



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Ashton Warner Nanny Academy

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 17 August 2010

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Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Brief description of TEO

- Location: Stanmore Bay, Auckland
- Type: Private training establishment
- Size: 56 Full-time students – all domestic, SAC-funded (no international students)
- Staff: Two full-time owner-operators
Four part-time, permanent tutors
Casual and specialist staff as required
- Courses: Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 3)
New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 5)
- Sites: One, as above

The Ashton Warner Nanny Academy (the Academy) is a privately owned, specialist nanny training organisation located in Stanmore Bay on Auckland's North Shore. The Academy was established in 1988 and offers two qualifications: the Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 3) and the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 5). The Academy receives student achievement component funding from the Tertiary Education Commission and students are eligible for student loans and allowances.

The most recent NZQA quality review was an audit conducted in 2006 and the Academy met all of the requirements for ongoing registration at that time. This was the same result as for the two previous audits.

Executive Summary

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Ashton Warner Nanny Academy**.

The data collected by the Academy from 2006 to 2009 shows that on average, achievement rates for the Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education are approximately 70 per cent, and for the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education, approximately 90 per cent. These achievement rates are significantly higher than those for other, comparable programmes in New Zealand. In 2008, 88 per cent of graduates were in further education (early childhood education (ECE) or teaching) or employment in a child-related position of more than 20 hours per week within four months of graduation.

The Academy has set up a student support structure that is appropriate to the needs of its students and removes barriers to achieving their goals successfully.

Discussion with stakeholders indicated that the Academy engages well with its industry and community and is valued for the positive contribution it makes.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Ashton Warner Nanny Academy**.

The Academy has established a highly reflective organisational culture. All staff and advisory committee members are involved in reviewing the purpose and direction of the training and how well it is meeting its stakeholder needs. Staff also have plenty of opportunities for reflection on their role, which benefits students through improved teaching techniques and comprehensive student support.

The Academy records and analyses information on students' progress and achievement on an ongoing basis. This information is then used to make organisational improvements as well as inform course content and delivery which ultimately results in improved outcomes for students.

The Academy has embraced the self-assessment process and is using it effectively. Consideration of all stakeholder feedback, learner evaluation, internal audit, and performance indicator results is a standing item at every monthly staff meeting. Appropriate actions in regard to stakeholder feedback, learner evaluation, and performance indicator results are agreed and recorded in the minutes. Action items from previous meetings are reviewed to confirm that they have been completed and to ascertain the degree to which they have been effective. Records indicate that this practice is well embedded and has been happening for several years.

Basis for External Evaluation and Review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITPQuality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.

The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz).

Findings

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

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>

Outline of scope

The agreed scope of the external evaluation and review of Ashton Warner Nanny Academy included:

- Governance, management, and strategy (mandatory focus area)
- Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 3)/New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 5).

All students are enrolled in the above qualifications.

Part 1: Answers to Key Evaluation Questions across the organisation

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

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

The data collected by the Academy from 2006 to 2009 shows that on average, achievement rates in the Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education are approximately 70 per cent and in the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education, approximately 90 per cent. These achievement rates have been benchmarked against other members of the Nanny Education Organisation of New Zealand (NEONZ) and are between 50 and 100 per cent higher than other comparable programmes in New Zealand.

Staff at the Academy demonstrated a good understanding of the factors that lead to student achievement and regularly analyse and discuss ideas for improving achievement. Records

indicate that this practice has been occurring for at least five years and has led to gradual improvement of student achievement rates.

In 2007 achievement results of around 60 per cent for the Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education was identified as problematic and an improvement plan formulated. This plan has been reviewed and amended on a number of occasions as new insights have been gained. Analysis in 2008 and 2009 indicated that entry qualifications have a significant bearing on successful completion. Consequently the Academy developed a structured interview selection tool with weightings for the various factors considered important for success. The tool was applied to the selection of 2009 students and the qualification completion target was subsequently met in 2009. The tool was further developed for 2010 and indications at this stage are that completion rates for the Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education programme this year will be well above target.

The Academy has a strong belief in a positive correlation between student attendance and achievement and therefore monitors student attendance closely. Students are required to report in by 8.30am if they are sick. If they are not in attendance and have not made contact the principal follows up immediately. Students themselves reported that they really liked this regime. Student retention so far for 2010 is 100 per cent.

Students reported that they received timely, accurate, and supportive feedback on their progress from Academy staff. All students meet with the principal at least once per term for one-to-one discussion around progression, achievement, and goal-setting.

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

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

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

The Academy surveys all graduates four months after graduation to ascertain their destination and also to gain feedback from graduates and their employers with regard to how well their programme prepared the students for work or further education. Staff were able to share many stories of graduate success.

In 2008, 88 per cent of all Ashton Warner graduates of the level 5 New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education were in further education (ECE or teaching) or employment in a child-related position of more than 20 hours per week within four months of graduation. The comparable figure for graduates of the level 3 Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education was 68 per cent. This lesser employment outcome was discussed at staff and advisory group meetings and it was concluded that it was to be expected given that the Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education is a lower-level qualification. Employment and further education outcomes for 2009 Academy graduates have increased to 89 per cent for the level 5 certificate and 74 per cent for the level 3 Ashton Warner certificate.

The Academy believes that its programmes are not only about providing students with the ability to interact with children but are also about giving students social and life skills such as parenting, budgeting, professionalism, assertiveness etc. These attributes are measured

through the one-to-one interviews with the principal and through placement reports. Many of the students intend to use the qualification to seek overseas employment to supplement their travelling. As a result, wherever possible the Academy has included examples from overseas and incorporated cross-cultural situations into the delivery and content.

Formal cross-credit arrangements have been negotiated with Manukau Institute of Technology for the Bachelor of Education and with the New Zealand College of Early Childhood Education for its Diploma in Teaching.

The Academy believes that the most critical factor in its success is being known to provide good value to its students, the industry, and the community at large. Evidence from stakeholders, including students, indicates that the Academy engages well with its industry and community and is valued for the contribution that it makes.

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

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

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

The Academy has regular, ongoing interaction with a wide stakeholder group through varying mechanisms. These mechanisms include daily contact with students, student satisfaction surveys, monthly staff meetings, "climate" surveys undertaken with staff and stakeholders, consultation with placement parents, and biannual advisory committee meetings. The composition and functionality of the advisory committee is exemplary. Committee membership includes iwi and Pasifika representatives as well as industry, university, teaching staff, and student representation. Management actively seeks advice and criticism from the advisory committee. Members confirmed that their expertise and contributions are valued and acted upon. Management involves the committee in all forms of internal review and consults on all of its operational policies and procedures.

Engagement with local nanny agencies ensures industry needs are being met. An agency representative speaks with students from each intake to impart information and expectations about nannying. Nanny agencies endorse the Academy's programmes and speak highly of its graduates. Enrolments consistently meet maximum numbers to enable two intakes of both programmes per year and this is seen as testament that the programmes are meeting stakeholder needs.

Programme content is not only designed to provide skills and knowledge to work with young children but also teaches other pertinent skills such as communication with adults, household management, budgeting, transportation, and presenting for job interviews. Relevance of the qualifications in overseas countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom has also been researched.

The majority of students want to work as nannies, either within New Zealand or overseas. Many students enrolled in the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education programme plan to undertake further study in early childhood education. Student feedback confirms that the Academy's nanny education programmes provide them with the skills, knowledge,

and confidence to achieve their goals. In particular, the work placement component not only provides opportunities for students to develop practical skills but also improves their self-confidence. The “Graduate Gossip” testimonies on the Academy’s website span a number of years and include graduate testimonies about how the skills, knowledge, and experience gained through the nanny programme have cemented their careers and pathways to higher education.

The management team actively seeks opportunities for improvement from its stakeholders through surveys and other forums. In one example of feedback for improvements, nanny agencies responded that good manners, modest dress sense, and cellphone texting were important issues for employers and agencies. This feedback has been incorporated into programme delivery.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Staff recruitment practices focus not only on qualifications and experience relevant to the programmes but also on personal attributes that will complement the Academy’s ethos. The principal mentors new staff and assists with the development of lesson plans. Teaching performance is also monitored through the appraisal system.

