



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Premier Hairdressing College Limited
Trading as Premier Hairdressing
College

Date of report: 18 May 2010

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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.

Brief description of TEO

Location: 16b Pohutukawa Drive, Hamilton (Head Office)

Type: Private Training Establishment

Size: 54 equivalent full-time students (EFTS)

Sites: Takapuna, Auckland; Lower Hutt, Wellington; and Napier

Premier Hairdressing College Limited (PHC), Trading as Premier Hairdressing College (PHC), offers training towards the PHC Certificate in Hairdressing (Level 2) and the PHC Certificate in Advanced Hairdressing (Level 3).

The elementary course (PHC Certificate in Hairdressing) focuses on teaching students basic hairdressing skills as well as building their confidence and self-esteem to prepare them for work in the industry. The certificate also encompasses all the unit standards required for the National Certificate in Hairdressing (Salon Support) (Level 3).

The advanced certificate is for hairdressing apprentices or those who have already completed an elementary certificate. Students who successfully complete practical and theory assessments for the certificate also gain recognition for the National Certificate in Hairdressing (Professional Stylist) (Level 4).

Students enrolled in both courses undertake theory learning and practical work delivered at one of the organisation's three premises in the North Island.

Executive Summary

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Premier Hairdressing College Limited (PHC), Trading as Premier Hairdressing College.**

Qualification achievements have steadily improved over the past three years and in 2009 were well above the Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC) required targets. This is reflected in the high number of students entering into employment in the industry as an apprentice or assistant following completion of the PHC certificates.

The improvements have been attributed to a number of initiatives, but mostly due to the changes to a more learner-centred training approach three years ago. Lesson plans and teaching activities are creative and promote engagement with the learning and increase students' motivation. In addition, increased student support, better enrolment and attendance monitoring processes, and the open communication promoted by the management structure have also contributed to a successful learning environment.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Premier Hairdressing College Limited (PHC), Trading as Premier Hairdressing College.**

The organisation is systematic in reviewing processes in relation to students' progress and course outcomes over a number of years.

The organisation is responsive to industry and is innovative in its approach to training in the industry. Management implements organisational changes following staff consultation across each site.

The organisation has a number of formal structures in place to review its performance against targets and has collected information for management and staff review for a number of years. However, some information was difficult to track as performance measurements differ between some years, and the date of collection varies from year to year.

In addition, the organisation could set more specific goals to measure Māori achievement rates, qualification completion rates, and increases in literacy and numeracy skills to identify how it may further improve its outcomes.

TEO response

Premier Hairdressing College has made no comment on this report.

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 TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITPQuality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and 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).

Findings

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

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/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>

Outline of scope

The agreed scope of the external evaluation and review of PHC included the following mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management, and strategy.

The following elective focus area was chosen:

- Premier Hairdressing College Certificate in Hairdressing (Level 2).

This certificate course was selected because it represents the greatest number of students enrolled with PHC and has been offered for longer than the Premier Hairdressing College Certificate in Advanced Hairdressing.

Part 1: Answers to Key Evaluation Questions across the organisation

This section provides a picture of the TEO's performance in terms of the outcomes achieved and the key contributing processes. Performance judgements are based on the answers to key evaluation questions across the focus areas sampled. This section also provides a judgement about the extent to which the organisation uses self-assessment information to understand its own performance and bring about improvements, i.e. capability in self-assessment.

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 **Good**.

Context

The course completion target is 70 per cent, while the target for qualification achievement is 55 per cent. These targets have been agreed with the TEC, which provides funding for both courses.

Explanation

The course completion results for the elementary certificate show that completion rates have increased over the past four years. In 2006 achievement results for the elementary

course were 59 per cent. These have increased steadily and were above the TEC targets for 2008 (72 per cent) and 2009 (77 per cent). As expected, this led to a similar increase in qualification achievement rates, and 77 per cent of students who completed the course achieved the qualification in 2009.

Students who achieve the elementary certificate are also highly successful in achieving employment as an apprentice or salon assistant. In 2008 this figure was 65 per cent, and 68 per cent in 2009. Overall, the results show that students on the advanced course have high achievement and employment outcomes. The elementary course does not record employment outcomes for TEC purposes.

The management team regularly reviews reports on student results from site managers to identify any issues or trends. The increase in students' results is related to a number of changes following a major review of the organisation's activities in 2007. This included a shift in focus from the lecture-style delivery to a more learner-centred approach to learning as well as introducing a group tutor support system for students.

However, the organisation has used a different data collection method in 2009, which makes it difficult to compare results with previous years. The organisation has recognised this and has developed a system to enable it to measure data to compare student outcomes. At present, although it is achieving the TEC targets PHC has yet to establish indicators of success for increasing literacy and numeracy skills or Māori achievement rates, in particular at the Napier and Wellington sites, in relation to other students and across delivery sites. A further analysis of results could also be useful to identify which course components students had difficulty with.

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**.

Context

There are two pathways to qualify as a hairdresser. People can choose to train with a provider such as PHC who provides training in foundation skills to a standard that will assist them to find work in a salon to meet the high demand for hairdressers in New Zealand. Some people choose to find work as an apprentice in a salon instead and gain experience on-job and complete assessments off-job. PHC also provides off-job training and assessment for current apprentices to enable them to complete the National Certificate in Hairdressing (Salon Support) (Level 3).

Explanation

PHC has an off-job training contract with the Hairdressing Industry Training Organisation (HITO) to provide the off-job training and assessment required for the advanced students to achieve the advanced certificate, which leads to the National Certificate in Hairdressing (Professional Stylist) (Level 4). This demonstrates the confidence HITO has in PHC staff and premises to deliver industry training.

PHC staff have a close relationship with HITO and use the core content of the national certificate in the elementary certificates, for example shampooing, customer service basics, and colouring knowledge, as well some basic cutting skills in the elementary certificate.

Students may choose to enrol on the elementary course to build their confidence as well as confirm whether or not they are serious about a career in the industry.

Students valued the strength of the relationship staff have with industry as it meant they were able to learn about current trends in the industry and keep up to date with the latest techniques. Students are also able to attend industry workshops and receive certificates, which are valued by the industry. This provides students with additional skills to assist them to obtain employment as an apprentice or salon assistant.

The organisation has a memorandum of understanding to provide basic training in hairdressing skills to about ten secondary schools in the North Shore of Auckland as part of the Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) programme. This helps students to find a career and the organisation to identify potential students who may be successful in the industry.

PHC responds well to industry and student feedback. An example of the organisations responsiveness to industry feedback was the implementation of the procedure and standard for the time allowed for students' haircutting experience.

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**.

Context

Salon owners require graduates who relate well to customers and are able to assist confidently in a salon environment. Students come from a range of backgrounds and have a range of differing needs. HITO also has assessment standards which PHC is required to comply with.

Explanation

PHC reviewed the way in which it delivered its programmes in 2007, which led to the organisation changing its approach to training in order to meet learner needs better. This entailed introducing more learner-centred activities and less lecture-style delivery, combining theory and practical learning, and using more group work. The organisation believes these changes have contributed to higher retention rates, and therefore students are more likely to achieve a qualification.

PHC encourages feedback from all of its stakeholders. The management team analyses feedback to identify improvements or any amendments required, and the regional manager and director visit sites at least monthly to talk to staff about the changes. Site managers provide staff with the appropriate support to implement the changes. The processes enable staff to deliver courses consistently across all sites.

The biggest change made as a result of student feedback was breaking the course into nine components to make it more achievable for students, and assigning a tutor to one group of students to provide ongoing, consistent support.

In addition, each site seeks input into its course content from the local advisory group consisting of salon owners, hairdressers, and other training providers. An example where changes have been made to the programme to meet industry needs has been in aligning the PHC certificates to levels on the national qualification framework to make it easier for employers and students to understand how the PHC qualifications relate to the national qualification levels. That is, elementary equates to first year, the advanced certificate equates to year two, and year three is an apprenticeship year consisting of on-job training and off-job assessment towards the National Certificate in Hairdressing (Professional Stylist) (Level 4).

Elementary students are able to complete work experience once they have completed the theory after 20 weeks into the course. Evidence collected by the organisation on outcomes shows that many students enter into apprenticeship agreements with the salon owners with whom they completed their work experience.

The work experience component is four days a week for a fortnight. Feedback from salon owners indicated that they require students to have more practical knowledge of the industry, from being able to greet clients professionally in person or over the telephone, to providing scalp massages and being able to conduct a consultation with a client. PHC has incorporated role-plays, with students acting as clients, to address this requirement.

However, more work is required to ensure salon owners' expectations are realistic and that they are clear about the level of support they need to provide for students on work experience.

The organisation has recently introduced a more comprehensive needs assessment process at enrolment for identifying students with literacy or numeracy learning difficulties. The assessment includes assessing students' preferred learning styles. It has also embedded numeracy and literacy learning activities into lesson plans. In addition, PHC is providing training for all its tutors on literacy and numeracy training and is halfway through this. The organisation aims to increase achievement rates for those students with learning difficulties.

PHC reduced the number of intake opportunities per year for its elementary course from four times per year to three times to reduce enrolment numbers to meet the TEC limit for provision of training against funding allocations.

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**.

Context

PHC tutors deliver pre-employment training for hairdressers using theory and practical tasks. The tutors work 80 hours per year in a salon and hold the appropriate adult education

and hairdressing qualifications, which are required by the standard-setting body, HITO. PHC assessment materials have also met HITO moderation requirements.

Explanation

The organisation reviewed the structure of the programme in 2009, and as a result combined the theory and practical tasks. Tutors and management noted that this has increased student participation and assisted student learning of the theory relating to their practical lessons.

In response to industry needs the course has included teaching activities that help prepare students to work in a real salon. PHC training rooms look and feel like a hairdressing salon. Students work with real models, operate a salon booking system (Salon Ezy), which is widely used in salons, and have plenty of opportunities to build their customer service skills and learn how to present themselves without the pressures of working in a commercial salon environment. Students also have the opportunity to enter into annual industry awards to compete against other students at the same level.

Assessments are conducted when individual students have completed the required number of tasks. The students are able to complete assessments at any time throughout the 12 weeks of the course. This caters to students who are unable to complete the programme in one block and provides reassessment opportunities for students who require further training on some modules.

The organisation pays for the tutors' professional development activities such as assessment of unit standard courses in adult education. Tutors attended a workshop provided by HITO on using the industry-developed training and assessment materials, which incorporate strategies to assist students with learning needs to succeed. PHC has been given Best Practice moderation status from HITO for the quality of its assessment practices and assessment decisions. The tutors will also participate in upcoming TEC workshops on using new literacy and numeracy tools. Staff have developed their computer skills to assist them in training students to use the computerised customer booking programme. These activities have assisted the tutors to use strategies that encourage students' participation and learning.

Students' feedback on the training was highly positive about the support provided by the staff at PHC, as well as the teaching methods. Students said they liked learning the use of the industry terminology on the training floor. Students also liked the way tutors could tailor their delivery style to suit each type of learner, using the results of individual learning style assessments conducted at the start of each course. Also, students who spoke English as a second language have additional opportunities to practise tasks under the supervision of their group tutor. Tutors noticed the increase in motivation of these students as a result.

The organisation encourages consistent training across its three delivery sites. This is managed using an intranet system which stores all the lesson plans and activities to deliver training. The lesson plans have activities such as shared reading exercises, quiz games, and other group activities used to build students' confidence, increase literacy and numeracy skills, and get them to participate in the class. This helps to build an inclusive learning environment and allows for tutors' differing teaching styles while maintaining consistency.

In addition, the regional manager visits each site regularly to help tutors implement new teaching resources or activities. This promotes consistent delivery between sites as well as providing additional support for staff. The organisation also holds an annual conference to provide an opportunity for staff to review course content and to discuss teaching strategies. Any new activities are introduced at that conference to ensure tutors are training to a similar standard.

Tutors note what has worked and what has not worked in the lesson plan for the benefit of the next tutor to use them. Tutors are also encouraged to develop new activities or make changes. A recent example of this was the inclusion of te reo Māori in lesson plans to further assist the engagement of learners. The tutors' feedback to the evaluation team was that they found the intranet helpful as it gave them new ideas and enabled the activities to keep the students motivated.

The training salon viewed at the Auckland training site was to an industry standard. Students have access to all hair products to carry out their tasks using commercial salon-like premises. Some classrooms used to deliver theory lessons were still being refurbished but the classrooms in use had suitable training facilities.

Students also gain practical experience while working in a salon. The tutors support students with regular contact to ensure they are being provided with opportunities to practise what they have been taught. Salon owners provide feedback to the organisation on the students' competency in the salon.

Management reviews reports compiled by the site managers on learner achievement to identify any trends in achievement or issues that need to be addressed. Feedback from students has also been incorporated into the programme. This demonstrates the responsiveness of the organisation towards any new trends and ensures that the teaching is effective and motivates students to achieve. The achievement results, as well as feedback on the training from students and industry, support these conclusions.

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 **Good**.

Context

Students attend PHC to gain basic hairdressing skills as well as preparation for work. Students enrol either following attendance at a secondary school or when they are looking to train for a new career.

Explanation

The organisation reviewed its enrolment policies and procedures three years ago to determine how they can identify ideal candidates who will have a passion for the industry and a willingness to succeed. In addition to a phone interview with the director, the students meet the site manager and sit an assessment of learning styles and take a literacy

test. Once the student is accepted, they are assigned to a tutor who provides information and advice to a group of students from the same intake for the duration of the course.

The tutor sets weekly goals with students which are reviewed every Monday. The group tutor also holds a debrief/tutorial session at end of each day to go over any problems and gives feedback on what has worked. This provides an opportunity for students to air any issues and ask questions. The debrief session helps to focus students after a full day working in the salon, and brings the class together. Students have individualised programmes where students can work at their own pace. Assessment is conducted when the individual student is ready.

The changes to the courses have contributed to higher retention rates and achievements over the past two to three years. The school is very supportive of students and aims to provide them with every opportunity to help them achieve the certificate. Each school has a school phone available for students to use to text tutors if they are unable to attend. The attendance records are regularly monitored by the tutors daily and checked by the site manager weekly, which helps to identify where a student may have problems so that a strategy can be developed to assist that student.

Within the first few weeks students can expect to be assessed for lower-level unit standards contained in the certificate. This recognises the learning achieved in the first few weeks, and credits are reported if students are competent. This creates a sense of achievement early on, which for some students provides enough encouragement for them to continue. Students said the reason they came to PHC was because they felt that the tutors genuinely cared. The management attributed the higher retention rates to the supportive environment.

The organisation also recognises the tutor team efforts with annual awards. This is well liked by staff and makes them feel valued and promotes the well-being and harmony of the organisation, contributing to students' support.

The organisation recently appointed a cultural manager in response to an initiative from the Auckland site manager, who recognised the multicultural make-up of students at this site required a different teaching approach to ensure that students felt at ease in the training environment. The manager is working with staff at other sites to introduce cultural activities into their lesson plans.

Students at PHC valued the training and the support they received from the director, the management team, and tutors. Students interviewed at the evaluation visit said they chose to study at PHC because of the location, and the school had a good reputation for helping people find work in the industry. The students also reported that the course was well structured and the information received meant they knew what was required to achieve the certificate.

PHC is continually reviewing its policies and procedures to see where they can enhance student retention. A more detailed analysis of student feedback on each component of courses may assist with this.

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 **Good**.

Context

PHC has a governing board made up of the director, administration manager, accountant, and one other partner. The board meets to set the direction of the organisation. The management team carries out strategic planning and reports results for the board to review. The board also uses an external advisor to provide an external perspective on the organisation's strategy and goals. The principal tutors meet with the site manager every Monday; tutoring staff meet regularly each Tuesday and Thursday to review the training and students' progress.

Explanation

The governance and management teams have led major changes to the organisation over the past few years. This has involved a shift from lecture delivery style to a more practical focus and adapting lessons plans to better meet the needs of learners. The reason for the changes was to engage the students more, which encourages them to learn.

The board and management team are committed to providing an open, inclusive environment for staff and students. The director communicates with staff on all aspects of the business transparently and is receptive to feedback and new ideas from staff. An example of this was the introduction of a cultural manager. This openness to innovation promotes ownership by staff of their role.

Communication is also enhanced by the site manager working alongside the team as confirmed by feedback from tutors and students during the evaluation visit. They valued the regular monthly visits from the regional manager and the director.

The organisation has also introduced a career pathway for tutors which they believe has led to increased motivation of tutors which has in turn flowed into an improved atmosphere in the classrooms.

The improvements in achievement are supported by the increased number of salon owners who offer to take PHC students on for work experience, the success of its students at national industry awards, as well as the ongoing contract that PHC has with HITO for provision of off-job training and assessment for apprentices.

Overall, the organisation's formal structures support the director who is able to focus on innovations and maintaining relationships with the industry. The organisation is also very active in identifying and responding to issues that contribute to the success of students. However, the organisation needs to better collate more in-depth data on student feedback and course components achievement rates using more formal measures for analysis.

Part 2: Performance in 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 **Good**.

2.2 Focus area: Certificate in Hairdressing (Level 2)

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

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

Actions Required and Recommendations

Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's regular scheduling policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from this report.

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E eeradmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz