

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

R & R Associates Limited trading as  
Service Skills Centre  
(formerly trading as Fashion and  
Faces International)

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 10 February 2015

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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:	R & R Associates Limited trading as Service Skills Centre (formerly trading as Fashion and Faces International)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	1250 Fenton Street, Rotorua
Delivery sites:	As above
First registered:	15 July 1991
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retail Plus Skills for Work and Life (levels 1-3)</li><li>• Beauty Services Plus Skills for Work and Life (levels 1-3)</li><li>• Hairdressing Plus Skills for Work and Life (levels 1-3)</li></ul>
Code of Practice signatory:	Not applicable
Number of students:	Domestic: 16 EFTS (equivalent full-time students), increasing to 20 in 2015
Number of staff:	3.5 full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	Service Skills Centre has a range of accreditation for unit standards classified under the subfields Communication Skills and Service Sector Skills, as well as domain accreditation for Personal Financial Management, Beauty Therapy and Salon Skills. See the full list at: <a href="http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-">http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-</a>

[accreditations.do?providerId=863786001](http://accreditations.do?providerId=863786001)

**Distinctive characteristics:** The student population mainly consists of youth identified as at-risk. Students are often referred by school guidance counsellors or youth organisations such as Te Waiariki Purea Trust and the Community Policing Team based in Rotorua.

**Recent significant changes:** Change of ownership occurred in July 2013. The organisation changed its name to Service Skills Centre in October 2014. The programme has been restructured and the transition to the new structure began mid-2014. It is expected that the majority of the new student intake will be enrolled in the new programme pathways in 2015.

**Previous quality assurance history:** The previous external evaluation and review (EER) of Service Skills Centre, then known as Fashion and Faces, was conducted in 2010. NZQA was Confident in Service Skills Centre educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

The organisation has not assessed many NZQA-managed standards. However, NZQA has requested the resubmission of two mathematics unit standards because they were not assessed at the national standard. Service Skills Centre has submitted an action plan to address the issues identified.

Service Skills Centre has met the external moderation requirements of ServiceIQ (the ITO responsible for retail unit standards and qualifications), and is working with HITO (Hairdressing ITO) to improve external moderation outcomes for 2014. The HITO beauty services moderator has already seen an improvement in the assessment of beauty services unit standards this year. Overall, both NZQA and HITO have expressed some concerns with previous assessments conducted and are monitoring improvements.

**Other:** Students enrol in the retail course to complete the Certificate in Retail (Level 1, 40 credits) before they are able to enrol in either a level 3 beauty services or salon support course. Some students

may need to complete the National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 1) first, and may also complete their NCEA Level 1 or 2 before progressing to higher-level courses. Previously, students enrolled in retail, beauty services or hairdressing, in which the employment skills certificate was embedded. The organisation has also delivered Foundation-Focused Training Opportunities workshops to adults on behalf of the Ministry of Social Development, but this funding ceased at the end of 2013.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER of Service Skills Centre included the following focus areas:

- Governance, management and strategy (mandatory)
- Certificate in Retail Plus Skills for Work and Life (Levels 1-3)

This course was selected because it had the highest number of enrolments in 2014. It combines national certificates in retail and employment skills. The focus areas were selected based on the self-assessment of the PTE, and were agreed to following discussions with the organisation's directors.

## 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 was conducted by two evaluators over a day and half at Service Skill Centre's delivery site. The EER team spoke to the two directors, three tutors and 10 students enrolled in various courses. Stakeholders interviewed included parent/guardians, school guidance counsellors, a police community team member, salon clients, and a work experience employer.

Documents reviewed prior to the EER visit included the organisation's self-review of activities, Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) investment plans for 2014 and 2015, moderation reports, and a report on the change of ownership and upgrade of premises. During the visit, the EER team reviewed a range of documents to support their findings, including staff meeting minutes and planning, TEC outcomes, programme results, business plans, quality management system,

programme review and planning, literacy and numeracy monitoring documents, and analysis of students' satisfaction.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **R & R Associates Limited trading as Service Skills Centre.**

Learners are achieving qualifications at a rate higher than the TEC target of 40 per cent for level 1 and 2 qualifications. Current results show that 26 per cent of learners have gained a qualification so far in 2014, with another 42 per cent expected to achieve a qualification by the end of November 2014. Retention has been high, with zero withdrawals for the last intake. With the majority (around 80 per cent) of learners identifying as Māori, there is evidence that the organisation is supporting this group of learners to achieve in line with national priorities.

The 2014 levels of achievement are a major improvement on 2013, when the credit achievement rates was half and qualification achievement rate was only 14 per cent. The improvement highlights the success of the new management and staff in turning around the organisation and delivering higher-than-expected results. In recognition of this success, the TEC has increased the number of funded spaces for the PTE's Youth Guarantee programmes in 2015.

There is anecdotal and visual evidence that learners are gaining worthwhile, valued skills to help them into further study or employment. This is reflected in the significant changes in behaviour identified by staff and parents/guardians as a result of the support processes and teaching methods, which has translated into learners' highly improved confidence levels, personal appearance, customer service skills and timeliness.

Since the organisation was purchased in July 2013, there have been major changes with the refit of the premises and the restructuring of programmes to suit learner needs better. The personnel changes made under the strong vision and direction provided by the two directors have occurred in a way that has least disrupted the students. Currently, tutors are upskilling in literacy and numeracy as well as moderation to assist the organisation's assessment of needs and to strengthen assessment to ensure results are valid and meet national standards.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **R & R Associates Limited trading as Service Skills Centre**.

The organisation identified the problem with the low results under previous management and restructured the delivery of programmes. The organisation also established new systems for tutors to record learners' results against TEC targets, as well as internal measures, and it is expected to embed these into practice more when the full roll-out of the restructured programmes comes in 2015.

The different measures used by the TEC for youth courses in 2013 and 2014 means there is no accurate comparison of qualification achievement for previous years. However, there is evidence to show that credit achievement in 2014 has doubled from 2013 and there is significant improvement in retention, which provides sufficient evidence to support that the directors have made appropriate changes that have led to improvements.

Service Skills Centre uses students' satisfaction analysis and overall progress against individual goals, including literacy and numeracy gains, to monitor achievement and identify any learner needs. The organisation also has strong support from its community, such as community iwi trusts, secondary school guidance counsellors and local employers to help identify where it can further assist learners to gain the skills and knowledge required to achieve their goal of work or further study. However, this could be formalised to better capture feedback on whether programme content and activities are relevant to learners and other stakeholders.

The viability of the organisation is supported through the additional programmes run for local secondary school pupils to gain a taste of studying beauty services and salon support at Services Skills Centre. This also helps to spread word-of-mouth advertising for new enrolments.

The managing director took over in July 2013 and has already implemented changes across the organisation, from updating the premises to a more professional standard, restructuring the programme delivery, and introducing better internal reports, which will become even more embedded in the second year. These systems are sound and it is expected that the organisation will have a good base of information for identifying what works and what needs improvement for the future. The restructuring of the programmes and information about outcomes will also enable the comparison of qualification achievement and destinational outcomes between cohorts and from year to year.

# 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 **Good**.

The organisation's records show that it is exceeding the TEC target of 40 per cent for the retail qualification achievement, with 13 of the 29 learners enrolled during 2014 gaining the qualification, and a further seven expected to complete by the end of November 2014. The organisation's self-assessment also shows that it is on track to meet the qualification achievement targets for the level 2 and 3 programmes when learners complete.

Eighty-five per cent of learners that have remained enrolled throughout 2014 have achieved NCEA Level 2. With nearly 80 per cent of learners identifying as Māori, these results demonstrate that the organisation is meeting the needs of learners living in the Rotorua region. Six students have withdrawn since the change of ownership, mostly for personal reasons, and one has contacted the organisation about finishing her qualification in 2015.

This is a significant improvement on 2013 outcomes for learners. In that year, 47 per cent of learners completed their course and only 14 per cent achieved a qualification. In 2014, learners doubled the number of credits achieved for each programme from 2013, except for beauty. As a result of the restructuring of programme delivery, students will attempt the remainder of the beauty qualification in 2015.

The improved results are largely due to the change in focus the new directors and staff have brought to the organisation. The focus is about gaining qualifications and identifying and providing all-round comprehensive support to enable learners to do so. Services Skills Centre has set a target of 85 per cent qualification achievement for 2015. Based on the improvements and success of this year, it is likely the organisation will continue to provide success for its learners.

The systems established since the change of ownership for monitoring achievement during 2014 will enable comparison of future qualification achievement and destination outcomes between cohorts and from year to year. However, more comprehensive information could be systematically documented for analysis. For example, course completion, qualification achievement, withdrawals, and progression for each intake and each qualification would help understand

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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.

whether learners are progressing on to higher-level qualifications, and would identify any barriers.

## 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**

Service Skills Centre provides training that is leading to worthwhile, valuable improvements in learners' behaviour as well as increasing opportunities to gain skills relevant to employment or enrolment in further studies. This primary outcome is being achieved for this group of learners, many of whom are identified as high risk, having dropped out of the education system at a young age (as young as 12) or having issues with family and relationships to overcome.

There is both anecdotal and visual evidence that through their learning pathways learners are making conscious, realistic decisions about their futures. All learners interviewed during the EER visit stated realistic and achievable goals. Some felt ready to enrol in a polytechnic course now that they had gained confidence in their abilities, while others wanted to do an apprenticeship, and in these cases the organisation has helped learners to achieve their goals by contacting employers and helping with writing CVs. An example of this is a learner who intends to move to Australia and has already received a job offer from the contact made by a tutor at Services Skills Centre. Stakeholders ranging from school guidance counsellors to community groups and whānau said they saw learners gaining a feeling of belonging and a focus on achieving.

Supporting this evidence of the value of improved outcomes is the feedback from parents, employers, school guidance counsellors, tutors and the students themselves about behavioural and attitudinal changes. Comments were about increased confidence through achieving NCEA Level 2 and improving literacy and numeracy skills, and the resulting pride and satisfaction. The learners are also gaining social skills such as timeliness, presentation, teamwork and listening skills. These attributes and outcomes are strengthening the learners' relationship with whānau and creating a worthwhile change to help with making beneficial choices in the future.

Providers of youth programmes are not required to record information about retention and employment outcomes. However, the director of Services Skills Centre is recording where learners go and is beginning to see positive employment opportunities presenting and learners' progression into further study (80 per cent from level 2 to level 3). There is good evidence of feedback from stakeholders being used to understand the value to learners and whānau, but the organisation needs to develop ways in which to capture informal feedback more systematically to identify any trends or make improvements.

### 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 **Good**.

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

Service Skill Centre is matching learners' needs for a programme that teaches basic employment skills and confidence and leads to formal qualifications. This is confirmed by employer and other stakeholder feedback gathered by the director. Regular salon customers provided comments to the EER team about the learners' improved confidence in greeting clients and other relevant customer services skills as a result of the training.

The management restructured the PTE's programmes to provide more focus on gaining a first-level qualification before moving on to the next level, and the changes were introduced gradually during 2014. The staff and students were involved in the change process and the finding is that, when compared with previous outcomes and feedback, the changes have resulted in learners being more focused.

The programmes provide flexibility so that learners can progress at their own pace, with some preferring to study individually, while others participate in the group activities. Programme activities relate to employment training, such as salon treatments with embedded literacy and numeracy activities, but have other learning around soft skills, such as personal work ethic, timeliness and personal presentation to enable the learners to be work-ready.

A range of activities is available to support learners in finding employment. Staff provide advice on CV preparation and help contact potential employers, as well as arrange for work experience. Other experiences that help learners relate to one another and the programme context include salon visits and social activities.

The staff maintain awareness of industry needs through engagement with the Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ) updates and informal feedback from the various stakeholders. This is used to help ensure learners' needs are met and to gather information to inform programme planning. The organisation is looking to develop stakeholder groups to better capture feedback in a more formal manner.

## 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 **Adequate**.

The teaching staff have the relevant experience and qualifications to teach the programmes. The EER team heard that tutors apply different teaching styles to suit the range of learner needs. Tutors ensure that learners are engaged, using verbal questioning and feedback on their workbooks. Service Skills Centre demonstrated that it had good processes and systems in place for reviewing students' satisfaction. Management listens to learner feedback and makes relevant improvements, as seen in changes to group work activities and staffing. Overall, the positive learner outcomes and upwards of 90 per cent satisfaction across all aspects of the teaching activities provide evidence that the teaching is effective.

Staff performance is reviewed annually and staff have an opportunity to provide feedback on the organisation's management and direction. Management reviews learner feedback and progress for each course and this is discussed with the tutor. However, only one tutor has had a full annual review because the other two tutors have been employed for less than a year. All staff recently enrolled in an adult literacy and numeracy national certificate as this was identified as an area for upskilling. Staff meet weekly to discuss learners' progress, and the PTE is introducing templates to document staff meetings to provide an ongoing opportunity to review progress and capture feedback to make necessary changes.

Previous annual external moderation results highlighted a need for improvements to assessment materials, and the organisation has responded with staff training in assessment and reporting procedures and a total review of all workbooks and assessment resources. HITO, which is responsible for monitoring salon and beauty services assessment standards, has expressed its satisfaction that the approach Service Skills Centre is taking will address assessment issues noted previously. However, the results of NZQA's national external moderation will not be known until 2015. This affects the core skills unit standard assessment materials, which were out of date, and assessor judgements, which were not to the required standard. An action plan to improve assessments has been accepted by NZQA, and improvements are already underway with the revision of all workbooks and in staff changes.

Overall, the improvement in learners' achievements as a result of the support and teaching from tutors is commendable. However, further confirmation that assessments are at the national standard and that tutors have completed upskilling is required for this area.

## 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**.

Learner support is excellent and staff have created a safe place for learners, which supports them in their goals. The support ranges from arranging transport to and from the site, external literacy and numeracy teaching, one-to-one tuition and the additional 'awhi' demonstrated by the tutors and acknowledged by the students and those stakeholders who are closely involved.

The uniqueness of the PTE is the sense of belonging that learners feel and the desire to attend. This was seen by the consistent attendance and the retention of some learners into higher-level of study who were not previously engaged with learning and dropped out of school in their early teens. The other unique factor articulated by whānau and staff was the learners' mutual support and encouragement to succeed and work well together in a group.

Interviews at enrolment help to identify potential learners' motivation and ability to attend and complete the programme. An assessment of literacy and numeracy skill levels is conducted to identify the appropriate support required to assist the learning. Learners then establish goals for the year ahead, and for three years and five years. These goals are reviewed at key points during the year, along with literacy and numeracy progressions. The current data shows improvements with literacy and numeracy, with some learners progressing up two steps. The progress is monitored at an individual level because of the array of learning needs, which makes it difficult to compare across the cohorts.

An incentive system operates that gives rewards to learners for credit achievement and attendance. Each month learners vote for a student of the month, with input from tutors, which helps build confidence. At the end of the year a graduation ceremony is held and this gives the learners and their whānau an opportunity to celebrate the successful achievement of learning goals.

## 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 new director has previous experience with youth in secondary schools, PTE operations and human resources. Decisions are reviewed by the director and her business partner, as well as the organisation's accountant, who managed the financial side of the previous entity. The initial priorities for the organisation were the review of programmes, revision of resources and improvements to the training

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premises, which have now been completed. The director has managed the transition to a new programme delivery structure while still focusing on addressing learners' needs. The improved qualification achievement and progression is attributed to management's clear vision and goals, as well as the resources and training provided to staff.

The successful educational outcomes have been beneficial in securing further places for funding in 2015. The organisation has retained contracts with a local secondary schools programme to provide taster courses. The programme has been revised to fit more with local secondary schools' needs. This provides an additional income source to help protect the sustainability of the organisation.

The PTE's systems are in place and at an appropriate stage for an organisation in its initial year under new ownership and management. The director recognises that the next stage of planning is to ensure that staff have the appropriate delegations to carry out their role and succession planning is in place to enable the director to focus more on the governance and management role.

Activities required throughout the year have been documented and aligned to help ensure compliance with TEC and NZQA requirements. The quality management system provides a guide to how processes are carried out, and these are reviewed regularly to ensure they are up to date and that staff follow procedures. More regular staff meetings are planned to help with the monitoring of the effectiveness of the programme changes against learner outcomes from 2015.

The organisation has responded well to the immediate priorities around improving learner achievement and assessment resources, and restructuring the programme to provide a clearer focus for students. Overall, the transition to new ownership, changes to staff, and the restructuring of the programme have been successfully carried out, and it is expected that over time the formalisation of new systems and processes, such as directors' meetings and staff reviews will become more established. This will help to monitor learner achievement between different programmes and cohorts for future analysis.

## 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: Retail Plus Skills for Work and Life (Levels 1-3)

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 Services Skills Centre:

- Develop a comprehensive, systematic process for documenting course completion, withdrawals, qualification achievement and progression for each intake rather than over the calendar year, to enable better comparison between cohorts.
- Improve data collection to better analyse withdrawal data to help identify ways to increase outcomes.
- Document stakeholder feedback more systematically to identify valued outcomes and trends to understand where improvements have been made.

# 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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