



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Taranaki Further Education and
Training Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 27 September 2011

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MoE Number: 8692
NZQA Reference: C04953
Date of EER visit: 21 and 22 June and 1 July 2011

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

Location:	Kowhai Lodge, 65 Juliet Street, Stratford
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	1992
Number of students:	Domestic: 71 International: nil
Number of staff:	Five full-time; five part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	Sub-field accreditations to level 2: accounting; agriculture; business administration; core generic; distribution; driving; mathematics; retail; and wholesale, retail, distribution and sales Sub-field accreditations to level 3: communication skills and computing Also several domain and unit standard accreditations covering a wide range of disciplines from level 1 to level 4
Sites:	64 Centennial Drive, New Plymouth 6 Princes Street, Hawera
Distinctive characteristics:	Taranaki Further Education and Training Limited (Taranaki FEATS) provides learners with a pathway to employment and higher levels of study through foundation learning and specific vocational programmes.
Recent significant changes:	Funding changes resulted in the closure of the cookery programme in Hawera and development of the Work on Work programme in 2011. Training for Works

programmes are now delivered over 13 weeks and a maximum of 26 weeks for foundation programmes.

Previous quality assurance history:

Taranaki FEATS met all but three requirements of the relevant standard at the quality assurance audit undertaken in 2009. The requirements not met related to governance and management, and the development, delivery and review of programmes. Two of the three requirements not met recurred from the previous audit. Taranaki FEATS was on a one-year audit cycle.

Other:

Not all Taranaki FEATS' programmes are offered at each delivery site.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope for the external evaluation and review included mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management, and strategy.

The following focus areas were also included because they included programmes and activities within two funding streams, involved all three delivery sites, and represented a significant proportion of Taranaki FEATS' education provision:

- Ministry of Social Development (MSD) funded programme – Health Care Assistant (New Plymouth)
- Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funded programmes – Flexi Youth (Hawera) and Business Administration and Computing (Stratford).

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 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/>

Documentation provided by Taranaki FEATS prior to the EER visit included the November 2010 Investment Plan, course statistics summaries, minutes from Outcome Meetings 2010 and 2011, self-assessment/quality assurance records of system development, and the evaluative questions flowchart.

The EER visit was undertaken by two NZQA lead evaluators over two days involving programmes and activities at the New Plymouth, Stratford, and Hawera sites. The external evaluators met with the general manager, programme manager, programme facilitators, students, and one employer. Phone interviews were undertaken and the evaluators spoke

with four stakeholder representatives. Further documentation viewed during the visit included moderation reports, a self-review summary report, meeting minutes, and weekly/monthly outcome monitoring reports.

Taranaki FEATS will have an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and submissions received will be fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Taranaki FEATS**.

Taranaki FEATS delivers foundation learning programmes with the aim of providing learners with a pathway to employment or further training. The organisation has established its own performance goal that at least 70 per cent of learners will secure employment or progress to further training. Outcomes over the past two years have been good. In 2010, Taranaki FEATS exceeded its goal with performance outcomes of 73 per cent for all programmes combined and 79 per cent for NCEA. These results were an improvement on those achieved in 2009.

Learners achieve well both personally and academically. For example, of 11 learners enrolled in Health Care Assistant (HCA) in 2011, nine have completed the National Certificate in Community Support (Core Competencies) and eight of these have secured employment in the local hospital or in rest homes. Of 15 students enrolled in 2010, ten achieved the national certificate, eight secured employment, and two engaged in further training. Seventeen learners engaged in the Flexi Youth programme in 2010. Twenty national certificates were achieved; eight learners secured employment, and three progressed to further study. In 2009, 18 learners engaged, 13 national certificates were achieved, seven learners secured employment, and seven progressed to further study.

Taranaki FEATS is meeting the needs of learners and the wider Taranaki community through the provision of targeted vocational programmes. Students are referred to Taranaki FEATS programmes by local agencies such as Work and Income New Zealand and its service arm, Youth Transition Services. The MSD-funded programmes such as HCA and Work on Work are short, employment-focussed training packages designed to develop learners' skills to move them from social welfare benefits into paid work. In addition to meeting targets set by funding agencies, outcomes are positive for learners' well-being and also that of their families. Students interviewed spoke about the confidence and sense of pride they gain from their experiences at Taranaki FEATS. Facilitators also described the growth in learners' self-confidence that they observe during the learners' time at Taranaki FEATS.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Taranaki FEATS**.

There is good evidence that self-assessment information is used to improve outcomes for learners. Each facilitator regularly monitors individual learners' progress and there are ongoing discussions within the teaching team to address any issues that may arise. Facilitator reports, which include performance against required external targets, are collated by the programme manager. A monthly report to the general manager informs of progress towards outcomes and identifies improvement initiatives or areas where interventions may

be needed. This reporting would be strengthened if it included evidence that initiatives have been effectively implemented and the extent to which they were worthwhile.

Management uses self-assessment information for organisation-wide improvement purposes. For example, in recognition that engaging in work experience was impacting positively on learner achievement, a policy was implemented across all programmes to require all learners to do work experience. Management reported that the improvement in 2010 outcomes can be partly attributed to this initiative.

Formally capturing graduate information is an activity that could be enhanced. Taranaki FEATS monitors employment outcomes as part of external compliance requirements but holds other information that is not currently utilised as effectively as it could be. For example, the business administration and computing facilitator maintains a spreadsheet that captures useful achievement information. Facilitators provided several examples of the contact they have with learners long after they have left the organisation. They view this as an indicator that learners valued their experiences at Taranaki FEATS enough to stay in contact or return to visit. They agreed that these forms of contact provide good opportunities to formally capture useful information about learners' destinations and experiences after they have left the organisation. Such information will further strengthen the self-assessment data already being collated and analysed.

Taranaki FEATS' self-assessment activities have progressed to the development of an evaluative questions flow chart. Management recognised that the six key evaluation questions (KEQs) mandated by NZQA were "well thought out and would meet our needs", therefore were used to provide the flowchart's framework. All staff were involved in developing the enquiry questions underpinning each KEQ that are relevant to Taranaki FEATS. Sources of data are also identified within the flowchart. A self-review meeting held in April 2011 analysed the data and identified actions to be taken. A draft self-review summary resulting from this meeting was provided during the evaluation. Management stated that the report will be finalised following consultation with staff. Based on the draft report sighted, the evaluators recommend that the final self-review summary report clearly identifies and communicates improvement initiatives beyond the "business as usual" activities sighted within the draft report. For self-assessment to be effective, improvement initiatives need to focus on actions that will bring about real and worthwhile improvements in the organisation's educational performance and outcomes for learners.

TEO response

Taranaki Further Education and Training Limited has confirmed the factual accuracy of this report.

Findings¹

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**.

Taranaki FEATS provides foundation learning programmes with the aim of providing learners with a pathway to employment or further training. The organisation has established its own performance goal that at least 70 per cent of learners will secure employment or progress to further training. Outcomes for the past two years have been good. In 2010, Taranaki FEATS exceeded its goal with performance outcomes of 73 per cent for all programmes combined and 79 per cent for NCEA. These results were an improvement on those achieved in 2009.

Learners achieve well both personally and academically. For example, of 11 learners enrolled in Health Care Assistant (HCA) in 2011, nine have completed the National Certificate in Community Support (Core Competencies) and eight have secured employment in the local hospital or in rest homes. Of 15 students enrolled in 2010, ten achieved the national certificate, eight secured employment and two engaged in further training. Seventeen learners engaged in the Flexi Youth programme in 2010. Twenty national certificates were achieved, eight learners secured employment, and three progressed to further study. And in 2009, 18 learners engaged, 13 national certificates were achieved, seven learners secured employment, and seven progressed to further study.

Students interviewed spoke about the confidence and sense of pride they gain from their experiences at Taranaki FEATS. Facilitators also described the growth in learners' self-confidence that they observed during the learners' time at Taranaki FEATS. Quantitative measurement of this form of achievement is difficult, but recent changes to evaluation surveys previously used aim to capture this information more formally. The learner feedback form and staff reflection on learners form are currently in use and more implementation time is needed to determine whether this initiative has yielded worthwhile information.

Each facilitator regularly monitors individual learners' progress and there are ongoing discussions within the teaching team to address any issues that may arise. Facilitators concluded that a common barrier to achievement is the students' lack of confidence and life skills; hence this is an area of particular focus. Facilitator reports, which include performance against required external targets, are collated by the programme manager. A monthly report to the general manager informs of progress towards outcomes and identifies improvement initiatives or areas where interventions may be needed. This reporting would

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

be strengthened if it included evidence that initiatives have been effectively implemented and the extent to which they were worthwhile.

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 **Good**.

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

Taranaki FEATS is meeting the needs of learners and the wider Taranaki community through the provision of targeted vocational programmes. Students are referred to Taranaki FEATS programmes by local agencies such as Work and Income New Zealand and its service arm, Youth Transition Services. The MSD-funded programmes such as HCA and Work on Work are short, employment-focussed training packages designed to develop learners' skills to move them from social welfare benefits into paid work. In addition to meeting targets set by funding agencies, outcomes are positive for learners' well-being and also that of their families.

Taranaki FEATS supports learners who have not had successful education experiences in the past to re-engage with education. A number of the students interviewed said they much prefer the learning environment at Taranaki FEATS compared to school and described how much they learn from the staff and the activities they engage in.

Further testament to the value of Taranaki FEATS' programmes was provided by staff from two rest homes who stated that Taranaki FEATS' learners and graduates consistently perform better than others they engage with.

Formally capturing graduate information is an activity that could be enhanced. Taranaki FEATS monitors employment outcomes as part of external compliance requirements and collects other information that is not currently utilised as effectively as it could be. For example, the business administration and computing facilitator maintains a spreadsheet that captures useful achievement information. Facilitators provided several examples of the contact they have with learners long after they have left the organisation. They view this as an indicator that learners valued their experiences at Taranaki FEATS enough to stay in contact or return to visit. They agreed that these forms of contact provide good opportunities to formally capture useful information about learners' destinations and experiences after they have left the organisation. Such information would further strengthen the self-assessment data already being collated and analysed.

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**.

Taranaki FEATS' programmes and activities are well designed to align with learner and stakeholder needs. A predominant feature of all programmes is the learner's pathway to employment, and all programmes focus on literacy and numeracy development. Facilitators assist each learner to prepare a pathway plan. These plans identify individual learner needs and aim to address their specific goals.

Facilitators spoke of the importance of gaining mutual trust and respect as key factors to learner engagement. The organisation's policy of a 10:1 ratio between learners and facilitators caters well for this as manageable class sizes assist facilitators to develop a good rapport with learners.

Facilitators take learners shopping at charity stores to purchase appropriate clothing for the workplace. This activity is funded by the organisation and supports learners' chances of success when seeking work experience or employment. Learners interviewed enjoyed this activity and spoke about how much it boosted their confidence in the workplace.

At all levels of the organisation there is good communication with community stakeholders such as Work and Income, local high schools, the local polytechnic, New Plymouth rest homes, and the Central and South Taranaki Youth Development Trust. The general manager maintains links with the Taranaki community through professional affiliations, including with Education Taranaki and Taranaki Tertiary Providers group. Stakeholders contacted during the evaluation confirmed that Taranaki FEATS is visible and well regarded within the Taranaki community. Some spoke specifically about how well the programmes are run, the calibre of the staff, and the high level of support provided to learners.

Taranaki FEATS responds well to the changing needs of stakeholders. There is evidence that programmes and activities are reviewed to match these needs. For example, the commercial cookery programme was recently closed, and the 13-week Work on Work programme commenced in Hawera in response to the needs of funding agencies. Management reported that although the change is a challenge, at this time the organisation is adapting well. In another example, monitoring information identified that the organisation's drug and alcohol policy provided an unintended barrier to learner success. The policy was amended to allow a pathway back to learning. Of five learners affected in 2010, three returned and successfully completed their qualifications without further incident. Changes were made to the automotive programme because learners were not able to achieve an automotive qualification. As a result, eight learners have since completed the automotive qualification in addition to NCEA levels 1 and 2.

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 **Excellent**.

Taranaki FEATS says “the key to a great programme is a great facilitator”. Facilitators are qualified in their fields of expertise and hold teaching qualifications. They confirmed that there is good provision for professional development to help them maintain currency with industry requirements and for further development of teaching practice. For example, HCA facilitators maintain their nursing registration through ongoing professional development. Some staff have recently completed the National Certificate in Adult Literacy Education. Taranaki FEATS’ sister company, Vocational Literacy Services, supports capability by providing literacy, language, and numeracy support.

A number of facilitators are long-term employees of Taranaki FEATS. The dedication and passion of all staff interviewed at each site was evident. Learners interviewed spoke highly of the teaching staff. Feedback from external stakeholders was also extremely favourable.

Facilitators described a collegial teaching team which shared knowledge, ideas, and experiences, particularly when seeking solutions to classroom issues. They feel well supported in their teaching roles and said that, overall, programmes are well resourced. Some expressed difficulty managing time for administration activities such as preparation and marking. Others spoke of the pressure they felt from having to take on learners who may not achieve positive outcomes, and against which the organisation is measured, for reasons they believe to be beyond their control.

Facilitators use a team approach when undertaking internal moderation. Examples of external moderation reports provided during the evaluation confirmed that assessment activities meet national standards. Students said that assessment tasks were clear to them and they get good feedback from their tutors about where they need to improve.

There is good use of self-assessment information to improve teaching practices. Facilitators seek and value feedback from their peers and view learners’ positive attitudes towards them as an indicator of their effectiveness. Learners are surveyed to gain information about the programme, the facilitator, and the learning environment. This information is collated and shared to improve teaching practices.

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**.

Taranaki FEATS provides learners with high levels of guidance and support. The organisation has a philosophy to “place great emphasis on supporting the whole person”. Learners come from diverse backgrounds and some require considerable pastoral care. In some cases, social problems such as alcohol and drugs present barriers beyond the resources of Taranaki FEATS, and these learners are referred to appropriate social agencies for assistance.

Students spoke highly of the support they receive at Taranaki FEATS and the helpfulness of all staff, particularly their tutors. Some described their learning experience as “better than school”. The evaluators observed a learner-friendly environment at all three delivery sites.

Guidance and support is provided during work experience. Learners are encouraged to seek their own work experience placement, but facilitators assist if necessary. This prepares learners for seeking paid employment and helps to develop their communication skills and self-confidence. The majority of learners interviewed were actively engaged in work experience and spoke positively about seeking a placement.

As stated previously, individual learner progress is regularly monitored. This enables early intervention and the identification of additional support needs. The HCA facilitator mentors learners in the workplace on a weekly basis. This provides additional support and enables timely interventions if needed. An example was provided where a learner was bullied in the workplace. The facilitator was able to act immediately and the learner was successfully placed with another workplace.

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 **Good**.

Taranaki FEATS has effective leadership. There is a clear strategic direction and a strong focus on learner outcomes. These are well communicated by management and embraced by staff. The organisation operates a flat structure and facilitators are described as “self-managing”. The general manager is closely connected with staff at all three sites. Staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities. They spoke of a collegial team and the good level of support within the organisation. Staff were particularly praiseworthy of the general manager’s support and guidance.

Teaching facilities and resources are good. There is planning for upgrading and renewal of resources to enable learners to achieve their learning outcomes. The current tight economic climate is acknowledged by staff, and resources are allocated on an “as-needed” basis. A recent example is the purchase of 14 replacement computers for the business administration and computing programme at the Stratford site.

There is evidence that Taranaki FEATS responds well to change. The general manager spoke about the challenges the organisation has faced in recent times due to the shifts in government policy. This has impacted on staff morale and a “fun day” is planned for later this year to acknowledge the team’s efforts and successes.

Management uses self-assessment information for organisation-wide improvement purposes. For example, in recognition that engaging in work experience was impacting positively on learner achievement, a policy was implemented across all programmes that requires all learners to do work experience. Management reported that the improvement in 2010 outcomes can be partly attributed to this initiative.

Taranaki FEATS' self-assessment activities have progressed to the development of an evaluative questions flow chart. Management recognised that the six key evaluation questions (KEQ) mandated by NZQA were "well thought out and would meet our needs", therefore were used to provide the flowchart's framework. All staff were involved in developing the enquiry questions underpinning each KEQ that are relevant to Taranaki FEATS. Sources of data are also identified within the flowchart. A self-review meeting held in April 2011 analysed the data and identified actions to be taken. A draft self-review summary 2010/2011 resulting from this meeting was provided during the evaluation. Management stated that the report will be finalised following consultation with staff. Based on the draft report sighted, the evaluators recommend that the final self-review summary report clearly identifies and communicates improvement initiatives beyond the "business as usual" activities sighted within the draft report. For self-assessment to be effective, improvement initiatives need to focus on actions that will bring about real and worthwhile improvements in the organisation's educational performance and outcomes for learners.

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: Ministry of Social Development-funded programmes

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: Tertiary Education Commission-funded programmes

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, in addition to those recommendations implied or expressed within the report, Taranaki FEATS further builds its self-assessment capability by ensuring that reports resulting from the formal analysis of self-assessment information focus on, and clearly record, the actions required to bring about improvements in educational performance and outcomes for learners. This recommendation is in particular reference to the 2011 Self Review Summary Report that was in draft at the time of the external evaluation and review. This approach will assist with:

- prioritising action items that impact most on learners
- monitoring of actions for effective implementation
- determining the extent to which the improvement initiatives have been worthwhile.

Appendix

Regulatory 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 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).

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

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E eeradmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz