Report of External Evaluation and Review

Kiwidotcom (2010) Limited
trading as Kiwidotcom

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 15 May 2013

Contents

MoE Number: 8748

NZQA Reference: C10385

Date of EER visit: 4 and 5 March 2013

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:	Kiwidotcom (2010) Limited trading as Kiwidotcom
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	7 Melba Street, Kaitaia
First registered:	1 September 1992
Courses currently delivered:	• National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 2) programme (Upskill)
	• National Certificate in Hospitality (Level 2) programme sub-contracted by Northland Polytechnic (NorthTec) for delivery by Kiwidotcom
	• New Zealand Diploma in Management (delivered under a Memorandum of Understanding with NorthTec)
	• Various short courses in computing
Code of Practice signatory?:	Not applicable
Number of students:	Domestic: 12 equivalent full-time students
	Māori students were 93 per cent of the students in 2011 and 89 per cent in 2012.
Number of staff:	Four full-time equivalents
Scope of active accreditation:	• National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 2)
	• Foundation English for International

<div align="center">Students</div>

Distinctive characteristics:	Kiwidotcom is one of two Māori providers in the Far North.
	The hospitality programme involves running a cafe.
	Most of the learners are 'second-chance learners' seeking both long-term and 'just in time' learning opportunities.
	Most of the learners on the Upskill programme are over 25 years of age.
	Fee-paying courses are offered through computing and other workshops tailored for individual companies.
Recent significant changes:	Kiwidotcom is diversifying its relationships and income sources in order to ensure financial sustainability.
	The number of places funded by the TEC for the National Certificate in Employment Skills programme was cut from 12 in 2012 to six in 2013.
Previous quality assurance history:	At the previous quality assurance visit by NZQA, an audit in June 2009, Kiwidotcom met all the requirements of the standard in force at the time. National external moderation requirements were met for one of the unit standards moderated in 2012, but assessor decisions were not verified for two literacy and numeracy unit standards because of a misunderstanding about the type of evidence required.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

In accordance with NZQA policy, the mandatory focus area of governance, management and strategy was included in the scope of this external evaluation and review. The National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 2) programme was selected as a focus area because it is Kiwidotcom's only TEC-funded programme. The final focus area selected was the National Certificate in Hospitality (Level 2) programme because it is an example of a programme delivered via a sub-contract with a polytechnic (NorthTec) and assessment outcomes are reported to NorthTec for reporting to NZQA.

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-guidel*ines-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 external evaluation and review was conducted over two days by two NZQA evaluators at the Kiwidotcom office in Kaitaia. The evaluation involved interviews with:

- The managing director and one other director

- The administrator

- Two classes

- Two tutors

- A range of stakeholders in person and via phone.

The evaluation also involved a review of relevant documentation such as written feedback from clients, NZQA post-moderation reports, course evaluation forms, assessment records, the student handbook and other correspondence. The evaluation team also visited the organisation's new cafe in Awanui, which has one room being used as a classroom.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Kiwidotcom (2010) Limited trading as Kiwidotcom.**

The learners at Kiwidotcom are reaching good levels of educational performance. The overall targets set by the TEC for the learners on the Upskill programme are being achieved, although the specific target of positive employment outcomes is not as impressive as the positive outcomes associated with further training at other educational institutions. The gain in employable skills is impressive and many of the conversations held by the evaluation team referred to the improvements in the learners' communication skills and in their levels of confidence.

Kiwidotcom provides an environment in which the learners flourish. The delivery on the Upskill course has been adapted to include the concepts of tuakana-teina (a mentoring system) along with mahi tahi (working together). In addition, the project-based learning approach used on the Upskill course teaches a range of skills and develops personal attributes through such events as a fashion show and the promotion of Kiwidotcom's courses. A similar approach, grounding the learning in practicalities, is also apparent in the hospitality course through such events as catering for book launches.

The high quality of the staff throughout, and particularly the management, is indicative of a high-performing organisation. Links with the community and a range of stakeholders have been developed well. This is particularly true of the relationship with NorthTec. The sense of vision for the Far North and for student success is evident. A holistic approach is taken to student support, which has led to a comprehensive umbrella of support being established.

Kiwidotcom is not prepared to rest on its laurels. It is always considering what is best for the learners and for the community. Currently, it is conducting an analysis of wider stakeholder needs through a survey of local businesses.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Kiwidotcom (2010) Limited trading as Kiwidotcom.**

Kiwidotcom has a good record of self-assessment being undertaken of its high-priority programmes and changes being made designed to improve the outcomes for the learners. The links between the self-assessment and the changes are evident, but less evident is the measurement of the effects of the changes. Highly effective self-assessment systems are able to demonstrate such effects. This is the challenge for Kiwidotcom.

The provider would benefit from more information about the gains in the literacy and numeracy levels of the learners. Kiwidotcom analyses the rise in the learners' skill levels and reflects on the most appropriate way to facilitate this rise. It has received positive feedback from NorthTec about its hospitality programme and could take this a step further by requesting more detailed feedback about how the results of its programme compare with NorthTec's results of its own parallel programmes.

The survey of local businesses' needs is leading to the development of workshops in the areas of governance, human resources, employment documentation and customer service. This is effective self-assessment. The system is currently being strengthened by the formation of advisory groups to provide additional feedback. The feedback from the learners is collated and analysed before being discussed by the relevant staff and the consequent changes made. A good example of this was the change in the learning strategy for new enrolments to include more step-by-step delivery of theory and new practical art.

Findings[1]

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 learners at Kiwidotcom exhibit strong levels of performance. Those learners on the Upskill programme are achieving the targets set by the TEC. The positive labour market outcomes figure for 2011, for example, was 67 per cent. The TEC target figure for 2012 was 64 per cent. The provisional figure for 2012 is 64 per cent, and it is predicted that this will eventually rise to 68 per cent. Similarly good levels of achievement are evident in the National Certificate in Hospitality programme, where the qualification completion rates rose from 52 per cent and 64 per cent in the two semesters in 2011 to 66 per cent in 2012. According to TEC figures, the median national qualification completion figure nationwide for all level 1 and 2 funded programmes in 2011 was 61 per cent.

Through conversations with learners and stakeholders, the evaluation team gained an understanding of the good rise in the skill levels of the learners. In the Upskill course, a fashion show and the promotion of Kiwidotcom's courses are being used as vehicles for improving learner skills. The learners become increasingly confident as they learn how to promote the show and the courses. Special attention is paid to their communication skills by using mentors to observe them and to give them feedback. The learners also learn how to weave putiputi to be used as table decorations for the fashion show. A similar approach is undertaken on the hospitality course where the learners involved in the catering side of book launches have talked to the guests about the dishes they have prepared.

Kiwidotcom pays close attention to the feedback it receives from stakeholders about the skill levels of the learners and uses this feedback to improve the programmes. The provider is committed to analysing the rise in the skill levels and reflects on the most appropriate way to do this. Kiwidotcom has received positive feedback from NorthTec about its hospitality programme and could take this a step further by requesting more detailed feedback about how the results from its programme compare with NorthTec's results of its own parallel programmes. There is also scope for some improved analysis of the gains in literacy and numeracy arising out of the programmes.

---

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

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.**

Kiwidotcom is heavily involved with its stakeholders and through them with the wider community. This close relationship enhances the value of the outcomes achieved. A Ngai Takoto manager summarised the value of the outcomes in stating that the organisation has employed 'a number of young persons who have been the recipients of Kiwidotcom's training programmes. We regard Kiwidotcom as a valuable and effective service provider'. A statement from a Northland radio broadcaster, Te Hiku Media, described Kiwidotcom as 'a positive organisation offering opportunities in our community which can assist students to improve the quality of their lives through skills needed in a workplace environment'. The chairman of the Kaitaia Business Association praised Kiwidotcom's hospitality training facility as 'an essential service in our community with the many restaurants, cafes and takeaways', because 'it is easier, cheaper and faster to hire somebody who has done it before'. These statements represent the views expressed by many stakeholders and endorse the importance of the valuable outcomes being achieved.

