



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Land Based Training Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 23 August 2011

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Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, trainees, prospective trainees, 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

Location:	Wanganui
Type:	Private training organisation
First registered:	1996
Number of trainees:	Domestic: 328 equivalent full-time trainees International: nil equivalent full-time trainees
Number of staff:	16 full-time equivalent staff plus 28 contractors on part-time or on-call basis.
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 1)• National Certificate in Agriculture (Introductory Skills)• LBT Certificate in Agriculture, with strands in Dairy and Sheep/Beef (Level 3)• National Certificate in Agriculture (Levels 2, 3 and 4)• New Zealand Qualifications Framework Domain Core Generic unit standards, and unit standards from across a range of industry sectors including: agriculture, health and safety, horticulture, forestry, road transport, extractive industries, and building and construction
Sites:	Head office is in Whanganui, with training sites in Waikato, Waitara, Palmerston North, Marton, Taranaki, Hunterville (Otiwhiti Station), Horowhenua, Ruapehu,

and Hawke's Bay.

Distinctive characteristics:	<p>Land Based Training Limited (LBT) offers training primarily in the agricultural sector, providing trainees with access to fee-paying programmes for the certificates in agriculture, or fully government-funded programmes, namely Foundation Focused Training Opportunities and Youth Training.</p> <p>LBT also offers training to road transport operators in a range of licences and endorsements including: class 2, class 4, class 5, dangerous goods, passenger, forklift, wheels tracks and rollers, and other bespoke training to meet companies' specific training needs.</p> <p>The managing director of LBT also operates a rural consultancy business.</p>
Recent significant changes:	None
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>LBT is required to engage in national moderation of assessments with the following standard-setting bodies: Agriculture Industry Training Organisation (AgITO), New Zealand Industry Training Organisation (NZITO), New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (Hort ITO), Forest Industries Training and Education Council (FITEC), Tranzqual (transport), NZ Extractive Industries Training Organisation (EXITO), Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO). In the main, LBT is judged to be assessing at the national standard, and where this is not the case the organisation has made appropriate plans and changes to improve its assessment practice.</p> <p>The most recent quality assurance visit by NZQA was an audit conducted in 2007 when all requirements were met.</p>

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The following focus areas were included in this evaluation:

- governance, management, and strategy; currently a mandatory focus area
- LBT Certificate in Agriculture (Levels 3 and 4), Foundation Focused Training Opportunities, and Youth Training. These programmes were chosen because they include the largest groups of trainees enrolled with LBT. The programmes chosen also provided a means to review four of the eight LBT delivery sites.

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/>

This evaluation was carried out by a team of three evaluators, including an NZQA lead evaluator and two team evaluators, over three days. The team visited four of the eight delivery sites, including the national office in Whanganui as well as Waitara, Huntersville, and Marton. The team interviewed the two owner-directors of LBT, members of the teaching and administration staff, and a random selection of trainees at each site, stakeholders (by telephone), and reviewed a wide range of the organisation's documentation and records.

Land Based Training Limited has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and submissions received have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Land Based Training Limited**.

Over the past three years, LBT has consistently exceeded Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) contract performance targets. Over the last four years, performance figures for the LBT Certificate in Agriculture (Levels 3 and 4)¹ have been significantly above national median figures achieved by private training establishments. Qualification completions have been 88-100 per cent (2009 national median 71 per cent), course completions 98-100 per cent (2009 national median 74 per cent), and 88-100 per cent retained in study the following year (2009 national median 66 per cent).

Over recent years, performance figures for Youth Training (YT) and Foundation Focussed Training Opportunities (FFTO) programmes have frequently exceeded TEC credit achievement targets. Over the past four years, between 45 per cent (in 2007) and 100 per cent (2009) of students have moved on to positive labour market outcomes (trainees gaining employment or moving on to further training). The organisation has extensive tracking and monitoring systems to establish these figures. This year's FFTO and YT programmes are exceeding contracted educational targets. While contract targets are for trainees to gain three unit standards, LBT trainees have to date completed six to nine unit standards. These are high achievements within the context of these programmes, designed to re-engage learners in education and support them on to further training or employment. LBT has made well-considered and appropriate adjustments to programmes to meet changed TEC contract requirements for 2011. All FFTO and YT trainees are making real, observed, genuine improvements to their literacy, numeracy, life skills, work-readiness skills, and connections with the workplace, as confirmed by staff, employers, and the students themselves. Most students attend most of the time, learning environments are stimulating, and the rapport between staff and trainees is respectful and supportive, indicating that students are stimulated and gaining value from their training.

Tutors are well connected to the rural farming community as well as to local iwi and marae. This is providing trainees with access to up-to-date farming methods and technology, and it is facilitating the reconnection of trainees with their communities. Trainees are highly engaged in their studies, and there are planned and purposeful opportunities for the application of theory in commercial farming operations as well as through local community projects.

¹ Tertiary Education Commission published performance data for 2009.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Land Based Training Limited**.

Since 2008, LBT has been progressively implementing well-structured and planned, systematic self-assessment and organisational review processes. Staff at all levels are actively involved and provide input to reviews. LBT's self-assessment system is well integrated into the organisation's monthly staff and management meetings, as well as into programme and organisational review processes.

LBT has sought external input into the design of its self-assessment processes, but the process of self-assessment has been implemented and supported by LBT's own staff on an ongoing basis. LBT's self-assessment system has led to the identification of highly effective practices and opportunities for innovation and improvement, such as to learner interview processes and questions, mid-course evaluations, changes to programme content, and the implementation of literacy training for tutors. These changes are well documented and LBT reviews them on an ongoing basis, and this process has ascertained the effectiveness of changes put in place.

The organisation has demonstrated it has an excellent understanding of the needs of the communities within which it is offering training. This has in part been the result of LBT's close association with a farm advisory company owned by LBT's managing director, as well as through hiring staff who have extensive networks within the agriculture sector and within the local iwi and rūnanga.

Trainees' needs are well established early in the programme through the enrolment processes and a structured needs assessment that includes the use of the TEC literacy and numeracy online assessment tool. These needs are effectively addressed and monitored throughout the programme, and the process is leading to meaningful and measurable changes in life skills, work-readiness skills, agricultural skills, and the achievement of unit standards and qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

LBT benchmarks its own performance using publicly available performance data and has used effective processes to review its outcomes and achievements and contributing processes year on year within and across its courses.

TEO response

Land Based Training Limited has confirmed this report to be factually accurate.

Findings²

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Learner achievement figures for 2009 show that trainees in the LBT Certificate in Agriculture programmes are significantly exceeding national median figures. In 2009, 100 per cent of trainees completed a qualification (71 per cent national median), 98 per cent completed the course (74 per cent national median), and 82 per cent were retained in study (66 per cent national median). These figures are confirmed through TEC published data, the organisation's database, and paper records. Achievement rates for the past four years (2007-2010) have been at comparable levels.

Most trainees enrolling with the FFTO and YT programmes have been meeting or exceeding TEC contracted educational performance targets of 20 credits per trainee over the past few years. Contract requirements this year have changed significantly. However, at the time of this evaluation trainees had exceeded the educational achievement requirements of three unit standards each, and current indications are that the labour market outcomes will be achieved.

The organisation's self-assessment processes identify that trainees are gaining significant growth in essential job-seeking skill areas such as timekeeping, problem-solving, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, literacy and numeracy, as well as significant personal growth such as with confidence and self-esteem. Further to this, LBT has identified that, through tutor connections and community projects, trainees are also effectively reconnecting with their communities, which is a major contributing factor to employment and further training outcomes.

LBT programmes are based on a strengths-based approach, and trainees and staff discussed the help and support provided and sense of community and belonging at LBT. The overarching philosophy of the organisation includes a clear expectation of positive attitudes, ongoing high motivation, and (high) achievement for both staff and trainees.

Self-assessment across the organisation is well developed and effective in identifying performance strengths and weaknesses. It leads to effective identification of strategies which in their turn have led to improvements, as shown in the consistently high achievement and outcome figures. Issues are addressed appropriately to maintain these figures.

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

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

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

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

Trainees on the LBT Certificate in Agriculture are gaining relevant skills in up-to-date farming practices as well as a range of extra skills such as the training, ownership, caring, and handling of farm working dogs. All certificate trainees are gaining a qualification that is highly relevant to their gaining employment and moving on to roles of responsibility more quickly than they would otherwise. Examples of this were discussed during the evaluation, such as recent graduates moving into dairy herd management roles. In the last four years, 32 trainees have graduated with an LBT Certificate in Agriculture (Levels 3 and/or 4), and all but three trainees have gained employment in the agricultural industry, an excellent outcome.

One of the long-term goals of LBT for the certificate in agriculture programme is to reinvigorate rural communities and provide skills development for local trainees. Telephone interviews conducted with farmers during this evaluation confirmed LBT's assertion that this is happening.

The FFTO and YT trainees are gaining a reconnection with their communities, are contributing to the enhancement of their communities through community projects, and are gaining valuable work-readiness skills. These trainees also gain New Zealand Qualifications Framework unit standards in core generic areas relevant to gaining work, such as preparing their curriculum vitae and writing job application letters. These unit standards and farm-related skills are providing trainees with the necessary skills to gain employment as well as contributing towards the achievement of a National Certificate in Agriculture (Level 2). For some of the trainees, the education and employment outcomes are the first they have gained and are therefore of huge value both to the trainees and their communities. This was evidenced through the organisation's self-assessment, as discussed during interviews with staff, trainees, and external stakeholders.

The organisation's data collection and analysis in this area is well structured, informal, includes appropriate detail in regard to how well stakeholders value the training, and is used to make ongoing improvements over time. Specific outcome data is recorded and reviewed on a regular basis, and formal and informal contact with community groups and employers is collected using a range of processes such as diary notes, emails, and stakeholder surveys, which are regularly discussed among staff and reviewed, leading to ongoing improvements.

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

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

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

The programmes offered by LBT have been well designed to match the learning needs of learners and stakeholders, and are in fact meeting many of the most important of these needs. This was clearly evident through student achievement data and survey results and was confirmed through the evaluators' interviews with trainees, staff, and stakeholders. As noted below in section 1.4, one tutor has recently completed a piece of research funded through Ako Aotearoa, on Māori learning styles and pedagogy. This research has identified that there is room for improvement in how well LBT meets the learning needs of Māori learners, and it provides the basis for building this capacity within LBT.

The LBT Certificate in Agriculture is in effect an extension of the National Certificate in Agriculture. Because of its long-term relationships with the agricultural sector through the managing director's rural consultancy, LBT has designed and delivered this programme on commercial farms, where the trainees have access to theory classes and the immediate application of theory to practice. This has met the needs of learners as well as meeting the needs of farmers well, with specific extension skills added to the programme, such as machinery maintenance and dog-handling skills. LBT monitors this programme effectively through ongoing reviews and visits to the trainees on the farms. The organisation's documents and database confirm that other stakeholders' needs and requirements are well met, such as the monitoring of the moderation of assessments by seven industry training organisations. Trainees and staff interviewed at this evaluation noted that trainees leave this programme with (many) additional skills such as improved knowledge of nutrition, cooking skills, and other life skills: "they are more complete when they leave".

As already noted in previous sections of this report, LBT's self-assessment processes are structured effectively, well established across the organisation, and are leading to meaningful improvements, such as matching trainees' needs with the most appropriate programme to pathway them into both academic success and employment. The organisation is also meeting the needs of its funding bodies, as evidenced by ongoing contracts with TEC and the Ministry of Social Development.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

The tutors employed by LBT are highly effective. They include industry specialists and staff with long-term and well-established relationships and connections with their area and local people, with the ability to relate well to trainees and to understand and care for them. The effectiveness of the tutors was clearly evident in the educational outcomes and the labour market outcomes being achieved over time, as well as in the evaluators' observations of the high level of rapport and respect shown between staff and trainees.

LBT is achieving very high trainee attendance. This has not always been the case, but it was identified as an issue and the changes implemented, such as working alongside of whānau and building the concept of “the best team”, have led to dramatic improvements. The high level of attendance is one indicator of improved learner motivation and teaching effectiveness. Programmes are well planned and trainees have access to appropriate resources.

Teaching practice reflects a “mastery of learning” approach where trainees are successively taught and assessed towards competency, so they can “do it right and do it well”. Teacher performance is reviewed via teaching observations, with subsequent discussions and feedback leading to appropriate professional development, including planning and implementing training for the National Certificate in Adult Literacy (Vocational) and the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Level 5).

LBT has relevant and appropriate assessment practices. It is actively engaged with seven standard-setting bodies (AgITO, HortITO, Tranzqual, NZITO, FITEC, EXITO, BCITO) as well as NZQA for the moderation of its assessment practice and is rated as meeting the national standard in most cases. Where issues have been identified, LBT has implemented appropriate and effective improvements.

One tutor has recently completed a piece of research funded through Ako Aotearoa, on Māori learning styles and pedagogy and their engagement and learning. LBT views the research as a significant achievement and believes that the research outcomes will make a positive (and ongoing) contribution to Māori learner engagement and achievement at LBT.

LBT has highly effective processes for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of its teaching practices. These include staff as champions for specific processes, a self-assessment committee from across the organisation, regular staff meetings to review emerging issues, and continuously monitoring learner achievement and satisfaction rates.

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**.

LBT provides outstanding support and guidance, describing this support as for the whole person: “body, mind, and spirit”. As one tutor noted: “I am more like a parent than a tutor, but we have both roles: tutor and team member/support person”.

Farm trainees at Otiwhiti Station live on site. Otiwhiti is considered by LBT and its stakeholders as an exemplary training site, where trainees are fed, accommodated, taught, and employed on site. The training provided on the station far exceeds the minimum requirements of the Certificate in Agriculture.

LBT cares very well for its FFTO and YT trainees. They are picked up from home and provided with access to health professionals and counselling as needed. Students are provided with clear boundaries and LBT has clear processes, which it explains very well, for dealing with issues as they arise. Students are asked such questions as “will you pass a

drug test?”, and are offered support and services to achieve this to enable them to gain and hold employment. An example was noted: a past (reformed) gang member visits the training site to raise students’ motivation to change their lifestyles. Students and staff noted that this strategy is highly effective. LBT provides its fully funded students with specialist clothing such as the wet weather gear and gumboots required for work experience.

LBT’s review processes regularly identify areas for improvement and group these into geographic areas to be addressed on a prioritised basis. One staff member noted: “I feel well supported in all respects from the outset and I’ve gained the impression that management is proactive in addressing areas that need improving”.

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 two directors of LBT have a very clear focus on educational achievement. Both directors are farmers and one is a farm consultant. They understand well the requirements for employment in the farming community.

Management has appointed staff with outstanding connections within the community. They are respected farmers and significant members of local iwi, with great mana within their communities.

LBT provides excellent physical and learning resources, and no obvious gaps were noted at this evaluation. Staff interviewed at the four sites visited confirmed that resources are purchased or updated as required, and access to training sites such as Otiwhiti Station are beyond normal expectations.

Management facilitates large-scale farm discussion groups which review and contribute to the programmes offered, providing valued external input to technical aspects of the agricultural programme such as shearing, dog work, and farm insurance.

The organisation has recently rewritten its quality management system after reviewing its processes and practices, to ensure it matches organisational current practice and requirements for ongoing registration with NZQA, and to meet statutory requirements.

All aspects of the organisation are reviewed on an ongoing basis, involving all staff. LBT has appointed champions for specific areas such as the moderation of assessment. A self-assessment strategic summary is maintained noting opportunities and activities for improvement. The outcomes of these provide a running record of discussions, decisions, and the outcomes of improvements implemented. Documents sighted at this evaluation confirmed the implementation of improvement decisions into action, and that the actions have led to, or are leading to, meaningful improvements.

Focus Areas

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: Land Based Training Certificate in Agriculture (Years 1 and 2)

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

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

2.3 Focus area: Foundation Focused Training Opportunities

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

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

2.4 Focus area: Youth 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**.

Recommendations

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

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses 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 policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.

The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

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

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz).

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

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E eeradmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz