

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Worldwide School Limited
trading as Worldwide School of
English

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 1 December 2015

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Final

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:	Worldwide School Limited trading as Worldwide School of English (WWSE)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1 February 1991
Location:	80 Anzac Avenue, Auckland
Delivery sites:	As above
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General and Intensive English (7 levels of proficiency)¹• Exam preparation classes for International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Test of English for International Communication and Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE), and Cambridge Advanced English (CAE)
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	International: approximately 135 equivalent full-time students per annum (160 students were enrolled at the time of the external evaluation and review (EER))
Number of staff:	21 full-time equivalents (includes 14 full-time teachers and five support staff)

¹ Part-time students enrol in General English and full-time students enrol in Intensive English.

Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General English • Intensive English • Worldwide School of English Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) (Level 4) • Cambridge Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT)
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>WWSE provides English language education to students from a wide range of nationalities.</p> <p>Learners enrol for a variety of purposes and periods. Approximately 80-90 per cent of learners enrol either part- or full-time for an average of eight to 10 weeks, with the intention of travelling and/or working in New Zealand before returning to their home country. Learners have the opportunity to transfer to three other English language providers and experience living and studying in other New Zealand towns and cities.</p> <p>Ten to 15 per cent of learners are studying for international English language exams.</p> <p>WWSE students may also enrol in other elective courses (such as Business English and English Plus programmes, which include rugby, farm stay or internships with local companies).</p> <p>A small number of learners (approximately 5 per cent) pathway to other New Zealand tertiary providers.</p>
Recent significant changes:	<p>In February 2014 WWSE moved premises and now shares facilities and some resources with another English language provider.</p>
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>At the EER in 2012, NZQA was Highly confident in WWSE's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.</p> <p>WWSE is a member of English New Zealand which regularly audits member schools against management and academic standards specific to the English language industry. In an audit in August 2015, English New Zealand found WWSE complied with Version 12 of the Standards, and noted four commendations.</p>

Other: WWSE has formal agreements with several tertiary providers for students to gain entry to specified programmes on the basis of WWSE's internal English language test.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Mandatory focus areas were:

- Governance, management and strategy
- International student support.

The other focus areas selected were:

- General and Intensive English programmes – the majority of WWSE students are enrolled in these programmes
- Cambridge exam preparation classes – the majority of students seeking academic English programmes opt for Cambridge First Certificate in English and Cambridge Advanced English.²

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 evaluators visited WWSE over two days. English New Zealand nominated a representative (from another English New Zealand school) to observe the EER for training and development purposes. The evaluation team met with the two owners, the director of studies, 14 academic staff, four counselling/support staff and the accommodation manager, and 19 students studying in the focus area programmes. Phone interviews were conducted with representatives from other tertiary providers and an employer.

The evaluation team sighted management, academic and support services documentation, including planning and review documents, survey feedback, teaching-related materials including records of student progress and programme management, staff and student handbooks and homestay information and meeting

² This focus area was agreed at the beginning of the EER site visit, to replace IELTS exam preparation classes, as Cambridge classes represent a longstanding and larger component of WWSE's educational provision.

minutes. In addition, the evaluators sighted the learner management system (Worldwide On-line).

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Worldwide School Limited, trading as Worldwide School of English.**

The reasons for this judgement are as follows:

- Learners enrol at WWSE to improve their English for a variety of reasons, including travel and/or work in New Zealand, personal interest, to improve their employment prospects or gain access to further study. There is evidence from a variety of sources that learners are making excellent progress in improving their English language skills, and are very satisfied with their experience of studying and living in New Zealand.
- WWSE has a thorough and credible approach to measuring English language acquisition and monitoring individual progress through language levels, which includes robust assessment and moderation processes that provide assurance of the validity of learner outcomes.
- Learner records provide evidence of learners gaining increased confidence and fluency. The learning environment also fosters the development of cross-cultural knowledge and understanding and friendships.
- WWSE offers a range of programmes and electives that meet the varied purposes and interests of a diverse student population. Consistently high rates of satisfaction and positive feedback are important indicators of the valued outcomes for learners.
- Other important outcomes include consistently high overall pass rates in Cambridge exams and improved prospects for employment or further studies in New Zealand or in learners' home countries.
- Highly effective teaching is fostered by an integrated approach to academic planning, monitoring and resourcing, and a commitment to supporting staff development.
- The quality of guidance and support at WWSE is very high, and all staff share responsibility for ensuring learners needs are met. This is a key factor in learners achieving their goals.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Worldwide School Limited, trading as Worldwide School of English.**

The reasons for this judgement are as follows:

- WWSE is a well-organised PTE with appropriate systems and processes in place to assess and meet the needs of learners and other stakeholders and to maintain high standards of education and service delivery.
- Feedback is regularly sought from learners, staff and other key stakeholders and used to identify improvements on an ongoing basis, such as improving information for learners or introducing new activities, inside and outside the classroom.
- Self-assessment logs, which were introduced in 2014, provide a useful record of periodic reviews and significant improvement initiatives, including the outcomes of actions taken. The academic self-assessment log demonstrates a genuinely reflective approach, showing clear evidence of a process of enquiry, consultation and review. Examples include the introduction of a weekly self-study session, reviews of teaching resources and the development of new processes, tasks and rubrics for tests.
- As part of a considered strategy for increasing learner engagement and fostering the development of independent learning skills, WWSE has recently invested significantly in technology for all classrooms to enhance teaching and learning, and has also developed an online learner management system which contains learning materials and links to useful websites. WWSE continues to monitor the effectiveness of these initiatives and to identify further improvements to ensure positive learning outcomes.
- The teaching team is collegial and regularly shares information and resources. Opportunities for reflective practice include teaching observations (by peers and/or managers), annual self-assessment and performance appraisal processes, and contributions to regular professional development sessions.

Findings³

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**.

The majority of learners enrol in General or Intensive English programmes at WWSE for personal interest, travel or work purposes, and they make very good progress in improving their English language skills and developing their confidence and ability in everyday communication. The short study duration (average eight to 10 weeks) of the majority of these learners means that it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions on the overall rate of progress for learners. However, it is clear from individual records and other indicators of learning outcomes that learners are achieving very well in the context of a clear structure and criteria for progression and a general expectation regarding rates of progress which takes account of individual backgrounds and motivations. WWSE reports consistently high overall pass rates in Cambridge exams (86 per cent in 2013 and 84 per cent in 2014).

English language acquisition is measured through regular skills testing and learner feedback, monitoring of individual tutorials and self-directed study, as well as monitoring of progression through language levels (for longer-term students) and/or international exams (for a small number of students). The use of standard tests together with moderation of assessment for speaking and writing skills, and clear criteria for progression through the language levels, provide assurance of the validity of the learner outcomes. Monthly reports and final assessments of achievement also include evidence that learners are gaining increased confidence and fluency. Clear communication lines within staff and between staff and students ensures that tracking of individuals is consistent throughout their course of study. Strong evidence of the monitoring of student progress is found in learner passports and individual student files, meeting minutes and monthly progress reviews.

WWSE regularly monitors learner feedback, and reports very high rates of learner satisfaction with their learning and overall rate of progress. There is ample evidence of WWSE responding to learner feedback, providing additional information and support to students and staff as required. The self-access sessions provide regular opportunities for teachers to encourage learners to work independently on gaps and weaknesses (often identified as part of the initial needs analysis and goal-setting) and to provide additional motivation and support. Learner passports provide evidence of this activity, but it is not apparent that a

³ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

formal review of achievement against goals is routinely undertaken at the conclusion of the enrolment period. Learners interviewed by the evaluation team reported the value of these sessions and their satisfaction with the individual support provided by teaching staff for achieving their study goals.

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**.

WWSE has delivered international education for many years and has a good understanding of the expectations of stakeholders from diverse markets, and is highly successful in delivering valued outcomes to learners with varied goals. Improved communicative competency in everyday New Zealand English, including confidence and fluency, are important outcomes for those students who go on to travel and/or work in New Zealand. In addition, many students benefit from engaging, inside and outside the classroom, with individuals from other cultures and living independently, which fosters the broadening of horizons and personal growth.

A small number of students take up the opportunity to transfer to partner schools in three other towns and cities which extends their experience and understanding of New Zealand lifestyle and culture. WWSE facilitates short-term internships with local companies for approximately 20 students each year. Internships enable individuals to meet the requirements of their university programmes and/or gain useful professional experience, including knowledge of relevant technical language. Employers report that interns are useful and well prepared and that WWSE maintains regular contact throughout the period to resolve any issues should they arise.

For some learners, the achievement of international English qualifications (such as IELTS or Cambridge First Certificate in English or Cambridge Advanced English) facilitates their further study or extends their employment prospects in New Zealand or elsewhere. However, WWSE has also established several pathway agreements with local tertiary providers, which enable students to progress to level 3 programmes on the basis of WWSE's own English language proficiency testing. Providers contacted by the evaluation team confirmed that WWSE graduates have the requisite English language levels and are well-prepared for, and successful in, their further study. Pathway providers are confident in WWSE's English language standards and report that students are supported as they transition from WWSE to their new programmes. Providers also appreciate the opportunities the relationships provide for shared marketing.

WWSE has established networks with education retailers, both on and off-shore, and with appropriate professional bodies, which reflect WWSE's strong reputation and contribution to the international education industry. WWSE regularly engages with key stakeholders and gathers information on the changing environment which it uses to ensure programmes deliver valued outcomes. A recent example is the Job Club, introduced in response to a growing number of students seeking part-time employment.

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**.

WWSE effectively meets a variety of needs and study purposes through weekly intakes into seven levels of General and Intensive English. Preparation classes for several international English exams are delivered through a structured syllabus with an exam focus. Minimum entry criteria are applied, including retesting on site to confirm the English language level, to support student success. The General and Intensive English programme is well structured with clear curriculum and learning objectives, while being flexible enough to enable teachers to respond to various needs and requests. The director of studies oversees programme delivery and resources, collating and analysing monthly teaching summaries to ensure appropriate level, pace and direction is maintained. WWSE has a clear testing and progression schedule, including an initial placement test and fortnightly skills-based tests aligned to the learning outcomes. There is good evidence of rubrics being applied, and moderation processes ensuring consistency across all classes. Recent improvements include revised rubrics and external moderation of writing tests (refer Findings 1.4).

In early 2014 WWSE introduced weekly self-directed study into the morning classes for General and Intensive English students as part of a considered strategy of fostering independent learning skills. Learners complete an initial analysis of their learning needs and study goals and are then encouraged, with the regular input of their teachers, to focus on weaknesses and areas for further development. Individual learner passports provide a useful record of this activity. Learners can also access their test results and monthly progress reports via the Worldwide On-line learning management system, which has been recently developed. WWSE reports some indicators of increased independent learning among learners (such as more regular use of reading resources and positive effects on vocabulary acquisition) and is regularly surveying staff and students to identify further enhancements.

Staff and students have access to a very wide range of hard-copy and online teaching and learning resources (including those that refer to New Zealand lifestyle,
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culture and language) which enable learners' interests and needs to be met. A variety of listening resources focused on New Zealand conversation, as well as regular optional conversation classes, assist learners to improve their confidence and fluency, which has been identified by many learners as a priority. An extensive library and resource centre is supplemented by online resources available through Worldwide On-line. WWSE has also recently invested in technology in all classrooms to provide teachers and students with opportunities to engage with English language resources in different ways, such as using mobile devices.

WWSE regularly gathers feedback from students and staff, informally through conversations, observations and meetings, and formally through regular surveys. In addition, targeted surveys are conducted to inform specific projects or developments. High rates of student satisfaction with programme and service delivery and facilities and resources are evident from surveys conducted four or five times a year. WWSE provided a number of examples of how feedback has been used, for example to enhance teaching resources or activities.

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**.

Learners at WWSE benefit from a stable team of qualified and experienced teachers, who are very well supported by management to continuously reflect on and develop their skills and teaching effectiveness. Newly recruited teachers are mentored by a colleague and their teaching is observed several times over a six-month period before their tenure is confirmed. All staff participate in weekly staff meetings, peer observations and an annual performance interview. Teachers are encouraged to contribute to regular in-house professional development sessions. WWSE supports teachers to participate in external professional development, such as industry seminars or further training, and share newly acquired knowledge with colleagues. The effectiveness of a recent professional development focus on enhancing skills for using technology in teaching is being closely monitored by WWSE management.

