

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Employers and Manufacturers
Association (Northern) Incorporated
trading as EMA Training

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 26 September 2012

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Purpose of this Report

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

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	Employers and Manufacturers Association (Northern) Incorporated trading as EMA Training
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	159 Khyber Pass Road, Grafton, Auckland
First registered:	4 November 1991
Courses currently delivered	EMA Training delivers a range of business-related short courses, conferences, workshops, webinars, and seminars. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in Employment Relations• National Certificate in Business (First Line Management) (Levels 3 and 4)• National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (Workplace safety) (Level 3)• National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (Coordination) (Level 4)• National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Levels 4 and 5)
Code of Practice signatory?	NA
Number of students:	Domestic: approximately 30 students are enrolled on certificate programmes. In 2011, EMA Training ran a total of 436 public training courses for 3,921 attendees, with a further 216 tailored training and in-house training packages.

Number of staff:	Thirteen full-time equivalents
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>The Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA) is a not-for-profit, member-based organisation. EMA Training is the division responsible for the development and delivery of a wide range of short courses, programmes, workshops, seminars, and conferences.</p> <p>EMA Training has a memorandum of understanding with Massey University for the delivery of eight papers that meet the requirements specified for an eight-paper Graduate Diploma in Business Studies (Employment Relations Management).</p> <p>Of the 111 training workshops offered by EMA Training, 72 have unit standards attached to them. Assessments are completed by participants at their own pace, with ongoing support provided by EMA trainers.</p> <p>Most of the training is delivered by external contractors.</p>
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>At the 2008 audit of EMA Learning, the organisation did not meet two of the requirements of the quality assurance standard in place. The issues related to the late submission of financial attestations and a lack of a current building warrant of fitness.</p> <p>EMA Learning's National External Moderation Report showed a number of subject areas where assessment standards were not met. NZQA accepted an action plan for improvement.</p>

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review (EER) included the mandatory focus area: governance, management, and strategy. Two other focus areas were chosen to represent both the short courses and programmes offered and a significant percentage of the training delivered. They were:

- National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (Coordination) (Level 4)
- Health and safety training short courses.

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 operations manager of EMA Training supplied the EER team with a self-assessment report prior to the visit.

The evaluation team of two visited the Auckland site over two days. Interviews were conducted with the manager learning, chief executive officer, operations manager, and portfolio managers. Interviews were conducted with contract trainers and students, both on site and by phone. A range of documentation was reviewed including business reports, course evaluations, reports to the board and external stakeholders, and meeting minutes.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **EMA Training**.

EMA Training operates with a strong customer focus which ensures that trainee needs are regularly being surveyed and prompt action is taken to ensure any issues are dealt with quickly. A recent survey of trainees and those who book training showed that the vast majority would recommend EMA Training and use the service again. Comments indicate that they found the short courses practical, relevant, and useful. The high number that would attend training again is an indication that trainees believe they are gaining good value from the short courses.

Achievement in the focus areas and across the national certificates is inconsistent and appears to have been declining. For example, for the National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety, the achievement rate has dropped from 75 per cent in 2009 to 67 per cent in 2010 and 62.5 per cent in 2011, although some of the 2011 students are still studying. The level 3 programmes have lower achievement than the level 4 certificates. The organisation did not have a good, evidence-based understanding of achievement across these programmes. However, these national certificates are only a small part of EMA Training's business, with only about 30 students enrolled compared with nearly 4,000 who participate in the short courses.

For the short courses and the courses offered in partnership with Massey University, there is a high degree of satisfaction, and evidence demonstrates that the learners are gaining relevant practical knowledge and skills and value from the learning. For example, data collected from the short health and safety courses shows shifts in learner knowledge and understanding. Learners spoken to by the evaluation team provided examples of how the health and safety training had a direct impact on their workplaces. A workplace health and safety representative outlined how the changes she had initiated after her training resulted in the reduction of time off work due to injuries.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **EMA Training**.

The organisation has a number of quality improvement initiatives underway which are connected to a business improvement plan. Lots of information is being collected to inform the organisation about how well it is matching needs across the vast majority of the courses it delivers. Being a member organisation, EMA Training ensures that feedback on needs and value is regularly gathered, shared, and responded to.

The organisation has a range of approaches which are used to ensure trainees are satisfied with the short courses they are participating in, and to understand and gauge the needs of key stakeholders, particularly EMA members. The evaluation

team saw examples of quality improvements being made across both the programmes and short courses. These include improvements to workbooks and the online learning platform.

With a focus on understanding needs, learner achievement and outcomes are indicated rather than well understood. The low achievement of students on the national certificates is not well understood. Shifts in learner knowledge and understanding are collected for health and safety courses. However, this is done to meet reporting requirements for the Accident Compensation Commission rather than to understand trainee achievement and outcomes. Therefore, implementation of a new survey instrument is a useful initiative because it looks at how much the outcomes of EMA Training are valued. This survey asks respondents to explain their value ratings and the vast majority were overwhelmingly positive about the practical nature of the workshops. The few issues raised were being addressed by the training team. This tool has only been run once and so, to date, only baseline data has been collected.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Evidence of learner achievement does exist. For example, EMA Training asks stakeholders direct questions about shifts in knowledge and understanding for the short courses in health and safety, and numerous examples of feedback from those questioned as part of a new survey tool highlighted new knowledge or skills achieved. Trainees believe they are learning new knowledge and skills that are directly relevant to their work. Very few turn this learning into credits, with only about 200 out of several thousand opting to complete the assessments for the unit standards available. This is an interesting result given that 85 per cent of EMA members who answered a survey on training said they would see value in having a qualification linked to training.

Achievement for the small number of students enrolled in the certificate programmes is inconsistent. For example, achievement at level 3 is lower than at levels 4 and above. While some learners may be slow to complete, because they are working full-time and studying at a distance, EMA Training does not have a good, evidence-based understanding of achievement.

However, the certificate programmes comprise less than 5 per cent of the training offered by EMA Training, and the evaluations of the short courses demonstrate that there is generally a high level of satisfaction that trainee needs have been met and relevant skills learned.

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 **Adequate**.

Comments gathered from survey participants indicate that both trainees and those who book the training value the workshops. One wrote that 'training outcomes have been monitored and have been successful' and another stated, 'the content is good, and I am getting a lot of practical value out of it'. Furthermore, in answering

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

questions on whether they would recommend EMA Training, 92 per cent scored 6 and above on a 10-point scale, and 85 per cent said they were likely or highly likely to use EMA Training again. Trainees spoken to by the evaluation team believed the learning was practical and relevant and immediately useful in their workplace. For example, trainees used the learning to review their workplace health and safety policies, to analyse risk, and to implement safer ways of operating. Therefore, the evaluation team is confident that the training is delivering valued outcomes for key stakeholders.

Why so few participants complete the unit standards is less well understood, and the low uptake would seem to contradict the value that stakeholders, including EMA members, place on gaining qualifications. Understanding the value for those who have completed the certificate programmes is also not clearly evidenced by EMA and therefore is difficult to gauge.

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**.

The short courses match the needs of key stakeholders well. By holding catered one-day sessions, those in employment can participate easily. Key features noted by participants were the practical and engaging nature of the training. Good organisation and the skills and the knowledge of the trainers are highlighted as positive features. Most trainers are external contractors with expertise in business, so they bring practical knowledge to the training.

EMA members and employers are regularly contacted and asked about their training needs and preferences. There is good evidence that this feedback is used to design and plan training. Tailored training is delivered into individual workplaces, and growth in this area and repeat business indicates that the training is matching needs. In response to demand from members, there is activity underway to increase the delivery of training outside of Auckland. The development of e-learning tools to support the workshops is another example of matching needs.

The needs of the small number of students enrolled in the national certificates are less well understood. While the self-paced, blended mode of study is well suited to those employed, the enrolment processes all occur online and learners' needs and learning preferences are not assessed before they commit to the programme.

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 range of feedback collected by EMA Training demonstrates that the workshops are engaging, interactive, and well resourced. Trainers are encouraged to participate in professional development and their performance is closely monitored through observations and regular course evaluations. As noted above, there is a high rate of satisfaction with the trainers on the short courses. The practical skills and knowledge of the trainers were frequently highlighted by the trainees.

There has been significant work done in updating unit standards assessments to meet with national standards. It is too early to tell whether this work will improve EMA Training's external moderation results. While EMA Training undertook to hold a professional development seminar for internal moderators, this does not appear to have occurred, although one-to-one sessions with assessors have been useful for discussing assessment decisions and evidence.

The workbooks are being updated, making them more interactive and engaging. However, national certificate learners have only recently been asked for feedback about each course in the national certificate so it is difficult to gain an understanding of their perspective.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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 administration processes around the short courses are excellent and most trainees report that courses are well planned and structured. The e-learning system has streamlined some processes for the delivery of information and resources. All learners can log onto an e-learning site where pre-workshop activities and information about unit standards are available. All short courses have clear learning outcomes and statements of intent, ensuring those enrolling have a good understanding of the content.

A lack of needs assessment for students enrolling on the national certificate programmes is concerning, and a number of students have not been contacted for a considerable length of time. EMA Training staff agreed that follow-up with trainees soon after workshops could improve the rate of progress with assessments.

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**.

EMA Training is juggling a number of different training approaches, including short courses, seminars, tailored training, an e-learning website, and certificate programmes. In the information discussed at meetings and reported to the board there is a strong focus on inputs, including forward bookings, purchasing, and resources. While information is being collected on trainee satisfaction, a perspective on learner achievement and valued outcomes is harder to discern. Management was unaware of how well learners achieved in the certificate programmes. The new survey instrument recently adopted holds promise for the organisation to understand to what extent training outcomes are valued. The initial data indicates that the training delivered matches the needs of EMA members and course participants.

There is a business improvement plan which has seen a number of quality developments across the training centre. This plan is being monitored on an annual basis and there is a lot of activity underway. The management team is strongly linked with the EMA membership and there is a strong focus on identifying needs. The team works hard to develop programmes and resources to match EMA member needs, and feedback suggests that to a large extent these are being met.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 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: Health and safety training short courses

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

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

2.3 Focus area: National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (Level 4)

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

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

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). 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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