

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

## The Salvation Army Booth College of Mission

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 26 September 2012

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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:	The Salvation Army Booth College of Mission (BCM)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Upper Hutt
Delivery sites:	As above
First registered:	1 July 1991
Courses currently delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training (Level 6)</li><li>• Diploma in Salvation Army Mission and Ministry (Level 6)</li><li>• Diploma of Biblical Studies (Level 5)</li></ul>
Code of Practice signatory	BCM is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.
Number of students:	Domestic: 25 New Zealand campus International: two
Number of staff:	20 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	Religious Studies
Distinctive characteristics:	The Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training is designed to provide training for selected Salvation Army members, as per the international Orders and Regulations for Officer Training, or for

personal interest.

BCM offers the international Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training over two years. As part of the qualification, students complete the requirements for the Diploma of Biblical Studies in their first year. In their second year they undertake inquiry-guided learning within the Diploma in Salvation Army Mission and Ministry programme, and complete the Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training.

BCM also manages various professional development courses for employees, laypeople, and Salvation Army officers through the Centre for Leadership Development based in Upper Hutt.

Recent significant changes: None

Previous quality assurance history: The organisation did not meet two requirements in relation to the timely submission of financial attestations at the previous quality assurance visit, which was an audit in 2007. However, the organisation provided these as soon as they were available for the auditors following the audit.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training was selected as the focus area for the external evaluation and review (EER) because it is the main qualification that students come to BCM to achieve. It was also selected because the Diploma of Biblical Studies and the Diploma in Salvation Army Mission and Ministry are embedded within the certificate. The mandatory focus areas of governance, management, and strategy, and international student support were also included in the scope of the EER.

### 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.*

The EER took place over two days at the organisation's site in Upper Hutt. During the visit, the evaluation team spoke with the principal (which includes the role of training principal for the school of officer training), the academic registrar, tutors, students, and two representatives from the BCM academic board. The team also conducted phone interviews with graduates, and reviewed the organisation's self-assessment documents (which included information on students' results and analysis of feedback).

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **The Salvation Army Booth College of Mission**.

Students within the Salvation Army officer training courses have achieved high rates of success, with 100 per cent completing at Upper Hutt over the past two years. This success rate is partly because the in-depth selection process helps to ensure that BCM enrolls candidates with the ability to complete the work and serve as officers. The support of staff, including the tailoring of individual programmes and one-to-one sessions, also helps with the students' success.

The success of the students also relates to the practical programme activities used to provide students with experience serving in their community. Training activities include providing religious education at primary schools and support for prisoners and those facing the courts. Students select a mentor from the tutoring staff and meet with them four times during the year to review progress and gain assistance with their theory assignments. Students said this was useful as many have not achieved formal qualifications previously or participated in formal training for some time.

The international Salvation Army organisation, with the head office in London, particularly values the Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training. This is because the training meets the training orders set by head office. Because of this, other Salvation Army groups from overseas and within the Pacific region send their members to complete the Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training at BCM. The divisional commanders nationally provide feedback to the principal on the training, and those interviewed reported that the structured training makes a difference to how well the officers cope when they are appointed to serve in their area. Around 86 per cent of students achieved the Diploma of Biblical Studies from 2009 to 2011. However, there is no formal benchmarking against other training providers of this qualification to determine whether this is acceptable or whether there is opportunity for improvement.

The organisation reviewed its structure three years ago to decrease the number of committees and make communication between the different departments easier. Staff commented that this had improved their communication. However, the organisation needs to demonstrate the value of its training for its external stakeholders.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **The Salvation Army Booth College of Mission**.

BCM has a formal structure which is involved in decision-making at all levels of the training. Students are only accepted into the programme if selected by the appointment board following a selection process involving academic background and assessment of ability to serve. The academic quality committee, consisting of the academic registrar and tutors, meets monthly to review the programme timetabling and assessment outcomes, including student grades, to monitor progress against expected completion targets. Students' course results are recorded and compiled in an annual report showing comparisons with previous years. Input from the student committee is also considered in the process. A final review of students' successes is conducted by the appointment board which appoints graduates to serve in a region.

The BCM academic registrar is also a member of the Christian Theological and Ministries Education Society (CTMES). Laidlaw College, a member of this society, regularly reviews the Diploma of Biblical Studies to ensure that it is relevant and meeting the needs of Salvation Army groups and the people who want to serve in missions.

The senior training officers and education officer monitor the personal development as well as the academic success of their students, and provide a high level of support throughout the two-year programme.

Although the organisation has the structures and ongoing review processes in place to monitor achievement towards goals, it has yet to analyse the students' overall outcomes using benchmarking with similar training providers and feedback from the community to confirm that the training is successful and is valued by all of its stakeholders.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 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**.

The organisation has had 100 per cent achievement of the Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training and 100 per cent for the Diploma in Salvation Army Mission and Ministry for the past two cohorts at the Upper Hutt site.

The organisation analyses how well students do in each of the tests to determine where students are having the most success or where there are areas for improvement. However, there has been no formal analysis by management of the results to identify areas where the organisation could help improve the achievement rate for the Diploma of Biblical Studies. The data provided by the organisation shows that full-time student completion rates for the past three years have been 6/9 (67 per cent) in 2011, 12/13 (92 per cent) in 2010, and 19/21 (90 per cent) in 2009, which in total is 37 out of 43 (86 per cent). The organisation said the results vary from year to year because not all students require the Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training, which alters the completion rates. In addition, the small numbers that withdraw choose to do so for personal or vocational reasons and not because they are failing their course requirements.

The organisation has data for the number of students that achieve qualifications for each year and the grades achieved. In addition, the outcomes are recorded by gender and ethnicity. However, further analysis of results may help the organisation identify trends in course difficulties or for comparison of outcomes against different student groups. Benchmarking against like providers will also inform BCM about its performance in the sector.

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



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

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

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

The Salvation Army officer training certificate is a prerequisite to becoming a fully serving officer in the Salvation Army in New Zealand and overseas missions. New officers are given thorough training in the generic skills needed by a Salvation Army officer, as well as increased knowledge of the Bible. New Zealand divisional commanders reported to the evaluation team that they have noticed that as a result of the training, newly appointed officers' skills and confidence are higher than those of previous graduates who did not have the same level of training.

Students' feedback to the evaluation team was that the training gave them useful skills to use for their appointments such as time management, computing skills, improved writing skills, and how to work in a team with people from different backgrounds. However, leadership skills were the most valued skills that graduates said they had learnt. Evidence of this was the successful transition to an officer by a Salvation Army member with no previous formal education but a passion to serve her community.

Community groups also benefit from the training as students serve in their communities in prisons and courts and provide religious education in primary schools. BCM students also participate in fundraising activities to help other missions overseas.

Some students choose to go on to further study, which is facilitated by agreements with Laidlaw College and Otago University to cross-credit the Diploma of Biblical Studies into one year of degree-level religious study programmes. Most students interviewed by the EER team said they found the course valuable as it gave them useful knowledge to help confirm what particular life mission they would like to serve in, such as prison services or drug and alcohol addiction.

BCM has a strong understanding of the value of the training through its ongoing contact with the majority of its graduates for up to 15 years after they attend the training. The organisation's reports show that there is a very high retention rate, with around 70 per cent of graduates still in ministry after ten years. Graduates have contact through regular residential officer reviews by the BCM Centre for Leadership Development, which are held one, five, ten, and 15 years after graduation. During these reviews, information is gathered to review how helpful the training was for the officer's role and to identify areas for further training. This information is provided to the academic board and changes are made to course content as required.

Feedback from divisional commanders within the community about the value of the training to the communities it serves could be formalised to understand the value of the services the officers provide to the community.

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

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

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

The Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training meets the international orders for Salvation Army officer training, which is a prerequisite to becoming a Salvation Army officer. The principal of BCM has overall responsibility for ensuring that the certificate training continues to meet the requirements of the official orders. Students attend to gain the certificate to be able to serve their chosen ministry. A few students enrol in the Diploma of Biblical Studies to increase their understanding of the Bible.

The students' ability to complete certain aspects of the study helps the BCM appointments board determine what sort of appointment would be suitable for students on completion of their training. Feedback from divisional commanders spoken to by the evaluation team was positive about newly appointed officers' abilities to serve as a result of the training, but felt that more information about the programme would help them to understand students' additional regional training needs when they are first appointed.

The first year of the programme provides students with general theory and practical training to meet the needs of divisional areas and overseas missions to assist them to serve as a Salvation Army officer. Students gain suitable practical experience during their non-classroom activities to serve in missions, such as teaching religious education in primary schools and providing support for prisoners and those appearing at court. When students have passed all course prescriptions, they are required to sit separate assessments for the Diploma of Biblical Studies, which is awarded at the end of the first year.

In the second year, students continue with their practical training, alongside denominational-specific training and the development of enquiry and written skills. The second-year curriculum includes an open enquiry and students select their own project topic for research. The organisation has a large library and has recently taken over archive responsibilities for the national Salvation Army office, which provides a rich resource of information for students. Students achieve the Diploma in Salvation Army Mission and Ministry and on completion are also awarded the Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training. Students also have access to computers to assist them with research for projects, and Wi-Fi has been installed to provide more access for students with their own computers.

The academic board uses students' grades, feedback from the student committee, and course evaluations to monitor how well the programme is going and to make changes to the course outline. The students' evaluations conducted by BCM indicate that the organisation responds well to feedback, such as in the spacing of

assessments and students' practical workload, where the organisation reviewed the course outline and provided feedback to the individual tutor.

The organisation has a faculty review conducted by the academic quality committee at the beginning of each year. This, along with the reviews by the academic board, provides information to management about how well BCM is meeting the needs of its stakeholders. Feedback on the value of the training, including the academic components, could be better analysed and utilised to determine whether newly appointed officers are meeting the needs of their communities or whether additional skills are required.

#### 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

The organisation employs tutors with relevant teaching skills and experience in the field as Salvation Army officers. In addition, the tutors attend relevant conferences and subject matter courses for professional development. The tutors use their experiences to help students understand the practical skills required to serve in their appointments. Tutors and support staff spoke highly of the professional development opportunities that BCM provided them with.

Students select a mentor from the tutoring staff and meet with them four times during the year. Students can also request one-to-one support at any time to discuss issues raised during theological discussions and to request further help in understanding assessment requirements. This is key to the success of the students as many come to the programme with few previous formal qualifications or recent academic experience. This approach seems to have assisted students achieving outcomes beyond their initial expectations.

Most students arrive with a sense of their mission purpose already, which tutors foster using their knowledge and experience to help them to develop their skills and knowledge to serve in chosen areas. The tutors are focussed on providing individualised teaching support to assist students with the theory requirements. Teaching activities help students think about the topic and apply problem-solving techniques when presenting their views in written assignments. Students reported that the courses delivered by the tutors use a variety of learning activities and resources to suit the class members' different learning styles. For example, students' practical activities include presenting sermons to their local church groups, and videos are made of these for assessment. Tutors' feedback to students helps to identify further aspects for improvement. The BCM performance appraisal also monitors how effectively tutors are using feedback from students and class results.

Regular academic reviews show that students are progressing well. The academic committee meets monthly to review students' grades to address issues students may have with completing assignments or to check that workload requirements are

manageable. The academic registrar has identified an opportunity to review the internal assessment moderation process for the Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training to see how the organisation can formalise the process and involve tutors in peer moderating each other's assessment decisions in the interests of greater consistency in assessment and the provision of feedback to students.

In making their assessment decisions, tutors in the theory component of the Diploma of Biblical Studies programme rely on a systematic guide provided by Laidlaw College, the programme developer. Laidlaw College also acts as the external moderator of this programme. BCM has its own guidelines for assessment of work done in the Diploma in Salvation Army Mission and Ministry programme; in response to feedback from tutors, these guidelines have recently been revised to allow better 'weighting' of the assessment criteria.

Although the organisation's tutor evaluation process shows that students are satisfied with the teaching, further analysis of outcomes, including comparison across courses and tutors, could identify where further improvements to student outcomes could be made.

### 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**.

The nature of the training programme and the training environment means that students are closely guided and supported throughout their training. Students are initially nominated to attend BCM by their regional churches and then attend a selection weekend based at BCM head office in Upper Hutt. Candidates are interviewed during this time to identify their mission purpose and whether they have the commitment and ability to complete the two-year programme. Following this, the organisation puts forward suitable candidates to the review board which determines who enrolls.

The students, many of whom are married couples, are provided with housing on campus and have access to the William Booth Educare early childhood education centre. Living costs are covered through an allowance for students enrolled in the Diploma of Biblical Studies, and other living costs such as food and clothing are also covered by BCM where students are not eligible for a student allowance. Students had high praise for their living arrangements and also the availability of staff if they need help with personal issues. This is in addition to the formally appointed senior training officers who provide support to students, including the international students.

BCM tutors closely monitor attendance and students are required to catch up on any missed classes by viewing videos of the day's lectures. The low attrition rate from the programme following graduation and support in areas such as in

budgeting provides evidence that the organisation's guidance and support processes are successful in helping students to complete the training.

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

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

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

BCM reduced the number of committees following a review three years ago. However, it still operates several committees ranging from board level to operational level to monitor students' progress and well-being and to make appropriate decisions about the programme and appointments.

The governance board makes the overall decisions about the programmes based on the needs of the Salvation Army as a whole. The divisional commanders refer students to the training and the territorial commander determines who will be selected following an assessment weekend; final approval is made by the territorial commander. The appointment board makes decisions about where graduates go on completion of the training based on students' feedback and the needs of the missions. Continuing feedback about the programme and any gaps are identified by the review board's reviews of the serving officers, held at set stages following their graduation. This has led to improvements in the programme, such as more focus on practical activities rather than administrative functions.

The academic quality committee, using feedback from the student committee and other relevant committees (including the management board of the Fiji campus, the library committee, and the timetabling committee), conducts ongoing assessment of students' progress and training delivery. These meetings provide robust information on how well students are achieving in their various parts of the programme. The academic board monitors the course and assessments at monthly meetings based on reports from the academic quality committee. This enables the organisation to identify issues in the training and to ensure resources are up to date and sufficient for students to complete their studies. The organisation recently updated its library facilities and now has an extensive collection. The site is now also home to the national archive for the national Salvation Army organisation, which is a useful resource for students, particularly in their second year of study.

Although BCM has good processes in place to evaluate the training programme and activities, it does not have a systematic, comprehensive approach to analysing students' results, or benchmarking to identify appropriate strategies for implementation to improve students' academic success.

## Focus Areas

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

### 2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

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

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

### 2.2 Focus area: Certificate of Salvation Army Officer Training (Level 6)

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

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

# Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review, other than those expressed or implied within the report.

# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of programme approval and accreditation (under sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the Criteria for Approval and Accreditation of Programmes established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act and published in the Gazette of 28 July 2011 at page 3207. These policies and criteria are deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under the new section 253.*

*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 programmes they own or provide. These criteria and policies are also deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under section 253. Section 233B(1) of the Act requires registered PTEs to comply with these rules.*

*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 EER process 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](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

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

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E [qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)