WWSE has established appropriate academic and management processes which support good teaching practice. Teachers work closely together to discuss learner progress, share resources and ideas, and identify areas for improvement. There is evidence from teaching records and learner feedback that teachers are using a variety of approaches to encourage participation and to enhance learning. Short-term students benefit from specific task-setting on the weekly learner passport; this allows students, teachers and management to understand and plot individual progress rates. Assessment and internal moderation processes (including external moderation with a comparable provider) are well documented, which together with the use of standardised tests for the fortnightly tests provide assurance of

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consistency and the validity of learning outcomes. Teaching effectiveness is further confirmed by the positive assessments by learners and other stakeholders.

In addition to ongoing professional development, there is ample evidence of teaching staff being consulted on, and contributing to, a range of improvements which enhance teaching effectiveness. Examples include curriculum revisions, improvements to tasks and processes for conducting speaking tests, and ongoing refinement of functionality on Worldwide On-line to foster student access.

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**.

Staff at WWSE share responsibility for the academic and pastoral care of learners to ensure they have a positive learning experience which is a key factor in achievement of their study goals. There is good evidence that students feel well supported by WWSE. Accurate and complete information is available prior to enrolment and during a comprehensive orientation. Learners have easy access to staff and management, including regular meetings with counsellors who speak their first language. Learners can view their test results (which are graphed for easy reference) and monthly progress reports at any time on Worldwide On-line.

Language acquisition and learning about other cultures is fostered by ensuring diversity of nationalities in each class, and social engagement in the large cafe area and/or through the regular schedule of after-school activities. Monthly communication by WWSE with education agents ensures that they, and students' families, are well informed about the wellbeing and academic progress of learners. Any concerns or issues are addressed promptly, and actions taken are recorded for future reference, either by the director of studies or the counsellor depending on the nature of the matter.

WWSE provides homestay accommodation for approximately 70 per cent of WWSE students for at least part of their enrolment period. Communication and support is available to learners and homestay families in response to any feedback that is offered. Regular newsletters provide useful information for homestay hosts. Recently, additional information has been prepared to assist students who prefer rental accommodation.

WWSE has appropriate processes for ensuring compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students. The annual code review provides an opportunity for management and support staff to ensure the currency and accuracy of all student information and to consider improvements to support services. Counselling staff report that they receive regular feedback from students, informally as well as from satisfaction surveys, and regular peer evaluations contribute to their annual performance review.

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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**.

WWSE has appropriate policies and processes for management, academic and support activities which are well documented and effective in maintaining high standards of educational performance. Effective leadership and communication practices ensure staff feel valued and engage constructively with organisational change. Ongoing improvements are informed by feedback gathered through a variety of channels, including purposeful meetings, regular and ad hoc surveys, observations and informal engagement. In addition, periodic reviews are undertaken of major projects or activities. For example, the self-access system has been reviewed on a six-monthly basis since its inception. Self-assessment logs (which began in mid-2014) show how WWSE is tracking the effectiveness of, and further refining, significant projects, such as the self-access system, to enhance educational processes, tools and other resources.

Investment in embedding technology into education delivery through the provision of hardware and software has been a major driver for WWSE over recent years. An emphasis has also been placed on related professional development to build staff capability and to ensure positive outcomes for teaching and learning. Since the previous EER, WWSE has also relocated to premises where some functions and activities share space with another English language provider. This has enhanced the quantity and range of teaching and learning resources available to staff and students, without compromising the special character and culture of WWSE. These initiatives demonstrate WWSE's capacity for implementing change to support and improve educational performance.

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 **Excellent**.

2.2 Focus area: International student support

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: General and Intensive English

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: Cambridge exam preparation

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

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

WWSE maintains data on the success of students in Cambridge examinations and was able to discuss trends in general terms. However, the evaluation team found limited evidence of analysis or benchmarking of results being used to identify improvements.

Recommendations

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

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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