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# Report of External Evaluation and Review

South Pacific Bible College  
Incorporated

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 31 January 2017

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*Final Report*

# 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
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	31 July 1991
Location:	201 Otumoetai Road, Tauranga
Delivery sites:	201 Otumoetai Road, Tauranga
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies (Level 5)</li><li>• Diploma in Christian Ministry</li></ul>
Code of Practice signatory:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: four equivalent full-time students (one New Zealand European, three Pasifika)  International: six equivalent full-time students (four Asian, one European, one Papua New Guinean)
Number of staff:	Five full-time equivalents, three part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies (Level 5)</li><li>• Diploma in Christian Ministry</li></ul>
Distinctive characteristics:	South Pacific Bible College is a small organisation with strong international links. Senior staff travel regularly to the mission fields. Visiting teachers come from international universities, Bible colleges and mission fields.

Recent significant changes:	<p>The Board of Trustees membership criteria have been changed to include more diverse representation of stakeholders and now includes regional and international members.</p> <p>Advisory group activity has been strengthened to include an Australian stakeholders meeting, a regional stakeholders meeting, MRN Collaboration Partners meeting (USA-based mission group), DMD Collaboration Partners meeting (New Zealand-based mission group), and the introduction of 'Impact Day', an open house visit for stakeholders and potential students.</p>
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>The previous NZQA external evaluation and review (EER) of South Pacific Bible College Incorporated was conducted in August 2012. The summative statements of confidence were Highly Confident in educational performance and Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment.</p> <p>External moderation occurred through an external moderator up to 2015. An external peer moderation agreement is now in place with Faith Bible College in Tauranga.</p> <p>Internal moderation of assessment is undertaken using a five-year plan.</p>
Other:	<p>South Pacific Bible College is a longstanding member of ITENZ (Independent Tertiary Education New Zealand) and the Western Bay of Plenty providers group (WBOPP). WBOPP is a mixture of PTEs (offering training ranging from hairdressing to information technology training) and the Waiariki Bay of Plenty Polytechnic. This group meets to collaborate and share in self-assessment workshops, best practice and other matters relevant to the region.</p> <p>South Pacific Bible College has a significant and ongoing association with the Christian Theological and Ministries Education Society (CTMES).</p>

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Following consultation with South Pacific Bible College management, the focus areas were chosen, and the scope of this EER included:

- International student support and well-being – most of the current students are international students.
- Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies – this is the only programme currently being delivered.

## 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.*

Prior to the EER, the lead evaluator discussed the proposed site visit with South Pacific Bible College management to finalise the scope and agenda. A self-assessment summary was supplied in advance of that visit. After the selection of focus areas, and prior to the EER visit, relevant key documents were supplied to the evaluation team to support the plan of enquiry.

The on-site visit was conducted by a team of two evaluators over one and a half days at the Tauranga site. Discussions were held with the Board of Trustees chair, the principal, dean of academics, student dean, compliance officer, chief financial officer, teaching staff, 10 students, and external stakeholders including graduates.

The organisation supplied a range of documents requested by the evaluators on site to support the evaluative conversations, and these were reviewed by the evaluation team.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

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

South Pacific Bible College is achieving a very good standard of educational performance. Students successfully complete their qualifications and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to work in leadership and service roles in Christian ministry and community groups, and to undertake further study. Students are enabled and encouraged to achieve their own individual goals and aspirations in a fully supportive and respectful learning environment. There is strong evidence from the current students and graduates that the impact of the learning journey at South Pacific Bible College is transformative and inspirational.

South Pacific Bible College delivers relevant programmes which enable students to successfully complete courses and qualifications. The embedding of cross-cultural learning and active participation in community events and networks strengthens the outcomes for each individual. South Pacific Bible College has a strong reputation for providing quality graduates who are able to work in a variety of Christian ministry and community settings locally and internationally.

