

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Agoge Parkers Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 6 September 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, 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

Location:	Hamilton
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	1997
Number of students:	Domestic: 60 full-time equivalents International: not applicable
Number of staff:	Eight full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Driver licensing courses (class 2-5, F, D, W, T, R endorsements)• Forklift training and refresher courses• Adult Education (Level 5)• Workplace assessor courses
Sites:	Hamilton (Head office), Auckland, Christchurch, Rotorua (Adult Education)
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>Agoge Parkers Limited consists of three companies: Agoge Limited bought 90 per cent shares in Agoge Parkers Limited in 2004. Agoge Limited operates a recruitment business alongside the training.</p> <p>NC Wilkinsons Ltd owns the remaining 10 per cent of Agoge Parkers Limited. NC Wilkinsons Ltd provides adult education training and assessment courses nationally, including the workplace assessor courses.</p> <p>Agoge Limited oversees the driver training for Agoge Parkers Limited's union with Agoge Limited.</p>

	The management team consists of all the directors of the three companies.
Recent significant changes:	No longer offering freight forwarding qualifications.
Previous quality assurance history:	Agoge Parkers met all requirements at the previous quality assurance event, a quality audit. Agoge Parkers has also met the 2010 external moderation requirements for NZQA and the industry training organisation, InfraTrain, and has substantially met the requirements for external moderation with the transport standard-setting body, Tranzqual.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The external evaluation and review focussed on the following programmes offered by Agoge Parkers:

- Forklift training and refresher courses. This was selected as an area of focus because it represents the majority of training activity.
- Workplace trainer courses and National Certificate in Adult Education (Level 5). This course was selected because it contains assessment towards higher-level unit standards.

The mandatory focus area is:

- Governance, management and strategy.

Agoge Parkers also offers driver licence endorsements for classes 2-5, F, D, W, T, and R.

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 external evaluation and review was conducted over two days at the organisation's head office in Hamilton. The evaluation team consisted of two evaluators who spoke with the management team, tutor, and trainees on site. Further information was also gained from phone conversations with the relevant standard-setting bodies (InfraTrain and Tranzqual) and a number of clients.

The team reviewed information in documents contained in the organisation's own monthly meeting minutes, records, and analysis of courses as well as action points for review.

Agoge Parkers Limited has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and submissions received will be fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Agoge Parkers Limited**.

Agoge Parkers mainly provides driver education, and 99 per cent of trainees were successful in completing their course and achieving the relevant driver endorsement in 2009 and 2010. This is above the organisation's target of 95 per cent. Employers saw the benefit of the training in the increased productivity and reduced incidents and damages as a result of training. This was evidenced by anecdotal feedback from employers, as reported by the directors.

The workplace training courses have had good results for the last three years, with 83 per cent completing in 2009. Feedback from clients and trainees also shows high satisfaction (over 90 per cent) with the training. The training involves post-course assessment, which the organisation recognised made it difficult for some to finish the requirements once they are back in their workplace. In response, Agoge Parkers has implemented a shorter completion time; however, it is too soon to know whether this will increase participants' motivation to complete within a shorter timeframe.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Agoge Parkers Limited**.

Agoge Parkers has provided consistent quality in training over a number of years, as indicated through client and trainee feedback. Regular meetings are held with the directors to review and analyse results. Agoge could benefit from formalising feedback to monitor the value of its courses and show that it is meeting the training needs of its clients.

All courses are supported with appropriate resources, and driver education trainers are fully qualified to meet the transport agency and NZQA assessment requirements. Agoge Parkers has also met the 2010 external moderation requirements for NZQA and the industry training organisation, InfraTrain and has substantially met the requirements for external moderation with the transport standard-setting body, Tranzqual.

TEO Response

Agoge Parkers 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.

Findings¹

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**.

Agoge Parkers mainly provides driver education, and 99 per cent of trainees were successful in completing their course and achieving the relevant driver endorsement in 2009 and 2010. This is above the organisation's target of 95 per cent. The target is used to see how well courses can identify any problems with individuals completing. Agoge Parkers does not formally benchmark results with other, similar education providers, but through its contacts it believes that it is performing at a similar level to the other providers in this subject area.

The workplace training courses have had good results for the last three years, with 83 per cent completing in 2009. The training involves post-course assessment, which makes it difficult for some to finish the requirements once they are back in their workplace. This means it can take people up to a year to complete. Agoge Parkers has determined that on average it takes people six to eight months to complete and has changed its completion finish date from 12 months to six months. However, the organisation has not formally set targets for the completion rate in order to measure and compare previous results to gauge whether this initiative is helping to improve trainee motivation to complete.

Agoge Parkers has reviewed results for the previous two years for driver education and for a longer time for adult education courses, and these results have been used to make some changes to materials and trainee support. For example, as a result of its analysis Agoge Parkers has implemented changes to the completion time for the workplace assessor course. However, it is too early to determine whether the changes will increase course completions.

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 **Good**.

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

The value of training for employers was seen in the increased productivity and reduced incidents and damages as a result of training. This was verified through feedback from clients spoken to by the evaluation team as well as the feedback that the organisation collects from clients. However, there is little formal analysis of the direct outcomes of training.

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

Driver education trainees, who are usually warehouse store people and truck drivers, value the training as they not only gain the relevant driver endorsements but they also learn the latest regulations and safety practices as well as additional skills such as forklift parking. This was evident from the student feedback collected by the organisation at the end of each course.

There are around 40 workplace assessor course trainees annually, but demand for courses has been slowly declining as a result of Tranzqual reducing the need for workplace assessors. However, feedback collected from previous course attendees showed that they valued this training as it helped them gain formal qualifications and enabled them to take on a trainer role in their workplace.

Agoge Parkers has also been involved in a very successful programme to help long-term unemployed people to find work in the driving sector. Agoge is required to follow up with the trainees for nine months following the course. In 2010, 80 per cent of trainees were employed through the Agoge recruitment business and received positive feedback from their employers. Agencies supporting job seekers also refer clients to Agoge Parkers for training to help them gain licences to find work. The high volume of people referred indicates the high perceived value of the training.

Although feedback is currently collected informally from clients and sales managers about the training, the organisation is developing a formal system to evaluate client feedback to understand how well its training courses are valued.

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 **Good**.

Agoge Parkers meets with its clients before each course to determine their needs, demonstrating a high client focus. Many clients for forklift courses sent their warehouse drivers on courses to learn how to handle goods better and drive safely. Evidence from feedback and reports of reduced incidents and damage indicates that the training is meeting the needs of clients.

Trainees' feedback on courses shows that they are very satisfied with the activities which involve a good mix of audiovisual equipment, case studies, and use of time for any questions to confirm understanding.

In addition, Agoge Parkers demonstrates an ability to meet clients' needs by providing reminders when their staff require refresher driver courses. This has helped to ensure that the clients can plan training and that trainees are able to meet driver compliance requirements. Another area where Agoge Parkers demonstrates a client focus is in providing courses that suit clients' need for timeframes or for training delivery to be at client sites or at Agoge Parker sites nationally. However, some clients said it would be useful to receive individual trainee reports following each course in addition to certificates.

Feedback from employers whose staff have attended workplace assessor training courses confirms that the organisation understands the needs of its clients by providing courses that are tailored to the company's systems. The trainees liked the one-to-one support provided following the course to help them with any difficulties with completing the assessment. The materials are also designed with literacy and numeracy needs in mind. One client said: "In comparison with other trainers they focus on training for our systems, [they] understand us, [and identified] issues have been responded to".

Overall, the trainee satisfaction evaluations and feedback from clients shows that course resources and activities are meeting the trainees' needs as well as company training requirements. Agoge Parkers is developing a client feedback form to formally analyse whether all the training needs of clients are met.

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**.

Tutors are qualified adult educators and understand how to engage trainees in the learning, using various techniques such as questioning, revision, and providing their own experiences, and practical examples to ensure that all needs are met. Tutors assess trainees' learning needs at the start of the course to ensure that they are able to address them. In particular, feedback from clients on workplace assessor courses stated that the tutor is able to translate the jargon of unit standards into terms that trainees understand and apply to their own workplace assessment. This was also supported by the trainee course feedback collated by Agoge Parkers.

Agoge Parkers has monitored its courses through course numbers, moderation results, and clients', trainers', and trainees' feedback to ensure that teaching is effective. First, feedback from tutors and trainee satisfaction are used to see how well the courses are received. The overall trainee satisfaction ratings are very high, over 90 per cent for both the driver education and workplace assessor courses.

The organisation has met the national external moderation requirements for the workplace assessor training assessments by NZQA and the external moderation requirements for InfraTrain. Agoge has substantially met the requirements for external moderation with the transport standard-setting body, Tranzqual.

The organisation also has implemented a trainer performance evaluation process in 2010 as previous systems were not systematically put into action and therefore not effective in informing on teaching effectiveness. It is expected that more frequent meetings with tutors to evaluate training and identify any gaps will help to monitor individual courses. Agoge Parkers has been working on embedding literacy and numeracy techniques into all aspects of its training and is currently providing professional development opportunities for trainers to complete the National Certificate in Adult Education (Level 5).

However, the organisation is not formally monitoring the outcomes for individual trainers across similar courses to see where additional support could be provided to improve teaching effectiveness.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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**.

The driver education trainees receive support and guidance while on the course such as individual focus and help with any literacy needs to help them to achieve. This is because class sizes are usually around ten trainees per trainer.

Feedback from clients and trainees indicates that the support provided during and after the workplace assessor course helps with trainees completing assessments within the timeframe required. Usually within three to four weeks after the course the tutor follows up to see how the trainee is doing and to help with identifying any barriers to completion. If no assessments have been received three months after the course, the trainer provides individual support to help trainees.

As a result of course completion analysis showing that the longer a trainee takes to complete assessments following the course, the less likely they are to complete the requirements overall, the organisation has reduced the time allowed to complete from 12 months to six months. It expects that this will help to motivate trainees to complete their assessment earlier and increase the completion rates.

The organisation is aligning all its feedback forms for all courses to ensure it has valid data for comparison across courses. In addition, information from clients on trainees' learning needs could be recorded prior to courses and held to identify future training needs.

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

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**.

The management team, consisting of the respective directors of Agoge Limited, Agoge Parkers training, and NC Wilkinsons Ltd meet monthly to review course outcomes and progress on action plans. This means that directors are all aware of course results and progress towards improvements, particularly over the past two years.

The use of improved forms for collecting trainee feedback and reporting was established late in 2010 to enable more consistent reporting for analysis. This has enabled the management team to identify any issues with courses and aspects of training. Examples are completion times for the workplace assessors courses, as discussed previously, and recognising the need for better literacy support, particularly where courses involve written

work. The team has worked to ensure that clients are satisfied with the training and it surveys clients to identify improvements.

A new quarterly staff performance evaluation system was implemented in 2011. Previously the review of tutor performance was not conducted regularly enough to provide useful information for improvements. The management team is supportive of staff training and all staff are currently being enrolled in adult education training courses to enhance their delivery.

Overall, the organisation shows a good understanding of the trainees' needs and provides the necessary resources and qualified tutors. However, for the future, the organisation needs to ensure that its educational performance measures are relevant and that any learning barriers are removed.

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 **Good**.

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

2.2 Focus area: Workplace assessor training

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

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

2.3 Focus area: Forklift training and refresher courses

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

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/>*

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