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# Report of External Evaluation and Review

## Life Care Consultants Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 17 May 2017

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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:	Life Care Consultants Limited
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1 January 1997
Location:	538 Anglesea Street, Hamilton
Delivery sites:	Delivers training at client sites as well as at the following regional offices:  538 Anglesea Street, Hamilton  644 Great South Road, Ellerslie, Auckland  48 Hull Road, Mount Maunganui (currently in the process of gaining site approval from NZQA)  Level 4, Wellington Electricity Building, 75 The Esplanade, Petone, Wellington (closed due to earthquake damage until June 2017)  235A Stanmore Road, Richmond, Christchurch
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First Aid Refresher Course (Level 2)</li><li>• Workplace First Aid (Level 2)</li><li>• Fire safety training</li><li>• Fire Safety and First Aid (Department of Corrections)</li></ul>
Code of Practice signatory:	No

Number of students:	Domestic students (2016) – 24,104  Student ethnicity – no information was provided
Number of staff:	38 full-time, 12 part-time
Consent to assess:	Refer: <a href="http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=838085001">http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=838085001</a>
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>Life Care Consultants delivers short courses for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary school students who require first aid for qualifications</li> <li>• Employers that require their staff to meet certain compliance requirements such as first aid certificates, health and safety training, and fire safety training</li> <li>• Department of Corrections inmates nationally who require short courses in first aid and fire safety to complete qualifications or to upskill</li> <li>• Members of the public who attend courses on an as-needs basis.</li> </ul> <p>Students can obtain a first aid certificate by completing pre-course learning activities and attending a one-day, face-to-face training course where they are assessed against first aid unit standards. NZQA approved the delivery mode and hours in 2012.</p> <p>Life Care Consultants also provide various health services to the public and workplaces, from health consultancy work, flu vaccinations, to health checks and providing health and safety workshops.</p>
Recent significant changes:	Life Care Consultants purchased Fire and Rescue New Zealand in 2014. Life Care Consultants' tutors have undergone professional development to provide the training and assessment of unit standards 3271 and 4647 to its clients.
Previous quality assurance history:	The outcome of the last external evaluation and review (EER) conducted by NZQA in 2014 was Highly Confident in Life Care Consultants' educational performance and Highly Confident in the PTE's capability in self-assessment.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

This evaluation included two focus areas:

- First aid courses – including unit standards, non-unit standard and refresher courses.
- Fire safety training – there are fewer of these courses delivered compared with first aid, but this was chosen as a focus because it is a new area of delivery for the organisation. Life Care Consultants' main client for fire safety training is the Department of Corrections.

## 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 lead evaluator arranged a conference call with the Life Care Consultants leadership team to identify the scope initially. Further conversations were held with the general manager operations to confirm the scope of the EER and to finalise the agenda for the on-site visit.

Life Care Consultants provided several documents for the EER team to review prior to the visit, including a brief summary of changes since the previous EER, programme review documents, pre-assessment moderation results, staff development plan sample, dashboard summary of course satisfaction over three months, as well as the latest organisational structure. Information about Life Care Consultants' external moderation activities – requested by the lead evaluator from The Skills Organisation industry training organisation leading up to the visit – was not received at the time of writing this report. However, Life Care Consultants has participated in and met all external moderation requirements of NZQA, which was responsible for external moderation of the first aid sector until 2013.

Two evaluators visited Life Care Consultants for one and a half days. Evaluative conversations about educational activities and outcomes were held with the leadership team, consisting of the managing director, general manager operations, and the national training manager. The EER team reviewed a wide range of documents, including student course completion and analysis, course attendance numbers for all training delivered from 2014-2016, staff qualifications and professional development records, programme review documents, external moderation reports, course enrolment data, online pre-course activities, completed student satisfaction forms, and the organisation's high-level 2016 strategic plan.

Current tutors and past students were interviewed by phone to gather further information about the organisation's training and outcomes. The lead evaluator also had subsequent phone interviews with key stakeholders following the site visit.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Life Care Consultants Limited**.

The main reasons for this level of confidence are outlined below.

- Life Care Consultants has a 99 per cent achievement rate for all courses.
- Students are highly satisfied with the course activities and the tutors' teaching and support.
- Courses are tailored to meet workplace requirements, based on information gathered from identifying clients' needs and monitoring feedback.
- Life Care Consultants has a network of support for clients, including relationship managers and sales staff, as well as administrative systems who organise the courses to help meet clients' needs.
- Students are gaining valued outcomes with credits towards gaining a qualification, for further study or employment requirements, as well as for gaining valued skills and knowledge.
- The organisation has well-qualified staff and provides well-resourced training courses.
- The organisation demonstrates dynamic leadership in its approach to delivering courses using different learning strategies online and face to face, and providing the infrastructure to do this seamlessly.
- Overall, Life Care Consultants has strong leadership to provide the organisation with clear direction to deliver courses that are worthwhile and suit a range of stakeholder needs.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Life Care Consultants Limited**.

The main reasons for this level of confidence are outlined below.

- Life Care Consultants has accurate data for analysing course results by region, by tutor, and across each type of course delivered, which is used for measuring outcomes.
- Regional managers analyse outcomes, and the national training manager deals with any issues arising, which are reported to the leadership team.
- The organisation uses information to make changes, if required. An example was the restructure of regional managers and sales team roles to better meet the needs of staff as well as clients.
- Life Care Consultants uses a variety of sources to confirm whether the training is meeting the needs of clients, including course evaluation, client follow-up and tutors' reports. This provides good evidence that the organisation is monitoring key areas to demonstrate it is meeting organisational goals.
- Regional managers and staff review their processes at monthly meetings, and the leadership team conducts quarterly reviews of strategy.
- The organisation is responding to changes in learning needs with online activities, as well as managing growth with the introduction of a call centre and a new learning management system with greater capability for monitoring outcomes.
- External moderation results show that the assessments are at the national standard and results are valid. A more comprehensive internal moderation system is in development to demonstrate that all staff are assessing consistently to the required standard.
- There is a gap in programme review documentation around the effectiveness of the pre-course learning activities and how they contribute to outcomes and are of value to the students. The new learning management system will provide some of the data that could be used for this analysis.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students 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**.

Life Care Consultants has a high rate of achievement, with 99 per cent of students completing their first aid and fire safety courses. The organisation understands the reasons for non-completion, which are mainly beyond its control.

The national training manager uses course records to calculate the number of students receiving comprehensive first aid certificates including unit standards, compared with those that are only completing the non-unit standard courses. It is not clear whether all students are achieving the course outcomes they intended. For instance, in some cases, students that wish to gain unit standards are unable to do so if they have not completed the pre-course activities, and must arrange to attend another course.

Overall, the organisation has an effective system to monitor performance. Achievement data is collated by regional managers and reported to the national training manager, who then uses this information to provide the board with a regular update on course numbers, course type and completion rates. Because of the high rates of achievement overall, the organisation does not analyse completion rates for Māori or Pasifika students to identify any differences to overall completion rates.

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

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**.

Course participants highly value the courses for the first aid knowledge and skills gained, as evident in the face-to-face course feedback. Students commented that the course has taught them how to respond in an emergency in the workplace, or within their home for those with young children or elderly relatives.

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

Life Care Consultants provides public courses but mostly delivers courses for employers with over 50 staff. Life Care Consultants provides value to employers by sending timely reminders for employee refresher training and organising group bookings on employers' behalf. The organisation has also recently created a sales team which provides stronger relationships with clients to retain their ongoing business and better cater to training needs.

Refresher courses comprise about half of the organisation's training activities, and Life Care Consultants administration staff use previous course records to notify people when their refresher is due three months before their certificate expires. The new learning management system is being developed to provide automatic email reminders for employers and employees.

A recent survey shows that a high number of students have improved confidence through the skills gained on a course. For many prison inmates who have not completed a qualification before or even gained unit standard credits, the biggest value is the completion of unit standards towards a qualification to help them with gaining employment when they leave prison. This provides them with confidence that they can succeed. Although not a significant gap, the organisation has not conducted a separate analysis of the confidence gained by this group of students, particularly for those who may not have achieved a formal qualification previously.

Overall, the unit standard courses help people to meet workplace requirements or to complete apprenticeship qualifications, and the high amount of repeat business from large clients indicates that these are valued course outcomes.

### 1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant 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**.

Life Care Consultants understands the needs of its clients and students and tailors courses to meet their needs. Tutors will tailor scenarios to the workplace and use practical examples where possible. Students' feedback gathered at the end of each course and collated for monitoring purposes shows high satisfaction with the course relevancy and the practical way in which it was taught using up-to-date resources.

Tutors use a range of learning strategies for the first aid courses. The pre-course reading is being moved online, after significant investment by Life Care Consultants to enable more interactive activities and the use of voice to help those with reading

difficulties. The face-to-face course is largely practical, with students working in groups. The tutors provide one-to-one instruction as needed.

To achieve the first aid unit standards, students must complete the pre-course reading and self-test activities, followed by a quiz. The quiz is submitted to the tutor at the start of the face-to-face course to show the students are eligible to participate. If successful, the student can be awarded the associated unit standards. If the student has not completed the pre-course activities, they cannot attend or can only receive a certificate of attendance. As a result, one review of the records of Life Care Consultants' tutors showed that around 19 per cent of attendees changed the course type on the day. The reason for the changes could be that the students had not completed the required pre-course quiz. Some may also decide on the day that they wish to have the unit standards they initially did not want. The learning management system that is being implemented will help to identify students who have not completed the required work prior to the course (to ensure they achieve their desired outcomes and/or enable Life Care Consultants to further explore this result and any impact on the learners).

The pre-course reading and self-directed learning activities have been recognised by NZQA as equivalent to four hours of the total 12 hours mandated by the first aid industry, although the time it can take varies between students. According to Life Care Consultants, for some students the reading acts as a refresher to confirm what they already know. Tutors review students' quiz results at the course to identify where students may need further help in understanding the course material. However, it was not evident that the tutors reliably use this information in their delivery. Life Care Consultants may benefit from reviewing the quiz results to inform the effectiveness of the pre-course material, identify learner needs, and review the face-to-face course delivery.

Department of Corrections inmates enrolled in the course are supervised to complete the pre-course activities offline. The fire safety unit standards do not have pre-course work and are mostly delivered to Department of Corrections staff and inmates.

The face-to-face first aid courses are delivered by fully trained staff with a background in pre-hospital emergency care or equivalent, as per the first aid requirements. The national training manager conducts observations of tutors to ensure that the presentation is effective and students are engaging. Feedback is provided to tutors and staff are encouraged to upskill. Life Care Consultants holds annual regional meetings and staff can attend the Association of Emergency Care Training Providers annual conferences. These activities provide good information for course development and planning, as well as ensuring that tutors are up to date with current with first aid practices.

Life Care Consultants does not use the training scheme it inherited when it took over from another business, but delivers components of this, tailored to the needs

of clients, such as the Department of Corrections officers and inmates who complete this alongside first aid courses. Tutors took courses from a fire safety training provider to be able to deliver the fire safety unit standards. In addition, tutors delivering in a prison environment have a security briefing and must undergo security checks as well as be suited to work in that environment.

The national training manager reviews the course annually. Feedback from students, clients, tutors as well as from monitoring online activities is used to identify where changes could be made to any aspect of the course. An outcome of this was the review of course workbooks to ensure they were better aligned to students' learning needs. The review included the newer online component to help confirm that the course is matching needs. The review also analysed how long students spend on the pre-course activities to determine average time it takes to complete, and how this contributes to their course outcomes, including increased confidence in applying first aid skills and knowledge.

Life Care Consultants has been moderating its assessments internally and has met all requirements set by external standard-setting bodies. However, the organisation is still developing a moderation system that comprehensively covers all assessments and involves a wider range of staff for consistency. Life Care Consultants has external moderation planned with The Skills Organisation this year.

As a result of a staff restructure, Life Care Consultants introduced staff roles to monitor student satisfaction and to ensure clients' needs are being met. Regional managers meet with tutors monthly to discuss feedback from course evaluations and any course updates. Sales team staff regularly contact clients to monitor client satisfaction and future course needs. The feedback from these activities is provided to the leadership team who can then determine whether any changes are required.

Well-organised administrative support ensures resources are available for each course and that courses are kept to a manageable number. Staff check that students attending a refresher are eligible before they are enrolled. Life Care Consultants ensures timely reporting of unit standard credits within three days after the course ends, and are posted to Department of Corrections supervisors within a week to enable the students to show evidence of credits on their record of learning for academic or workplace requirements.

Overall, the courses are meeting clients' workplace health and safety requirements, and the personal and work needs of students, as evidenced by the end-of-course evaluations and high number of repeat clients.

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

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**.

All students receive a pre-course pack with information about the course. First aid students receive a link to the pre-course reading and self-directed activities, whether they wish to have unit standards assessed or not. The organisation's data shows that a high proportion of students (81 per cent) complete the pre-reading online. A sample of the data provided from course evaluations and tutor feedback shows high satisfaction with the pre-course pack and learning quiz. Tutors report that the students found the pre-learning useful. However, there is no analysis of the pre-course reading to understand how it is engaging students. Department of Corrections inmates have their pre-course packs sent to a supervisor first, then attend a one-day pre-course session to go through the pre-course activities. A separate course evaluation form is used to gather information about satisfaction for these courses.

Students are engaging well in the face-to-face course activities. Analysis of the face-to-face course evaluations shows high satisfaction with the interactive component of activities used to get students moving and working in groups. The students interviewed by the evaluation team said the training was useful because they got to practise skills, and they described what they found useful. Students were also happy with the tutors' knowledge and being able to get additional help if needed. Tutors gave good feedback to help the students on their assessments.

The evidence above provides confirmation that students find the course engaging, and the learning environments are conducive to enabling them to succeed.

#### 1.5 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 organisation's strategic plan is linked to the leadership team objectives, measured using the regional managers' reports on course numbers and satisfaction and achievement data. Overlaying the strategic plan is the organisation's aspirational vision to have 'improved 1 million Kiwis health and wellbeing by 2020'. Life Care Consultants is seeing movement towards this goal, which was established in 2004. The strategic purchase of the fire safety business will help toward achieving this goal, as everyone who participates in Life Care Consultants'

activities – from health consultancy work, flu vaccinations, health and safety workshops, and formal training – is counted towards the target. Aspirational ‘big, hairy, audacious’ goals such as this demonstrate that the organisation is looking at how it can contribute to healthy workplaces in New Zealand.

The leadership team is effective in overseeing the delivery of courses to its key clients and other stakeholders. The team is well informed, using systematic reporting lines and valid, accurate data to monitor progress towards goals. A key indicator of success is the net promoter scores used to monitor client satisfaction with Life Care Consultants’ courses. The analysis of this data shows high satisfaction from the wide range of clients.

The effectiveness of the regional manager roles, which were introduced to help build better relations with clients and internally among staff, is evident in the feedback. Staff cohesiveness reflects how the organisation responded to poor staff retention and a staff satisfaction survey with low ratings in 2012. Staff satisfaction and staff turnover has since significantly improved. Tutors have appropriate training materials and are provided with relevant, ongoing professional development. The information gathered by the regional managers also contributes to the organisation’s view of how well the courses are doing, and helps to monitor growth.

Life Care Consultants promotes core values of providing positive, fun and passionate training within its course activities. The aim is to encourage people to think about health safety in a positive way, and this is demonstrated in the feedback gathered. The managing director is actively engaged with the sector, advocating for the comprehensive first aid unit standards, and has written an article for an industry magazine on this.

The organisation has a comprehensive strategic view of its activities and shows innovation and leadership with the development of online learning for this sector, the call centre, and the new learning management system to monitor online learning and better service the needs of clients. The organisation has comprehensive systems to monitor achievement of goals.

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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**.

Life Care Consultants has demonstrated that it has managed all compliance responsibilities, including NZQA training scheme rules, NZQA financial reporting requirements, and delivery according to sector requirements. Life Care

Consultants gained permission from NZQA in 2013 to include pre-course reading as part of the hours of delivery, and is meeting the intent of the agreement by ensuring students spend eight hours on site, not including the lunch break. The online learning component was also approved by NZQA, and ongoing monitoring will ensure that the organisation continues to meet the delivery hour requirements.

First aid tutors all have the required teaching qualifications or equivalent experience. The organisation maintains a system for monitoring its compliance, including ensuring all new tutors are trained, and that tutors have annual refresher training, and complete professional development. Fire safety tutors have also met the requirements to teach the unit standards that are assessed and are current in the sector.

At the time of the EER visit, Life Care Consultants had met all external moderation requirements, as directed by the standard-setting body, The Skills Organisation, for the standards it has consent to assess.

## Focus Areas

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

### 2.1 Focus area: First aid courses

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: Fire safety training

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

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

# Recommendation

NZQA recommends that Life Care Consultants include analysis of the pre-course online learning activities as part of a comprehensive self-assessment system.

# 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](http://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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