

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Faith Bible College

Confident in educational performance

Not Yet Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 11 September 2013

Contents

Purpose of this Report.....	3
Introduction	3
1. TEO in context.....	3
2. Scope of external evaluation and review	4
3. Conduct of external evaluation and review.....	4
Summary of Results	6
Findings	8
Recommendations	17
Appendix	18

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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

Name of TEO:	Faith Bible College
Type:	Private training establishment
Location:	Welcome Bay, Tauranga
Delivery sites:	749 Welcome Bay Road, Tauranga
First registered:	1 February 1991
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in Ministry Development (Level 4)• Diploma in Christian Ministry (Level 5)
Code of Practice signatory?	Signatory for learners 18 years and over
Number of students:	Domestic: 25 International: two
Number of staff:	Six full-time
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diploma in Christian Ministry (Level 5)• Certificate in Ministry Development (Level 4)• Certificate of Bible Theology (Level 3)
Distinctive characteristics:	Faith Bible College specialises in teaching Christian ministry programmes. The campus is set in rural surroundings on the outskirts of Tauranga. Many of the students and staff live on site, and the college provides the necessities such as food, laundry and bathroom facilities. Faith

accommodates a few family groups with young children when the parents are studying. The college differentiates itself through programmes that have a practical base designed to enhance the character and confidence of the students and complement the classroom learning.

Faith Bible College is part of a larger organisation (Faith International) which has mission schools in Russia, Ghana and Nepal.

Recent significant changes: It is of significance to the provider that, in January 2013, the long-standing deputy principal left the campus. His expertise and experience have been missed.

Previous quality assurance history: Faith Bible College participated in an NZQA quality audit in 2009, and four requirements were not met at that time, but were resolved.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus areas for this external evaluation and review (EER) visit were:

- Governance, management and strategy

This is a mandatory focus area.

- Diploma in Christian Ministry (Level 5)
- Certificate in Ministry Development (Level 4)

The provider has approximately 25 students in two programmes at levels 4 and 5. These programmes follow on from each other and so it is appropriate to look at them both.

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.

Two NZQA evaluators conducted the evaluation visit over two days at the provider's only site near Tauranga. The evaluators met with the owners and

managing directors, stakeholder representatives, the administration staff, teaching staff and students. A range of relevant documents was sighted by the evaluators.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Faith Bible College**.

Faith Bible College achieves a good level of educational performance. The college has a clear vision, based on Christian principles, which pervades all of its operations. The directors provide the vision and inspiration for the college, also they manage and teach. The directors have been instrumental in the establishment and growth of the college since 1969. Course completion figures have been around the 90 per cent mark for the last few years. Nearly all of these students also gained qualifications in these years. The Faith student retention rate is very good, as shown by the 92 per cent of students who are retained in the programmes. Although the 50 per cent rate of students that progress to the higher-level programme seems only moderate, it is an indication that Faith selects its second-year students very carefully, as the students must have academic skills, Christian qualities and the attributes of leadership and service. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) has required that Faith concentrate on boosting the numbers of Māori, Pasifika and young people and their success on its programmes. Faith's output in these areas is improving but still has some way to go to meet the TEC targets.

Faith's educational performance is also measurable through the far-reaching influence of its graduates over a long period of time. Most graduates have attained employment or move into ministry or to further study. Management estimates that Faith has had approximately 4,000 graduates over 45 years. These people have travelled to many countries across the world to work in Christian missions, schools and churches. The NZQA evaluators met several of these graduates and were impressed with the work that was being accomplished.

Although transformational learning is not strictly educational in nature, Faith also performs well in this area, which enables people from troubled backgrounds to greatly improve their lives. There were examples of this transformation in the graduates interviewed by the evaluators. Some students come from a background of drug abuse, violence, mental illness and incarceration, and study at Faith allows these people to look at themselves differently and develop. The evaluators saw how these people had turned their lives around and become worthwhile leaders and servants within the Christian faith community.

A recent trend is that the number of students enrolling at Faith is declining and currently sits at approximately 25 students. The TEC has capped funding at 28.5 equivalent full-time students (EFTS), and this quota is not currently filled. Management does not seem to know of other ways to attract students, but is investigating the idea of implementing a three-month 'taster' programme.

The college maintains very good links abroad and throughout New Zealand with like-minded institutions and with its various graduates from over the years. These relationships are useful in locating placements for the students and guest lecturers to present seminars and lessons at the college, and to maintain currency and relevance in the lessons.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Not Yet Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Faith Bible College**.

Faith Bible College is still exploring the concept and application of self-assessment. Some rudimentary applications of self-assessment are in evidence, but there is no embedded system of analysis from data, with the outcomes being utilised to develop and improve the learning situation. The evaluators saw some examples of foundational self-assessment in the scrutiny of the mission statement and how it influences the lessons. Two problem areas were also subjected to self-assessment: the timeframes for the completion of assignments and the effectiveness of the daily work task components. A unified, structured system of self-assessment and monitoring of key areas of educational significance is required to give data that will provide analysis that gives sustainable solutions, rather than the current piecemeal approach to self-assessment.

While Faith's educational performance results have been good and it has met the TEC targets, teaching methodology could be improved to give the students a better learning experience. While the teachers and management are aware of students' views through the evaluation that is conducted, there were indications at the EER visit that communication and empathy between the staff and the students could be improved. The students told the NZQA evaluators that they did not really feel part of the 'family values' theme that was being promoted. It was clear that Faith should work harder at creating a student-centred approach to its learning.

The teaching staff members at Faith are largely unqualified in teaching skills, as Christian knowledge is the basis on which they are recruited. The evaluators heard that the students feel that some of the teaching is 'old-fashioned' and not very inspiring. Various methods of quality checking of teaching such as performance agreements, observations and negotiated professional development are not used at Faith, and so any problems are allowed to continue.

Most issues such as those described in this report would be picked up under a sustained self-assessment system and would be able to be systematically tackled. Faith does gather significant data, especially in the areas of student progress and achievement, but it does not appear to have a structured system of analysis leading to development and improvement. Self-assessment needs to be built into a system that monitors and measures key areas of the educational processes, so that improvements can be made on an on-going basis.

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 **Adequate**.

Faith Bible College achieves good outcomes and has consistently achieved its completion targets over the last few years. This is shown by course completion figures from the TEC showing that Faith achieved 91 per cent in 2010 and 89 per cent in 2011. However, the course completion rate in 2011 for Māori students, at 67 per cent, was under the sub-sector median, but the figures have been influenced by the low number of Maori students involved (three). TEC figures for 2012 are not yet available, but the figures for 2011 show that 89 per cent of students gained qualifications, 92 per cent of students were retained in study and 50 per cent progressed to further study at Faith. These outcomes are satisfactory from the funding body's perspective. Attendance rates are around 90 per cent overall (the requirement at Faith is 80 per cent attendance), which indicates the students' good level of commitment.

Faith is a considerable contributor of graduates to the field of Christian ministry and has trained many pastors and missionaries who work in churches, missions and schools throughout New Zealand and overseas. Over the 45 years of its existence, Faith has provided approximately 4,000 graduates who have served in 65 countries. Faith uses the TEC performance commitments to measure its performance. It has good records of student progress and completion rates, and these are collated and summarised. It is not clear that the material is analysed or that the results are used to inform course development and improvement. Student achievement is celebrated at the end-of-year graduation at which learners are invited to make valedictory speeches which are recorded for future reference.

Faith enables some students to achieve by helping them to turn their lives around. The evaluators heard from two graduates who felt their lives had been saved by studying at Faith, and this was a common theme among successful students. These students arrive from difficult backgrounds of crime, violence and abuse to gain confidence and self-respect and to find a calling. This is encouraged by the key attributes fostered in the programmes, which are Christian leadership and service. The evaluators noted that some graduates went on to university study and then to take up significant positions in their local church.

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

As a testament to the accomplishments of the students, Faith has extensive records of graduate achievements, and the evaluators saw profile pages kept in albums which covered individual graduates back to the 1970s. These albums are on public display in the main reception area and help provide motivation to the current students.

While Faith has good academic achievement rates overall, there is little evidence that it uses the achievement figures to analyse its performance and use the findings to develop and enhance the programmes. Such development is very necessary as the NZQA evaluators saw evidence that at one time the student population was much larger (almost 90 students in 1997) and that there has been a steady decline in numbers since, in spite of efforts to pick up the momentum. The TEC funding cap has been adjusted to 28.5 EFTS, and this is the figure that management is working towards, with little inclination for finding other ways of attracting students.

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 students at Faith who successfully complete their programmes gain great value from the learning. The NZQA evaluators saw evidence that this was true also for the stakeholders, especially future employers who gain well-trained Christian leaders in service. The main advantage of the programmes is their practical or applied nature, which makes the graduates very useful at an operational level, with appropriate work discipline and team skills. During the programmes, the students engage in work task components around the campus which encourages discipline, good work habits and team skills. Feedback gained by the evaluators verified this.

A further value of the programmes is that they lead to employment, further study and involvement in ministry. Most graduates have engaged in these activities. There is great value in the 'out-station' placements of students in churches and the community as the students get to practise the skills taught in the classroom and make connections that help after graduation when they are seeking employment. Through these relationships, the students develop great lifelong friendships within the Christian faith.

There is strong value in the 'total experience' offered at Faith as the students live and study at the same venue in a restive rural setting away from the diversions of urban life. Students are able to concentrate on their studies and become absorbed in acquiring the life skills that the blend of lessons, chores and leisure brings. There was evidence of students showing an increase in confidence, responsibility, work skills and the ability to present and speak in public.

The evaluators saw evidence that the alumni are used with great effect to add value to the programmes. Alumni contact and experiences are shared with current students. Some of the students are placed with alumni in the out-station placements. The use of email and Facebook to provide forums for past and present students is effective for fostering these contacts. The albums with profiles of past students and their successes provide valuable material and act as inspirational role models. A student evaluation provides end-of-course feedback on course content, the teaching and the resources and again at the end of the year, and this formal feedback is mainly positive. The information from the evaluations is summarised.

Throughout the visit, the information gained from the interviews lacked an educational focus. Across the interviews conducted for this evaluation, it was apparent that the primary focus at Faith is the Christian faith, and it seems that an educational focus comes second in importance. An improved educational focus monitored by a coherent programme of self-assessment would provide a learner-centred experience and lead to a more effective teaching experience. Individual learners' needs would become more apparent.

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 **Adequate**.

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

Generally, the college is physically well resourced for the type of study that the students engage in. Faith provides a comprehensive reference library for the students. There are also a small number of computers on hand, but the evaluators learned that these do not function very well and the internet is curtailed at 10.00pm. Faith has a useful relationship with a major Auckland Bible school, and there other such relationships planned for the future. These relationships provide significant educational interaction at the management level and enable the possibility of external moderation of assessments.

The entry criteria for the programmes do not include minimum academic entry standards, and this may influence the students' capacity to cope with the intense level of study. The entry requirements include age restrictions and a pastor's reference. The entry application form and interview provide management with indications of the applicant's ability, level of literacy and any learning issues. Improvement in literacy and numeracy skills are not systematically monitored at Faith, and there is no structured inclusion of these in the learning. Generally, the teachers are not specifically trained in the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

One of the main modes of assessment is by written assignment, and the evaluators learned that some students have difficulty completing these on time. The use of

assignments appears intensive, with the students completing one assignment a week at times. This has been identified as a problem and the students are given extensions of the completion deadline on application, but it is unclear whether this entirely solves the problem.

Faith has received many positive comments from external stakeholders for the practical nature of its courses and that it does not rely solely on academic studies in the training. The development of a work ethic and leadership skills is highly valued by the stakeholders and makes the graduates very useful in the field of Christian leadership afterwards. This is valuable for students who use the level 4 course as a gap year between school and higher study. The programmes centre on the concepts of Christian leadership and service and these are developed through a combination of study and other activities.

There is no evidence that assessments have been moderated before use and it is of concern that there is no real assurance that they are 'fit for purpose'. The evaluators were told that the assessments were used and 'tweaked' repeatedly over many years, and the assumption was that they must have been moderated originally. Post-assessment moderation is by double marking of a sample of assessment papers, and this is an appropriate methodology for this activity. It was not clear that moderation findings are analysed or the learning shared.

The evaluators gained an understanding from the student interviews that there is a break up of communication (or understanding) between staff and students. This shows itself most in the students' perception of the use of 'old-fashioned' lesson methodology, and the tardiness of the feedback on assessment results in the case of visiting teachers. Another area of learning difficulty uncovered during the evaluation was the stress involved in the students coping with the extra rigour of work when transferring from level 4 to level 5 studies. These issues in themselves are concerning, but that the staff and management were not fully aware of the depth of the students' feelings is an additional area of concern. Management was able to reassure the evaluators that it had dealt with some of the issues already.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Student feedback and outcomes data indicate that the teaching is largely effective and provides learning that is valued by the learners and stakeholders. The teachers are very experienced in the field of Christian studies. Many of them have international Bible college experience and others have served as missionaries, teachers or pastors in New Zealand or abroad. They are able to implant many experiences into the lessons to illustrate the teaching. Faith engages in a wide range of learning experiences which include the use of seminars, out-placements, a

library, online studies, classroom activities, community work and character-building domestic work. Faith provides a unique learning environment in a rural atmosphere with all amenities for living and learning on site. In recent times, the introduction of visiting groups staying for camps has been a disruption to their study, according to the students interviewed. Self-assessment provided by management observations and discussion has provided the opportunity to make some improvements, such as the introduction of supervised 'care groups' to guide the students with their assignments and daily tasks, and improvements have been noticed. Students are supported with one-to-one tutoring if they have difficulties with the course. There has been an on-going problem with late assignments, which is partly alleviated by a possible two-week extension on application. The evaluators were told that the learning is very intensive and that the teaching standards varied, with a few teachers using 'old-fashioned' methods.

It was not apparent that any of the teachers had teaching qualifications. There is also a lack of professional development in the area of teacher training, with most of the emphasis in development being on Christian studies. There is also no systematic formal observation of teacher practice and no performance agreements for teachers to give direction in professional development, especially that of educational development. There is little evidence of benchmarking, either internally with past accomplishments or externally with other, similar institutions. If this were occurring, it would provide a measure of performance and maintain currency and relevance compared to other providers.

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 **Adequate**.

Guidance and support are an integral part of Christian doctrine and learning, so they are inherent in the way the college is run. The support and guidance given by Faith is extensive and broad, and caters well for the variety of students domiciled on the campus. Currently at Faith there are two international students from Kenya and Korea, and there are some students who are New Zealand residents but who have come from other countries. The students from abroad are mature adult learners and the scope of the pastoral care available is such that they do not require care other than what is generally available. Full live-in accommodation and meals are provided. Worship facilities and sports and recreation facilities are available on site. Faith provides excursion trips, care groups for study difficulties, an open-door policy, counselling services and a designated 24-hour phone contact. The contact phone numbers for support people are posted in all classrooms. The evaluators heard that staff members are available during normal hours, but unfortunately this does not extend to visiting tutors.

The personal needs of the students are also accommodated. Allergies and disabilities are ascertained in the enrolment process. There are strong Christian role models on campus and effective and profound avenues of personal support for students from unfortunate backgrounds. The evaluators were told of 'life-changing' and 'life-saving' transformations taking place in some previously troubled people. A qualified counsellor is present one afternoon a week to deal with any issues that the students may have.

Some other resources were found a bit lacking. Computer resources are not useful to students, mainly because of poor internet connections. Students commented that there are not enough male staff members with whom they could discuss personal issues. The students said they felt a little isolated from the staff and felt that communications could be improved between the groups. While there is contact with Māori and Pasifika external groups at a management level, there was no evidence that support staff or teachers from those backgrounds are readily available for the students. The evaluators discussed these issues with management, who were aware of some, but not all of the students' areas of dissatisfaction.

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 **Adequate**.

Management and teaching staff are mostly ex-students, so the philosophy of Faith continues to be entrenched in generations of learners. Passion, belief and calling are all evident in the management and governance personnel. Faith is multi-denominational and embraces all Christian persuasions. Staff members have a wealth of knowledge and experience. Strong international experience and ties are obvious in the functioning of the school. Faith International provides a valuable international network for the local school and establishes and runs international schools to teach people in their own environment. The college has connections with many overseas churches and missions, which enables good connections for its students and staff.

Unfortunately, Faith has a slowly declining student population. In its heyday it had approximately 120 students. Currently it has approximately 25 (the Student Achievement Component funding cap is 28.5 students). Management has a strategy to offer three-month 'taster' courses to overseas students in the future, to try to stimulate interest. The college already has established contacts with local secondary schools whereby staff members visit and give talks to the students. Faith is improving on its TEC targets to attract more Māori and Pasifika students. It is also gaining more under-25-year-olds, which is another TEC requirement.

Recently Faith lost its deputy principal and this has had a large impact on students and staff, but management sees this as an opportunity to adapt. Management is thinking of implementing an academic board to replace the deputy principal. The evaluators were told that the college is financially sound, but with the numbers of students dropping, the introduction of Christian camping groups is seen as a way of maintaining financial momentum and providing learning and networking opportunities for the students.

Governance and management are engaged with various professional organisations, including the New Zealand Association of Private Education Providers, which gives a point of educational reference. There is a good understanding of NZQA's Targeted Review of Qualifications, its requirements and their possible impact. Management recently held a seminar with a guest speaker, an administrator from another Bible college, who talked about the significance of EER. Faith management found this an insightful experience.

The Faith board of trustees has a lack of academic expertise, with the membership being largely selected for their Christian faith. It would be useful if the skill set of the board had a greater bias towards business and education. One of the major business challenges faced by the college is the opening of other Bible schools to operate in competition. The business model of the college is based on its mission statement and has remained generally the same for many years. It has not adapted to changing times.

There is good use of church contacts to provide visiting teachers and speakers at on-campus seminars. The seminars are attended by staff and students alike and are available online. It is intended that a live stream of some of the seminar presentations, which are currently available as recorded versions, will be established soon. Faith maintains an effective website to provide information and news. It has good contact with its alumni through its website and electronic media.

The college has engaged in some self-assessment exercises in recent times. It has conducted intensive self-assessment of how it uses the mission statement to inform teaching. Faith management has identified that the daily duties component of the course is contentious for some students and has conducted self-assessment workshops to assess the effectiveness of these as an assessment activity. It is not clear that developments have occurred as a result of this self-assessment, as the activities that it sought to find information about do not appear to have changed.

Governance and management at Faith maintain some relationships with other organisations. The college has arrangements with the University of Otago for cross-credits to the Bachelor of Theology degree at Otago, and also has links with Zion University in the USA. Membership and participation in outside professional organisations helps Faith maintain currency and relevance in the teaching.

If Faith is to improve its student numbers and performance, it needs to engage and pay heed to the results of its self-assessment. The appropriate strategy is to embed self-assessment throughout the operation, collect valuable data from this

process and ensure that it is analysed, discussed and used to inform development and improvement throughout the functions of the college. Currently, although data is being collected, it is not being used in the most productive manner to encourage informed development and improvement.

Focus Areas

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

1.1 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 **Adequate**.

1.2 Focus area: Diploma in Christian Ministry (Level 5); Certificate in Ministry Development (Level 4)

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

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

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Faith Bible College:

- Develop a self-assessment system that enables the college to draw on good quality data to analyse and make informed decisions that result in development and improvement of learning outcomes.
- Adopt a more student-centred approach to learning based on contemporary adult education principles.
- Examine and work on the relationships, communication and dynamics between staff and students to create an environment of harmony and empathy.
- Facilitate teacher training for the teaching staff.
- Formalise the inclusion of literacy and numeracy in the programmes.
- Improve the systems of moderation to give an appropriate overview of the appropriateness of assessment and teaching practices.

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).

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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Final Report