Professional development needs of the Academy are discussed with staff annually. Teaching staff are encouraged to engage in professional development activities and are financially supported to do so. Teaching staff spoke about how they share ideas, experiences, and knowledge through their daily interactions, staff meetings, peer observations, and feedback from professional development activities. Recently, three tutors commenced training in language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) and the team is now working to embed LLN in their courses.

Teaching staff spoke about ways in which students and teachers learn from each other. A particularly noteworthy example involved Māori students teaching staff and fellow students skills and knowledge in flax weaving, making poi, karakia, and waiata.

Student feedback is used to improve the effectiveness of teaching. Recent feedback indicated that students preferred to be visited on placement by the tutor they know well. As a result, casual tutors no longer undertake placement visits. In 2008, one-week, full-time courses were introduced to the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education following a successful trial resulting from student feedback in 2007.

The strong rapport between students and teachers was evident from discussions with the evaluation team and evaluation survey outcomes. Students and advisory group members spoke highly of the teaching staff. Students liked the open, friendly environment and find their learning activities interesting and challenging. Students receive clear information about assessment tasks and receive good timely feedback about their learning progress.

Staff understand the importance of moderation activities to ensure assessment practices are robust and valid and this is reflected in the Academy's excellent external moderation outcomes.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

The Academy embraces the whānau-style environment and staff are dedicated to supporting its students. This is reflected in the programme's sound retention statistics for 2007-2009 which averaged 83 per cent for the Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education and 94 per cent for the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education.

The principal provides pre-enrolment information and guidance to prospective students including information and support for those seeking to board locally. Student feedback is used to advise on suitable boarding families and any negative experiences exclude these families from the provider list. The principal also provides careers advice which assists students with their pathway planning. Students interviewed spoke about how well the pre-enrolment guidance prepared them for the course.

The Academy staff are skilled and qualified to support students with learning difficulties and personal issues. Any matters that cannot be managed within the Academy are referred to appropriate agencies. Students spoke highly of the support they receive and are comfortable to approach staff with any concerns or issues.

Support for Māori and Pasifika students is evident. A Māori graduate is employed to mentor Māori students and is also seen as a role model for students. Māori and Pasifika advisers are engaged to support both students and teaching staff with embedding cultural components within programme content and the learning environment.

Work placements are well managed and monitored through ongoing communication with students and placement families. While students are supported with their placements via briefings and a script (if necessary), they are required to contact their own placement families which acts as a "mini-job interview" and helps to develop their confidence, communication skills, and abilities to present themselves. Students find placements both stimulating and "scary", but in the event of a problem they can contact Academy staff at any time and are comfortable in doing so.

The Academy does not enrol international students.

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

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

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

Ashton Warner Nanny Academy is a privately owned and operated training provider with a clear mission. The organisation has effective systems for monitoring student achievement and supporting staff to improve educational achievements.

Effective resourcing is planned and provided for all courses, and repairs and maintenance of resources is well budgeted for. The Academy has detailed risk management and business continuity plans.

The organisation has, over time, employed, developed, and retained a very competent, well-qualified, and dedicated group of staff. Staff said they enjoyed the environment and worked hard but were rewarded well and felt highly valued.

Monitoring of performance at all levels of the organisation is regular, transparent, and open. It was evident that the monitoring of performance, while often challenging, is always supportive and focused on improvement.

The organisation enthusiastically encourages opportunities for reflection on its role and how to better meet stakeholder needs. This has led to a highly reflective environment and culture throughout the organisation. Evidence indicates that the owners actively seek feedback from many sources to use as a learning and improvement tool.

Part 2: Performance in focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

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

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

2.2 Focus area: Ashton Warner Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 3)/New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 5)

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

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

Actions Required and Recommendations

Further actions

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

Recommendations

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

NZQA

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