

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

South Pacific Bible College  
Incorporated

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 24 October 2012

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MoE Number: 8634  
NZQA Reference: C07982  
Dates of EER visit: 8 and 9 August 2012

# 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:	South Pacific Bible College Incorporated (SPBC)
Type:	Private training establishment
Location:	Tauranga
Delivery sites:	As above
First registered:	31 July 1991
Courses currently delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Christian Ministry (Level 5)</li><li>• Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies (Level 5)</li></ul>
Code of Practice signatory	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: five International: nine (Chile, Thailand, USA, Korea)
Number of staff:	Five full-time equivalents Three part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	Biblical Studies
Distinctive characteristics:	N/a
Recent significant changes:	None
Previous quality assurance history:	At the previous quality assurance visit in November 2007, which was an audit, SPBC met all but one requirement, specifically relating to the moderation schedule and marking protocols.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies (Level 5) was selected as the focus area for the external evaluation and review (EER) because it is the only qualification in which the students are currently enrolled. 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 Tauranga. During the visit, the team of two evaluators spoke with the principal, the compliance manager, dean of students, tutors, students, graduates, and church leader representatives from Tauranga and Rotorua, and spoke by phone with a board representative. The team also reviewed the organisation's relevant documents containing information on course completion data from 2007-2011, as well as tutor qualifications, graduate destination outcomes, meeting minutes, and stakeholder feedback.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **South Pacific Bible College Incorporated**.

SPBC measures student achievement by tracking course completions and graduate outcomes. The data shows that student achievement has been consistently high over a number of years. Qualification achievement for 2007-2010 was around 100 per cent. However, this excellent record was undermined in 2011 by four students withdrawing, for reasons beyond the PTE's control, and by first-year students still studying to complete the full course, out of a total of ten students, bringing the overall average down to 25.6 per cent. SPBC's retention and completion rates are reflected in its data for student achievement for 2007-2011. The organisation's tracking of students' course outcomes in 2012 indicates that course completions and qualification achievement will be around 100 per cent for 2012.

Another indicator of the college's success is the high number (over 74 per cent) of graduates who are working or have worked in Christian ministry or associated volunteer work following the completion of their studies.

The tutors are well qualified and have high levels of teaching support from the dean of programmes and the management staff. Support includes individual feedback from peer observations, self-review, and student feedback to ensure the programme and teaching are relevant and effective.

The number of church groups in New Zealand and overseas that take on SPBC graduates, and the feedback received about their biblical knowledge and practical ministry skills, demonstrates that the programme and activities are matching the needs of church groups, and this evidence supports the perceived high value of the training. A high level of engagement with the various stakeholders has helped ensure the programme continues to meet their needs.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **South Pacific Bible College Incorporated**.

The organisation demonstrated that it had effective systems for tracking students' achievements to assist them to achieve their educational and employment goals, and to ensure that the programme meets the needs of church groups and other relevant stakeholders. These systems include ongoing review of tutor performance, including guest tutors, formal programme reviews using input from church leaders and graduates, and ongoing monitoring of assessment outcomes and course evaluations.

The organisation has an ongoing culture of reviewing outcomes to identify improvements. As a result of more recent self-assessment activities, the organisation implemented a number of improvements to the programme and teaching activities to increase their effectiveness. Examples of improvements include the reorientation of student support and the integration of practical activities into programmes to help students gain more experience in church leadership.

Overall, the organisation has a mature approach to self-assessment, using information from a wide range of resources to make worthwhile, relevant improvements to the programme and to promote students' well-being.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 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 **Excellent**.

The organisation has demonstrated high qualification achievement by its students for 2007-2010, with 100 per cent success in course completion, retention, and qualification achievement. However, qualification achievement was only 25.6 per cent in 2011, bringing the overall average for 2007-2011 to 85 per cent qualification achievement. The 2011 result was an outcome of the typically low student enrolments of around ten to 15 each year – of the ten students who enrolled in 2011, two withdrew for personal reasons and two did not complete, although one returned to finish in the current (2012) year.

Students typically choose to complete the qualification to help them become church leaders in their home countries or to serve on missions. The organisation retains records of the outcomes for all of its graduates for the past five years. This data shows that most graduates are currently active in the missionary field and in voluntary positions, while a smaller number have worked in Christian ministry. This shows that the training has been successful in providing relevant qualifications for students to serve their communities.

The organisation's data on outcomes is comprehensive and is analysed to show how well students have achieved on separate courses and is used for comparison to identify any trends or issues to follow up. For example, the organisation uses students' course grades to follow progress to ensure students are able to achieve.

## 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**.

SPBC trains people for church ministry, as well as for voluntary work for organisations such as the Red Cross, in New Zealand, Australia, South East Asia, and the Pacific. The college staff frequently travel to these places to interview church leaders and graduates to confirm the value of the training. The college has

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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.

also developed a memorandum of understanding with an Australian church group, which has confirmed that SPBC will be the leading training provider for this group, replacing its previous arrangement with a local trainer, because of the quality of SPBC's training.

Graduates' experiences of the training help them to become church leaders for local church groups, both in New Zealand and overseas. Students are encouraged by their tutors to be active in their local communities. The tutors accompany the students when they provide Bible study classes in primary schools and take part in outreach community programmes. The students not only gain valuable experiences, but also experience changes in their lives as a result of programme, as evidenced by feedback from parents and students. Students may also cross-credit their studies towards a Bachelor's programme offered by another Christian ministry school in Auckland.

### 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 Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies was originally developed to provide students with the knowledge to build a foundation of ministry skills, such as sermon preparation and preaching in order to become church leaders. The programme provides students with a holistic knowledge of the Bible and ministry, and enables the students to develop an understanding of themselves. Student feedback and graduate outcomes demonstrate that the programme is meeting the needs of students and church groups.

The programme includes practical ministry activities and uses classroom-based learning and course workbooks to develop theoretical knowledge. Tutors are responsible for developing lesson plans and activities for their course, and these are reviewed at the end of each term using students' results and evaluations to ensure the programme is meeting students' needs and to make any improvements. Church leaders interviewed during the EER visit said the college has improved the programme over the years and it is now more refined, with an increased emphasis on practical application and producing graduates who are confident and have the ability to provide leadership in churches. Change has been most noticeable since the organisation conducted a comprehensive review of the programme in 2008 using feedback from tutors and graduates. Tutors now use more interactive presentations and have integrated practical activities with the classroom-based learning, such as for homiletics, which involves students writing and delivering a sermon in a church group. Another refinement has been the development of a separate biblical studies class for new students separate from the second-year students to assist the first-years to develop language and study skills. This has helped improve students' confidence and course outcomes.



The college holds various workshops for its members, which students attend to expose them to the range of church activities and enable them to find ways in which they can engage in the community. These activities can be assessed as part of the programme. For example, students were assessed on their leadership and sermon skills when they recently organised a church service. The tutor observed the service and gained feedback from the attendees and the church leader to assess students' competency.

SPBC is effective in determining the needs of its stakeholders, although it does not hold formal advisory group meetings. It gains specific input through the workshops and reunions, and is able to gain feedback about the programme and its activities from a range of sources. These include church leaders and graduates within New Zealand or from Asian and Pacific churches, partner colleges, visiting tutors, and the Mission Resource Network. In addition, SPBC is a member of the Christian Theological and Ministries Educational Society (CTMES), which is a group of 22 members from a range of Christian ministry schools in New Zealand. This group is used by the college to gather input into the programme and will represent the stakeholders for the targeted review of biblical studies qualifications in 2013.

#### 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 **Good**.

Tutors are qualified in teaching, with all having had five years previous experience in ministry, including the teaching of preaching skills, as well as educational qualifications. Many have been teaching for over ten years. Where a guest tutor or new tutor is presenting a topic, they are first observed by the academic team to ensure they are able to present effectively and engage with the students. The dean of academics observes all tutors on a regular basis and provides feedback on delivery and outcomes, which are discussed to make improvements.

The dean also provides internal upskilling workshops for the tutors. This is in addition to guest presentations on topics such as case study teaching, cultural diversity, literacy and numeracy, and other teaching philosophies. These practices ensure that tutors refresh their teaching activities to engage students in the learning. The programme leader and tutors have been increasing the number of practical learning opportunities and integrating assessments with practical experience, which has been well received by students and helped with course completions. Further evidence that the tutors are effective was provided by the tutor award presented to one of the teaching team. Another example was the excellent feedback by an Australian church group about a visiting lecture by an SPBC tutor.

The organisation has an ongoing approach to ensuring that assessments are valid and meet the standard. Tutors meet three times a year to discuss any issues with delivery and how to do things better. Moderation is scheduled according to when a paper is delivered. The tutor submits lesson plans and activities prior to delivery for

checking by the programme leader. A sample of assessments is submitted for moderation at the end of the course. The dean reviews all moderation reports, assessment outcomes, and students' comments for individual courses, including guest tutors, and provides feedback in writing for tutors to read and take any actions to improve their teaching. These reports are provided to the management team for review at end-of-year meetings to ensure that the teaching is effective. The organisation does not assess unit standards and therefore does not engage with NZQA's external moderation processes.

### 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**.

Students meet with the academic dean four times a year to review their academic achievement. The dean of students is responsible for the personal and spiritual well-being of students and is in regular contact with all students. Students also reported that they were comfortable talking to any of their tutors about their course and had received good support for their study and their living arrangements. The achievement in 2012 of an external award, the CTMES Support Staff Excellence Award, also indicates that the guidance and support students receive is effective.

Students' capability to complete the programme is assessed prior to enrolment and a test administered to identify any learning needs, such as literacy and numeracy support or whether they require further English language lessons before they can enrol. International students' needs are well provided for, with housing available and help from staff to obtain and maintain their appropriate study visas and insurances while attending the college.

The management team responds to any issues identified from student feedback. For example, two years ago the students reported a lack of a spiritual environment. The organisation reviewed its spiritual guidelines regulations and introduced regular staff and student lunches, a student representative position, and increased devotion times, which has worked to foster a more spiritual environment. The organisation also recently changed its student camp to take place in orientation week as a result of feedback, which enables students to get to know each other at the start and also helps students to identify with the college sooner.

### 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**.

The board has taken a more active interest in the college in recent years to review goals against performance measures to see whether these are being achieved. The board meets three times a year to discuss the organisation's direction and to review students' outcomes, including graduate destination outcomes. At these meetings, goals are revised to ensure they are relevant. Board input, such as the identified need to increase marketing to grow the profile of the college locally, is integrated into management team planning. This led to the implementation of an open day for students to invite members of the community to visit the college. The principal also reports to the board on overall performance and any issues or improvements made.

The management team and staff conduct a self-review and present this and gain feedback at annual meetings. This process has led to open sharing of what works and to finding solutions to any issues across all facets of the organisation's activities. Self-review is in addition to the quarterly tutor meetings, where tutors report to the management team on their courses and how well students are achieving.

The graduates stay in touch with the college through reunions held every four years and at annual workshops provided by the college, which helps in establishing networks and enabling current students to gain advice on developing ministry skills.

## 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: Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies (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 **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/>*

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