, trainer performance data, business plans, education consultant work summary, learner evaluations, stakeholder feedback, trainer turnover data, governance and management meeting minutes, and an overview of SBS's structure and its affiliated companies.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Step By Step Computer Services Limited trading as Step by Step Training**.

SBS gives learners who are no longer able to participate in their previous employment, due to suffering an injury, the opportunity to enter different employment.¹ This employment is usually in sedentary work which requires competence and confidence in working with computers.

Learner referrals have increased 50 per cent year on year since 2013. ACC and vocational providers have no obligation to refer clients to SBS. They do so based on the quality of SBS's training needs assessment, the training itself, reporting and subsequent employment success.

The knowledge and hard skills that SBS learners gain lead to the main funder and learner goal of new employment. New knowledge and skills also increase learners' confidence and sense of well-being.

A high proportion of learners (over 80 per cent) progress and complete their individual learning plans. In doing so, learners and SBS meet the funded expectations and requirements of their referrers. Completion of learning plans is significant because many of the learners referred to SBS have not previously succeeded in education or training or gained qualifications, or they are acquiring new qualifications for new careers.

An increasing number of learners achieve unit standard credits which provide additional formal acknowledgement of the computing knowledge and skills gained. Feedback confirms that the completion of unit standards also enhances learners' new employment prospects. The pass rates of those who achieve unit standard assessments based on SBS's assessment of their likely success, ranged from 92 to 100 per cent between 2013 and 2015. At least one ACC region is funding unit standards as increasingly standard practice.

Learners and trainers are well supported and resourced by SBS. Trainers and SBS track, monitor and report individual learner progress very closely and thoroughly in a timely manner. This enables learners to successfully achieve the outcomes which learners, the ACC or vocational providers seek. The reporting, and robust assessment and moderation, support the validity and reliability of SBS's achievement data and confirm that most learners achieve very well.

¹ And/or in some cases the related opportunity to go on to further study.

Governance and management have a clear understanding of how well the PTE is doing in the context in which it operates. They take an aspirational approach to education and training, using technology and computing literacy as a tool for social cohesion.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Step By Step Computer Services Limited trading as Step by Step Training**.

SBS conducts initial and thorough training needs analysis for each prospective learner. This has been enhanced since the previous EER, and occurs prior to gaining funding approval from ACC or the vocational provider. SBS trains each learner based on their individual training plans to achieve their goals, the main one being to achieve work-readiness for specific types of employment.

SBS benchmarks its unit standards assessment pass rates, including reassessments, year-on-year for comparison with previous years. Where there is any variation, SBS explains why. Pre- and post-assessment internal and external moderation are being used to ensure assessment is fair and consistent, supports the validity and reliability of achievement results, and informs continuous updating of resources and assessment materials.

SBS tracks, reports and monitors attendance closely and thoroughly which strongly supports achievement. It compares attendance year-on-year for comparison with previous years. Attendance rates consistently exceeded 80 per cent in 2013, 2014 and 2015. SBS uses attendance as one indicator of learner satisfaction, engagement and commitment, which directly relate to successful achievement.

End-of-training learner evaluation feedback provides SBS with data relating to overall satisfaction with the training and the trainer, the quality of resources, and whether they believe their training will be useful to prepare them for employment. SBS learner satisfaction rates² are consistently very high and the learners and stakeholders the evaluators interviewed confirmed this.

SBS collates the data, analyses and interprets it, and implements improvements as a consequence.

SBS tracks the longer-term outcomes of graduate learners to inform it further about the quality of the training and to make improvements. This information is not readily or formally known or provided by ACC or vocational providers because of privacy restrictions. Accordingly, much of SBS's evidence is anecdotal, although valid and useful. SBS collects feedback from its trainer network when an SBS graduate contacts it or a trainer personally to advise that, as a consequence of their

² Based on online as well as hard copy which has increased response rates from 20 to 35 per cent

training they have maintained or secured a job and are applying their skills in their employment. SBS has also created a database of SBS graduates and communicates with the learners via newsletters to collect information on use of their computing skills in their current employment. The PTE also collects information on whether their training and unit standards gained helped the learners gain employment, how well their training transferred into the workplace, and whether they have gone on to further study. While the response rates to these surveys are increasing, they are still limited. Collecting quantitative and qualitative data about outcomes and drawing conclusions remains a challenge.

In summary, SBS has a wide range of self-assessment information which is comprehensive, ongoing and continuous and covers all areas that matter including its key performance indicators for 2013-2015. SBS gathers formal and informal and anecdotal information from learners, trainers, ACC, vocational providers, and employers (where appropriate and possible). It processes and analyses the information, identifies trends and areas for improvement, makes changes, and determines whether the changes result in improvements.

Recent initiatives already supporting and further developing the high effectiveness of SBS's self-assessment are: the implementation of real-time workflow information; the appointment of a person to collect and analyse the information; and the related development and use of tools. These tools include individual training needs analysis, progress and final reporting, data-sets of achievement by age/gender/ethnicity, and the provision of lower-level foundation skills though to higher-level qualifications.

Since the new owners took over in 2012, their business acumen and expertise in understanding success factors to achieve work-readiness through computer training via their longstanding experience in vocational rehabilitation as directors of Human Capital Development, and their robust self-assessment, have helped develop SBS into a highly functional training organisation. They have plans for further expansion into the area of helping people find future employment and self-employment in digital technology.

Findings³

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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**.

A high proportion of learners referred by ACC or vocational providers (at least 80 per cent despite the significant increase in referrals from ACC) progress and complete their individual learning plans outlined in their individual needs assessments, with some completing unit standards if required as part of their plan. This training is mainly computer-related including, for a few, retail, sales and office administration content. Learners and SBS meet the funded expectations and requirements of ACC client referrals.

Since the previous EER, an increasing number of learners are attempting and successfully completing unit standards. Pass rates for those who undertake unit standards assessments ranged between 92 and 100 per cent for 2013-2015.

SBS benchmarks its unit standards assessment pass rates year-on-year for comparison with previous years. It attributes a fall in the total number of assessments in 2013 and 2014 to SBS's service contract with the Department of Corrections ceasing in June 2013. These contracts ceased in June 2013 as a result of Corrections policy shifts and were not related to SBS's training performance.

SBS tracks, reports and monitors attendance closely and thoroughly which strongly supports achievement. It compares attendance year-on-year for comparison with previous years. Attendance rates have consistently ranged between 81 and 84 per cent as measured six-monthly in 2013, 2014 and 2015. SBS uses attendance as one indicator of learner satisfaction, engagement and commitment which directly relate to successful achievement.

Achievement data and trends are supported by learner, ACC, vocational provider, and trainer reporting. These factors, and robust internal and external moderation feedback, support the conclusion that SBS achievement data is valid and reliable and that most learners achieve very well. This conclusion is significant based on the fact that many of the learners referred to SBS have not previously succeeded in education or gained qualifications, although they may have had a successful career prior to having to retrain.

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

A recent SBS initiative analysing achievement and outcomes according to age, gender and ethnicity has the potential to enhance the identification of achievement trends. These factors are also used to select the most appropriate trainer for each learner wherever possible. Capacity and proximity to the training for the learner are important and sometimes do not make such practice viable. SBS has not yet had the opportunity to fully use recent data to identify trainer success patterns or to make specific changes to training materials or assessments based on such information.

SBS has been collecting data since 2014 on the participation and success of learners based on ethnicity and education levels. Its student population compared with the New Zealand 2013 census comprises 74 per cent Pakeha (compared with 70 per cent for the general population), 13 per cent Māori (15 per cent), 3 per cent Pasifika (7 per cent), and 1 per cent Asian (12 per cent). So far, SBS has not identified any significant variations in success based on ethnicity.

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 **Good**.

The evaluation found that SBS training enables learners to achieve work-readiness through gaining new or different vocational skills and competencies for a career change or new employment. Learners and ACC case managers confirmed that the most successful outcome is when learners progress into employment following SBS training on completion of their physical and vocational rehabilitation. Such employment is typically light or sedentary work which requires competence and confidence in working with computers or, in fewer cases, retail and sales.

In addition, learners confirmed the value of their initial training needs assessment identifying specific needs and barriers to learning, their individual training plan, and meeting the service purchaser's expectations and requirements. As a result, learners gained or developed attributes such as increased confidence, the ability to learn and adapt, and improved literacy and/or numeracy skills which benefited their general well-being.

At the conclusion of training SBS provides a learner completion report to ACC which summarises the learner's learning outcomes (and as appropriate their achievement of unit standards). These outcomes are demonstrated by the learner completing specific tasks unassisted in the presence of the trainer.

Previously, most learners did not sit assessment of NZQA unit standards at the completion of their training, unless requested by the purchaser of the training programme. However, SBS may recommend that a learner undertake assessment based on the learner's progress and their potential to gain unit standards. SBS and *Final report*.

some ACC case managers and vocational provider representatives confirmed that an increasing number of learners gain unit standards. This provides additional evidence of the learners' knowledge and skills which further helps them to either gain different work with the same employer or new employment.

The number of assessments of NZQA unit standards has increased significantly in the past 12 months. SBS attributes the increase in unit standard assessments during 2015 to a change in ACC policy that it needs to provide more comprehensive vocational rehabilitation (including computer training). Many ACC case managers in at least one region are now requesting learners undergo unit standard assessments (including SBS's Computing Essentials Training Scheme) to provide confirmation of a national standard of achievement. SBS foresees that this growth will continue in the coming 12-24 months.

SBS also identifies employers as key stakeholders. This has extended to SBS delivering both ACC and vocational provider-funded as well as employer-funded computer training to employees in the workplace.

SBS receives strong evidence of the value of its outcomes from clients/referrers, via regular trainer progress reports, regular attendance updates, resolution of identified barriers affecting learning, and liaison on student progress with stakeholders. Detailed evidence of learning progress is reported to SBS and funders via student appraisal forms signed off by the learner and trainer and later summarised in student completion reports (and unit standard completions where they apply).

SBS receives positive, albeit mainly informal and anecdotal feedback on outcomes from trainers, learners and graduates. Formal evidence of SBS's success is not routinely possible to gather, for reasons mainly related to privacy. However, by speaking to learners, graduates, ACC managers and vocational providers, the evaluators heard some very positive examples of success. The evaluators were readily able to confirm SBS's ability to transition learners even from a position of fear, resistance, non-attendance and negativity to engagement, confidence, interest in their training, and independence resulting in work-readiness, employment and/or further study. SBS itself is developing its ability to access such information from a wider base without compromising the privacy of clients/learners/graduates.

SBS has created a database of SBS graduates and communicates with them via newsletters. It also collects information around their continued use of their computing skills in employment, whether their training assisted them to gain employment, and whether they have progressed to further study. The response rate to these surveys to date is limited, and drawing quantitative outcomes from the findings remains a challenge.

SBS has also extended the success of its training to workplace and community initiatives such as Kitchen Table⁴ which use technology and computing to develop social cohesion.

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**.

Learners enter training with an in-depth and wide-ranging SBS training needs assessment. This provides a comprehensive view of many aspects of trainees' prior experience, goals, training needs, special requirements as well as demographic data. Learner needs assessment is thorough, documented and used in programme development and teaching. It is also respectful of privacy and the dignity of learners.

In late 2015 SBS made improvements to its training needs assessment by:

- implementing a standardised practical (instead of a mix of practical demonstration and verbal questioning) needs assessment, with every trainer in the network applying the same approach, i.e. analysis of each learner's learning style to guide trainers as to the most appropriate teaching style to use with each learner
- capturing training needs assessment information online so SBS can more easily capture and analyse student data with respect to, for example, pre-training ability of the learner for each training module, training hours recommended, training barriers, and access to technology.

With the extra information collected, SBS says it can better meet the needs of learners by individually tailoring training packages. Every three months the PTE also reviews student data to inform macro decisions with respect to SBS training courses and levels, recommended training hours, and student resources/equipment purchased, such as laptops. These claims were verified by stakeholders and SBS's own self-assessment.

SBS training programmes are typically at the foundation level (New Zealand Qualifications Framework levels 1 and 2), and many referrals are 'second-chance' learners with fewer academic qualifications than the general New Zealand population. For example, 34 per cent of SBS learners have no formal qualification

⁴ Kitchen Table Tech: Building a Digitally Confident Aotearoa, One Kitchen at a Time. This programme is on hold pending securing funding from another source other than Adult Community Funding.

compared with 21 per cent of the New Zealand population at the 2013 census. Only nine per cent of SBS learners hold a level 4 trade certificate as their highest qualification, compared with 31 per cent for the New Zealand population. SBS training resource materials are typically at the foundation skill level and have embedded literacy and numeracy.

SBS computing training is based on the NZQA-approved Computing Essentials Training Scheme. The training scheme provides flexibility of content and assessment which enables SBS to match the needs of its learners and other stakeholders very well. The evaluators confirmed that SBS was delivering the Computing Essentials Training Scheme as required based on sampling at the EER visit and consultation with the NZQA approvals and accreditation team.

An SBS learner is often at the beginning of a new academic journey in a new subject area. For example, an injured 'blue collar' worker or tradesman may not be able to return to their pre-injury job and needs to transition into sedentary/clerical work by gaining computing and office administration skills. SBS provides a crucial step for such learners by helping them achieve relevant foundation-level skills and qualifications. SBS's one-to-one training delivery is at the heart of its success as learners develop new knowledge and skills in a 'safe' and trainer-intensive environment (with the opportunity to add additional training hours if needed in order to gain competence).

SBS predominately provides one-to-one training. This intensive approach ensures that learners can progress at their own pace and ask specific questions as their training progresses, therefore helping minimise barriers to learning and addressing challenges such as limited literacy and numeracy. Training sessions can be as few as one session per week (providing ample practice time in between training sessions to maximise learning outcomes). The training sessions allow first-time computer users and learners, who may lack confidence, the opportunity to improve their skills and achieve unit standard credits.

Once approved, SBS monitors each learner's progress closely after each training session. If training is not on track to meet programme goals, or there are challenges/issues, this is handled immediately through SBS head office. Throughout the training programme, SBS updates (each fortnight) the client/referrer/purchaser on the learner's progress. The trainer submits an online report immediately after training to SBS head office, which uses it to report to the client learner's service purchaser.

SBS regularly reviews and updates its training materials, and at the time of the EER visit was creating training materials for Microsoft Office 2016. SBS regularly asks its stakeholders (clients, learners, trainers and employers) for feedback on the development of new training programmes to ensure they meet the needs of all stakeholders.

According to a recent SBS survey, 47 per cent of SBS learners do not own or have access to a personal computer with an internet connection. In late 2011, SBS

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introduced rented laptops for learners, and has since grown the pool of laptops to 45. This addresses a significant barrier to learning and skills development.

Despite some of the privacy restrictions around SBS's learners, SBS has clear evidence of graduates successfully following pathways to a different employment role with their original employer or completely new employment as a consequence of their physical rehabilitation and SBS training. Graduates of SBS courses regularly contact SBS head office or their SBS trainer to advise whether their training helped them keep their employment albeit in a different role, or gain new employment, and to advise whether they are applying their new skills in employment. Evidence of this was clear to the evaluators, based on the graduates they interviewed and also confirmed by SBS's own graduate feedback.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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**.

SBS has 56 contracted trainers throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. This provides ready access to what is very effective one-to-one training for clients and learners across the country. The trainers, including those the evaluators interviewed, are committed to what they do and are suitably qualified and experienced, with considerable expertise and increasing professional oversight. The trainers are outcomes focused rather than process focused – they are very aware of the purpose of the training and how much it means to each learner. They regularly overcome barriers and challenges to learning, which for many of SBS's learners are complex in terms of their level of engagement, motivation and pre-training skills and abilities.⁵ Approximately 12 trainers are literacy and numeracy trained and qualified through gaining key literacy and numeracy unit standards or whole literacy and numeracy qualifications. Others have attended local or internal professional development courses or Ako Aotearoa workshops. This is important because literacy and numeracy are barriers to learning for some learners, and the more trainers who have expertise in these areas the more effective they can be in supporting the learners.

SBS is committed to maintaining and improving the quality of teaching staff, flexible pedagogy and teaching effectiveness through appropriate recruitment.⁶ Strategies for improvement include:

⁵ As previously mentioned, SBS also measures the attendance rates of learners as an indirect measure of student satisfaction, engagement and commitment to their training programmes.

⁶ SBS is aware that trainer turnover at 20-25 per cent is relatively high. SBS knows that the main reason for this is personal. But it also sees as important the development of a stronger community of practice so trainers do not feel isolated.

- Development of interpersonal relationship skills
- Development of contracted trainers within the SBS trainer network
- Trainer feedback from a range of stakeholders including learners, clients/referrers, and employers
- Regular site visits to each trainer's training facility to ensure each site is maintained to the required standard to optimise learning outcomes
- Regular Skype, phone or face-to-face conversations with trainers.

Trainers interviewed by the evaluators confirmed that SBS training coordinators are increasingly helping them overcome any sense of isolation and developing a community of practice whereby trainers share their successful practices and expertise. Coordinated trainer feedback and improved communications via a new intranet tool also support breaking down any sense of isolation. Robust internal and external moderation⁷ of delivery and assessment by trainers also helps identify areas for improvement. So too does the relatively recent initiative of performance appraisal and renewed encouragement of trainers to take up professional development opportunities.

SBS provides electronic⁸ and hard-copy end-of-training learner evaluation feedback forms to every student at the completion of their training to review four areas: the quality of their training experience; the quality and clarity of the course material; the effectiveness of their respective trainer and knowledge of the subject; and whether the student would recommend their training to others. Comprehensive learner evaluations are shared with trainers and are very positive, exceeding 95 per cent in each area.⁹ SBS has also demonstrated timely responses to negative feedback. For example, where feedback flagged an issue with a trainer's environment that was sub-standard, action was taken to remedy and then reclassify the training area as being suitable again. In response to comments about improving resource materials, or where they found difficulty in following areas of the training notes, SBS created an online means for trainers to submit errors identified, so is able to update material promptly.

In recognition of continuous changes in technology, SBS regularly engages one of its trainer network to regularly update training notes. As a consequence of learner feedback (and feedback from trainers that it was cost prohibitive for them to continue to pay for software updates), SBS developed a remote desktop server so

⁷ The 2015 national external moderation results reflect real progress in the assessment of core skills in particular.

⁸ Since the last EER, SBS has collected end-of-training learner evaluation feedback via online forms (as well as hard copy via self-addressed envelopes). This has increased the response rate to 35 per cent and allows SBS to more readily manage and interpret its self-assessment data and take action and make improvements.

⁹ Ninety-two per cent of SBS learners said they would recommend SBS's training to others.

trainers have access to the most up-to-date version of software. SBS recently created advanced training material within MS Word, Excel and Outlook to meet the needs of corporate clients and also some of the more advanced learners.

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**.

As reported in Findings 1.3 and 1.4, SBS's programmes match the needs of its learners very well. This is directly related to how well SBS guides and supports its learners. This includes comprehensive training needs assessment, flexibility of programme design, and highly effective one-to-one teaching and learning, assessment and moderation. SBS learners are very well supported throughout their individualised training programme to ensure they achieve their learning outcomes. A key to the relevance and effectiveness of the guidance and support is the considerable extent to which SBS understands and matches the needs of the learner and ACC or the vocational provider.

SBS provides information and support to learners using a range of effective ways. For example, when a learner's training is approved, SBS provides them with a learner handbook (last updated in November 2015). The handbook outlines SBS policies and protocols relating to training delivery, assessment, how to access support, the SBS code of conduct, how to make a complaint, and how to challenge an assessment decision. At the same time, SBS also provides key learning steps and helps ensure that the learner is fully aware of the training outcomes they can expect from their training. All SBS learners receive their own copies of training materials for current and future reference and use. As mentioned, SBS learners are also able to rent technological equipment (if approved by their referrer) to assist with their training – this includes laptops and data-sticks for internet-based training.