Although Kiwidotcom is achieving the overall targets set by the TEC for positive labour market outcomes, there are more training outcomes being achieved and fewer employment outcomes than desired. Kiwidotcom is trying to redress this balance, but the economic environment in the Kaitaia area makes this difficult. However, NorthTec recognises the value of Kiwidotcom's work in providing 'critical pathways for students who wish to further their study'. The value of the outcomes is increased by the gains in literacy and numeracy and the way in which literacy and numeracy is embedded into the programmes.

The students recognise these positive outcomes and appreciate how the courses are improving their levels of skill. They described the development of a group identity through the opportunities for interaction and particularly emphasised the growth of their communication skills.

Kiwidotcom gains a good understanding of the value of the outcomes being achieved by its programmes through its continuous engagement with stakeholders. It reflects on the feedback from employers offering work experience and adjusts its programmes accordingly. When it received feedback about a learner taking too many 'smoko breaks', for example, it ensured that future courses would pay more attention to covering the topic of employer expectations. A deeper understanding could be gained of the changes in literacy and numeracy levels, but this would necessitate changes in the approaches taken by other organisations on which Kiwidotcom depends.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

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

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

Kiwidotcom is conscious of its role in the community and takes a variety of approaches to ensure that its programmes match stakeholder needs. It pays particular attention to checking that the needs of learners are recognised and adjustments made when necessary. As part of its hospitality programme, for example, it runs a cafe three days a week. In order to cater for those learners with family responsibilities, Kiwidotcom allows them a later start than the learners tasked with preparing the cafe for an early opening. It also recognises that some learners require encouragement to attend sessions, so it emphasises the importance of tracking down learners when they fail to attend.

Kiwidotcom also appreciates the learning styles of many of its learners. Efforts are made to incorporate practical projects such as the fashion show in order to cater for the needs of kinesthetic learners. As many of Kiwidotcom's learners have had a limited range of employment experiences, the provider utilises opportunities such as work experience and visits to different workplaces to observe their methods of operation.

Mention has already been made of the relevance of the activities undertaken. Up-to-date material is used, such as workbooks from the Hospitality Standards Institute. The relevance of the programmes is enhanced by the close relationship between Kiwidotcom and NorthTec. Clear pathways are set for the learners to move on to NorthTec's programmes.

Kiwidotcom effectively uses a variety of ways to assess the success of its programmes in matching stakeholder needs. The project approach to suit kinesthetic learners and the close involvement of the learners with the community arose out of reflection and analysis on Kiwidotcom's part. Similarly, reflection on the nature of the provider's learners led to a gradual approach being adopted to the use of self-directed learning. The process of analysing further stakeholder needs is continuing with a survey of local businesses. This needs analysis is leading to the development of workshops in the areas of governance, human resources, employment documentation and customer service. Currently, advisory groups are being formed to further extend self-assessment and it is anticipated that these groups will strengthen feedback mechanisms.

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 **Good.**

Kiwidotcom recognises the importance of good teaching, and the evaluation team saw many examples of effective teaching practice. Mention has already been made of the use of the fashion show and weaving to secure the high levels of learner engagement that were observed. The programmes are adapted to the cultural needs of the students by emphasising the group as a learning organisation. There is a good mix of theory and practice and good examples of effective teaching practice. An example of the latter was the rotation of team leader positions on the hospitality course.

The relationship between the staff and the learners is positive and the teaching is effective. The Upskill students interviewed by the evaluation team praised the teaching. Typical comments from the exiting students were 'always had something new or fun to do', 'keeps you busy and learn life and job skills while doing it', and 'it's a good course to go to and learn something new'. The nine students from the hospitality course in semester 2 in 2012 rated their tutor positively on 18 different aspects. Six of the nine learners gave an excellent rating, two gave a good rating and one gave a fair rating for the overall quality of teaching. This endorsed the impression gained by the evaluation team.

The moderation reports from NZQA and NorthTec reveal a need for better oversight of moderation. In both cases, there was evidence of some misunderstanding and a consequent need to tighten procedures. A good framework for internal moderation was seen by the evaluation team. Kiwidotcom only assesses the students when they are ready and keeps individual progress records for each student. These are supplemented by individual learning plans which record each student's starting point, the changes needing to be made and their progress. Although good examples were seen, there is potential for these to be used more effectively to show progress.