Students value the highly experienced, committed and enthusiastic teaching staff who are passionate about their work and student achievement, and model Christian values, behaviours and practices to provide an engaging learning environment. There is a need to strengthen capability in assessment and moderation practice to ensure that consistency of both practice and student achievement across all subject areas and including both full-time and visiting teachers. Staff maintain strong links and engagement with graduates and other stakeholders, locally and internationally, to understand the value of the training for their Christian ministry work, community activities or further study. The ongoing and comprehensive engagement with the local community builds strong relationships and promotes the mission and direction of the organisation.

South Pacific Bible College is effectively managed, has a clear purpose and direction, and has access to expertise and resources that support the collaborative and operational aspects of the organisation. The Board provides a strong governance structure, emphasising the priority to 'transform lives' and provide quality education. The mission, vision and strategic direction of the organisation are clearly understood at all levels of the organisation. The emphasis on transformation can be seen in all activities across the organisation – particularly the feedback from graduates and students who say that their learning experience at South Pacific Bible College has positively changed their lives.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

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

Self-assessment at South Pacific Bible College is ongoing, authentic and transparent. There is good evidence of both formal and informal processes of daily review and reflection embedded within the operational practices of the organisation. The progress of individual learners is monitored and a personalised approach is taken to ensure learners succeed with appropriate intervention and support where required. There is no evidence of student achievement being reviewed at Board level.

A range of strategies is used to understand the needs of students and other stakeholders. These include systematic student satisfaction surveys, student evaluations of both the course and teaching, graduate surveys and stakeholder evaluations. The feedback is analysed and compared to identify areas for improvement. A course review process is completed prior to the delivery of every course<sup>1</sup>. This includes consideration of the previous tutor's reflective report, moderation outcomes from the previous delivery and discussion with the Dean of Academics to finalise any changes resulting from this process. However, moderation reports indicate inconsistencies in assessment practice, which highlights a weakness in assessment practice and in professional development for staff in this area. It is not clear that the outcomes of the assessment and moderation processes are fully integrated into the self-assessment and review processes in a timely way to inform improvement. A more focused review of all aspects of educational performance at the end of year review meeting and in reporting at Board level would strengthen self-assessment.

Programme review and development is occurring at course and programme levels appropriately for the small number of students. There is good evidence that staff regularly review student achievement and survey outcomes at quarterly review meetings and at the end of year review to inform planning for the following year.

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<sup>1</sup> Courses are delivered on a two-year cycle.

# Findings<sup>2</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 **Good**.

Student achievement at South Pacific Bible College is strong, as evidenced by the consistently high levels of successful course and qualifications completions. External benchmarking provides good evidence that South Pacific Bible College is performing above other similar organisations, and well above Student Achievement Component-funded PTEs.

**Table 1. Student achievement 2012-2015**

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Course completions	96%	97%	91%	95%
Qualification completions	90%	88%	86%	75% <sup>3</sup>
Retention	83%	86%	83%	79%

The organisation places a high priority on ensuring that the learning environment enables students to develop confidence in their own abilities and to be able to work with others so that they are well equipped for roles within ministry and helping organisations in the community. There is a clear emphasis on students actively volunteering their services within a range of community activities while they are studying, to put their skills and capabilities into practice.

Individual progress, knowledge-building and personal skills development are well known with the small number of students. While the monitoring of educational performance of every student is well understood by the organisation, the inconsistency of moderation outcomes indicates that greater emphasis is required on strengthening assessment practice.

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<sup>2</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

<sup>3</sup> Six of eight students achieved the qualification, one student withdrew before completing and the other student re-enrolled in 2016.



## 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**.

Students and stakeholders highly value the training provided by South Pacific Bible College because it provides a strong theoretical knowledge of the Bible and the practical application of this knowledge in a range of church ministry and community settings. Graduates recommend South Pacific Bible College to prospective students because of the quality of the experience and how well this is aligned to career aspirations.

From a survey of the 21 graduates from 2012 to 2015, 17 (81 per cent) are currently working in Christian ministry/helping organisations, with the remaining four not currently active or employed in this field. After completing their diploma qualification, 25 per cent of these graduates continued to further study and gained a Bachelor's degree. Recent graduates have 'evangelised and planted churches in New Zealand, Fiji, Thailand, Switzerland, the United States and Chile'.<sup>4</sup> Others are involved in Christian ministry such as Bay's Café in Chiang Mai, Thailand, Krosswerdz Hip Hop Ministry in Sydney, and in the Transformative Justice Institute in the Philippines.

A sense of community is fostered through the active network of graduates who:

- return to work at South Pacific Bible College as teachers and visiting teachers
- involve current students in community activities such as singing at local rest homes and assisting with children's groups in local churches
- lead activities in Outreach Week
- maintain regular contact with South Pacific Bible College and stakeholder congregations both locally and internationally
- share personal stories of how their learning at South Pacific Bible College has transformed their lives and equipped them for their new roles including setting up new churches.

South Pacific Bible College has formal and informal processes to maintain contact with its graduates, often through the personal connections established during the students' time with South Pacific Bible College and through staff travel overseas. A comprehensive tracking database is maintained and updated regularly to enable

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<sup>4</sup> From the Christian Chronicle, an international newspaper for the Churches of Christ. February 2016.

communication links with all graduates. The organisation conducts stakeholder surveys and uses its international networks to continuously verify the value of outcomes to students and communities.

### 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**.

South Pacific Bible College is clearly meeting the needs of the communities it serves. The organisation has extensive networks with church and community organisations in New Zealand and internationally, and constantly uses the knowledge gathered through a variety of networking opportunities to reflect on the relevance of its programmes and to implement improvements accordingly.

Students have a clear focus on their career aspirations and told the evaluators that the course had far exceeded their expectations. One student had planned to study for one year, but now intended to continue with the second year because they had gained so much learning and development from the course.

Positive feedback from stakeholders provides good information on the programme and how well it prepares students for work and community roles as well as contributing to current and future programme development. For example, it was suggested that an increased emphasis on training young people for Christian ministry should be considered. This has been addressed in the selection of appropriate staff to better reflect trends and practices in the marketplace. The practice of using visiting teachers adds an international dimension to the learning environment, as does the travel of staff to other countries to recognise and understand the value of graduate experiences and cultural diversity. Staff travel to other countries to shadow graduates and get feedback on how well the South Pacific Bible College programme meets the needs of the workplace. This provides valuable input into the annual review meeting and helps shape course content, relevance, and innovation in teaching practice. For example, the strong biblical theory base of the programme is what stakeholders want, and this point of difference attracts students to the South Pacific Bible College programme.

Staff at South Pacific Bible College have been actively involved in the NZQA mandatory review of religious education qualifications led by CTMES (Christian Theological and Ministries Education Society). While consultation is taking place with the Board of Trustees and other stakeholders to finalise the new programmes of study, there is a need to ensure that timelines are in place for NZQA approval and accreditation to ensure delivery of the new programmes in 2018.

Meetings with stakeholders and community groups are recorded and shared among staff. Feedback from students obtained through quarterly student satisfaction surveys is discussed at regular teacher and management meetings. The formal end-of-year review meeting is used to inform decision-making, and results in an action plan for the following year.

#### 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Teaching at South Pacific Bible College is effective and characterised by enthusiastic and experienced staff who are passionate about the content of the programmes and highly regarded by students, the local churches and community groups. Many of the staff are internationally recognised subject experts who model the behaviours and practices expected for Christian ministry roles. This has a powerful impact on the students who highly value the collaborative and collegial learning environment.

Student evaluations provide regular feedback on the delivery of each course and on the teaching. Analysis of these evaluations shows a high level of satisfaction, evidenced by an average score of 4.5 out of 5.0 in 2015, which increased to 4.8 out of 5.0 in 2016. Improvements in teaching and learning – such as more in-class activities, introduction of more quizzes, and changes in the style of teaching – have resulted from student feedback and informal conversations.

A five-year plan provides a systematic approach to both internal and external moderation of assessment. Feedback from the moderation reports is used to measure consistency of outcomes, validate learner achievement, and provide feedback on improvements to the courses. There is some evidence that the feedback from moderators is used to improve the learning outcomes and assessments when the next delivery of that course occurs. However internal and external moderation reports viewed by the evaluation team indicated some mixed results and there is evidence that the marking schedules need to be strengthened to ensure the validity of student results. With the resignation of the external moderator in 2015, South Pacific Bible College has now entered into an agreement with another local Bible college to undertake external moderation, and the first report has been received.

Professional development is supported by South Pacific Bible College, and staff share teaching and learning strategies through regular informal and formal meetings, co-teaching and inclusive teaching approaches. South Pacific Bible College also offers workshops and seminars which are open to external providers in the region. There is good evidence of effective practices in place to evaluate teaching performance using student evaluations, self-review, peer observations

and manager feedback in a formal performance appraisal every two years, with self and peer review in the intervening year.

### 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**.

With the small number of students, most of whom are international students, there is a real sense of a community where students and staff respect and support each other on a daily basis. Individual guidance, mentoring and support is provided seamlessly by the teaching staff, and this is highly effective in supporting students to achieve educational success. Students and staff spoke highly of the South Pacific Bible College 'holistic culture of care' which supports the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of every individual and underpins all aspects of the organisation. The close relationships between students and staff enable open discussion and promote the family environment through events such as shared meals and social events. Students say they feel safe, respected and listened to, and that South Pacific Bible College is culturally sensitive and aware. The requirements of the Code of Practice<sup>5</sup> are considered the baseline, and there is good evidence that South Pacific Bible College provides much wider care and support.

Comprehensive course and subject information is available and students have good access to resources such as library (including after-hours access), academic guidelines and computers. Student representatives meet regularly with staff to discuss student feedback and areas for improvement. There are many informal ways that students are supported in their learning such as individual mentoring from staff, additional tutorials and extra help at the end of a class. The high achievement rate is an indication that students are able to access the academic and personal support that they need during their studies. Students spoke highly of the culture of support at South Pacific Bible College.

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<sup>5</sup> Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice

## 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**.

The governance and management teams are committed to the South Pacific Bible College vision of 'transforming lives'. This vision is shared across the organisation and inspires and encourages the students, teachers, management and Board of Trustees. Following the 2012 EER, consultation with staff, students and the community resulted in the Board revising the South Pacific Bible College mission statement and strengthening the strategic direction of the organisation. Board membership has been strengthened to better reflect both local and international stakeholder interests, and members are well connected to the future needs of the organisation.

At South Pacific Bible College there is a strong culture of management, staff and students working together in a close family environment. Staff feel supported by management and value the inclusive work environment. Evidence-based staff performance appraisals are occurring and are useful for identifying development opportunities. The clearly defined management roles ensure that there is strong leadership at organisational level and within the academic, student support and compliance areas. Regular informal and formal staff meetings, management meetings and academic staff meetings serve as open, inclusive communication channels to facilitate the sharing of information and discussion among staff on academic and operational matters.

The organisation clearly understands its responsibilities under the Code of Practice and has effective processes to manage the recent changes. Policies are reviewed on an 'as-needs' basis and peer reviewed by appropriately qualified people to verify their completeness. For example, the critical incident policy was recently revised following the identification of a gap regarding clarification of roles.

The annual end-of-year book and meeting is a valued, key event for all staff to review the organisation's activities and effectiveness. The reports and outcomes of meetings discussed at this formal review focus on organisational performance and could be strengthened by increased attention to educational performance.

Overall, the organisation has good reflective practice on a day-to-day level as well as self-assessment based on regular activities to gather feedback, review and implement evidence-based improvements. All aspects of educational performance and self-assessment need to be systematically and consistently reviewed to strengthen self-assessment.

# Focus Areas

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

## 2.1 Focus area: International students

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: Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies (Level 5)

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

NZQA recommends that South Pacific Bible College Incorporated:

- Continue to review, monitor and evaluate assessment and moderation practice to ensure the quality, validity and consistency of assessments.
- Explore ways to report aspects of educational performance at the end-of-year review meeting, and to strengthen the reporting of educational performance to the Board.
- Develop timelines to ensure that the new programmes of study are submitted for NZQA approval and accreditation to ensure delivery of the new programmes in 2018.

# 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](http://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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