Learners, graduates and trainers interviewed by the evaluators and checked against SBS's self-assessment, including surveys¹⁰, confirmed that trainers are a key part of guidance and support. Head office staff and coordinators in particular provide timely and effective guidance and support to both learners and trainers.

A number of practices contribute to a highly effective guidance and support system to help learners to succeed:

- An initial comprehensive training needs assessment
- Training plans

¹⁰ ACC, vocational provider and learner satisfaction feedback is very positive.

- One-to-one training provided by experienced and qualified trainers recruited partly on how well they are able to relate to learners
- Regular internal and external reporting of progress
- Prompt interventions when required
- Additional support to address any barriers to learning such as literacy and numeracy
- Close monitoring and reporting of attendance
- Flexible learning and assessment
- A detailed completion report
- Completion certificates or unit standards acknowledgement of success.

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**.

The effectiveness of SBS governance and management in supporting educational achievement is critical to the PTE's success. SBS's capacity and ability to meet ACC's legislative obligation to provide rehabilitation via computer (and retail, sales and office administration) training consistently across New Zealand, assures ACC, vocational providers and learners that the people rehabilitated can become as vocationally independent as possible.

SBS governance and management balance innovation and continuity and match needs really well. Governance and management make a key contribution to the achievement of significant social outcomes. Clear goals and key performance indicators closely align with each other and the business plan. SBS goals are based on future-proofing employment prospects, making technology available, and funding to sustain viability. SBS currently achieves its outcomes through ACC funding but is aware of other training opportunities to broaden the funding base.¹¹

When the previous training manager left in August 2015, SBS contracted the support of an educational consultant to assist in the educational governance and management of SBS. The co-owner directors and educational consultant conduct regular board meetings to review progress against the business plan and to provide

¹¹ Despite SBS efforts to diversify its client base via workplace training, group training, online training and other initiatives, ACC's and vocational providers' purchase of services comprises a majority of the learner (and revenue) base.

strategic direction and planning. SBS critically reviews its quality management system and operations manuals annually (and also updates these as and when needed), to meet the changing needs of the organisation.

One of the two co-owners continues to manage the operation on a daily basis and ensures continuous, ongoing and highly effective planning, development and execution of the business plan; use of resources; financial management; staff and trainer management; assessment and moderation; and learner guidance and support. SBS coordination staff each receive annual performance plans (reviewed each quarter) to ensure they meet deliverables within the business plan and to meet their individual professional development goals.

SBS conducts weekly staff meetings which record and progress activities of the organisation and ensure SBS meets the short and long-term objectives listed in the business plan.

To ensure compliance with SBS policy and training guidelines and to execute continuous improvement with its trainer network, SBS provides governance and management support to its trainers in the following ways: regular company-wide newsletters which communicate news, policy changes, and strategic objectives; regular communication via SBS's intranet tool; and regular online survey forms to gain trainer feedback and expertise around existing and new training courses, learner resources, learner assessment, issues or challenges relating to learner training workflow, availability for training, and general suggestions.

SBS's presentation of its achievement of key performance indicators 2013-2015 showed that its breakdown and analysis of data demonstrated good understanding of how to achieve its outcomes. SBS is currently addressing high trainer turnover, based on analysis of data, by further developing the trainers through training and increased support from training coordinators.

SBS regards significant increasing and repeat referrals as an indicator of the quality and success of its training. ACC and vocational providers have no obligation to refer clients to SBS. Learner referrals have increased 50 per cent year on year since 2013. Since 2014 SBS has received referrals from 200 different stakeholders and 50 per cent of these are from repeat referrers. At the time of the EER visit, one month into 2016, SBS had 205 learners enrolled. This growth has taken place at a time when the Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Corrections have ceased referring to SBS through policy changes. There is no suggestion of any performance issues by SBS.

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: Computer Training

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

NZQA recommends that SBS continue to:

- Develop its already considerable self-assessment capacity and capability, including considering case studies as another means of gathering and reporting learner graduate success
- Develop trainer literacy and numeracy expertise to further improve the already significant achievement of highly effective learning outcomes.

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 the Accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and The 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 the 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/>.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz

Final report.