Different ways of obtaining feedback from the students have already been mentioned. These are summarised and recommendations are discussed at staff meetings. In September 2012, for example, a decision was made to review the learner workbook for a unit standard and this took place two months later. November 2012 was also the month when feedback from the learners led to a change in the learning strategy for new enrolments to include more step-by-step delivery of theory and new practical art in the form of weaving and block printing. Modifications to the unit standard timetable for 2013 were also made after learner feedback. Feedback from stakeholders, such as how a learner on work experience showed a gym owner how to use a spreadsheet, is also used but there were few examples of feedback being used to improve learner outcomes.

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 **Good.**

Every effort is made at Kiwidotcom to reduce barriers to learning. All staff go to great lengths to support the learners. Support includes providing transport, individual learning plans, support at court appearances, assistance with job applications, use of external agencies and student handbooks. Kiwidotcom understands the importance of good attendance and is very efficient at following up any lapses by the learners.

Interviews at the beginning of the course are effectively used to clarify the expectations of the learners. Advice throughout the course is freely given and is particularly effective in providing pathways for the learners to improve their qualifications. The approach to support is a holistic one which appeals to these learners. The concept of mahi tahi ('we all work as one') is applied as is that of tuakana-teina. The latter is particularly used for male learners who flourish when a more experienced male learner is assigned to them to act as a mentor.

Kiwidotcom carefully examines feedback to check that the support it is providing is effective. The tuakana-teina concept arose from feedback that some male learners wanted more contact with males and more quiet time with another male to clarify their thoughts. Discussions held by the evaluation team endorsed the value of this practice. Although the exit surveys have also provided feedback that has been used to improve outcomes, there is potential for them to be used better in this regard by the inclusion of a question referring directly to the effectiveness of the support provided.

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 team is highly skilled and supports educational achievement. The effectiveness of this support has been diluted in the past year due to the distraction caused by a diversification into a non-education related business. Kiwidotcom realises this and is engaged in the process of refocussing on best educational practice. Its owners have very good educational backgrounds and are passionately committed to the educational and economic development of the Far North.

The strategic plan is well constructed and provides key performance indicators, expected outcomes and timelines for the period 2013-2015. The provider has

responded well to the challenge posed by the 50 per cent cut in funding from the TEC in 2013. A more diverse range of programmes is now offered, including a New Zealand Institute of Management Diploma in Management programme run as an evening class through a Memorandum of Understanding with NorthTec, fee-paying computing programmes and a variety of fee-paying workshops on topics such as health and safety, governance and customer service.

This response is not only an example of good change management but also of greater community involvement. Kiwidotcom uses a business mentor to augment its own resources. It is no surprise that Kiwidotcom has in the last few years won two regional business awards or that a programme leader from NorthTec described it as an 'exemplary PTE'. The longevity of its Upskill and hospitality programmes reflects well on management. The research project undertaken in 2010 through funding from Ako Aotearoa investigated the causes of learners not completing their courses and identified effective engagement practices. Once again, the involvement in such a project illustrates the professionalism of Kiwidotcom and its commitment to the community. The professionalism is also apparent in the thorough appraisal system and the way in which Kiwidotcom sends staff members on courses and seminars.

The research project demonstrates the organisation's commitment to self-assessment and to using the results to improve the outcomes for the learners. Following the research, changes were made to the way in which the learners are prepared for the demands of study, and the teaching was broken down into a series of small steps and broadened to include a wider range of activities. These are more appropriate to the interests and attention spans of the learners.

The governance and management team reflects well on its own performance and makes the necessary adjustments, such as the involvement with a business mentor and the refocussing on best educational practice. A similar process took place before the decision was made to move the location of the training cafe from Kaitaia to Awanui. Moves underway to formalise the meetings of advisory groups will provide more feedback for management to consider. The onus is on Kiwidotcom to ensure that it uses this feedback to improve the outcomes for the 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: National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 2) programme

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 Hospitality (Level 2) programme

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

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review.

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/

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz