



Report of External Evaluation and Review

Burwater Pacific

Date of report: 15 December 2009

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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.

Brief description of TEO

Location: Central Auckland

Type: Private Training Establishment

Size: 380-1000 students p.a.; attend half-day courses

Sites: Head office in Auckland. Delivery at company and temporary venues.

Burwater Pacific has been delivering food safety training for 20 years, and has been registered with NZQA since 1993. Delivery of Basic and Advanced Food Safety training makes up approximately 25 per cent of the organisation's business. Other areas include developing and writing food safety plans for corporate clients, and conducting food safety audits. Training is delivered primarily to client company employees at company premises, but courses are also offered to members of the public at local venues as required. These short courses are specifically designed to meet client companies' compliance with central government food safety legislation, and territorial local authorities' food safety by-laws.

Executive Summary

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **highly confident** in the educational performance of Burwater Pacific.

Burwater Pacific offers two half-day courses covering safe food handling skills and knowledge, at the basic and advanced levels. At the completion of the courses students complete a multi-choice test, and it is rare for any students to fail. Where students achieve within 5 per cent of the minimum mark, Burwater Pacific tutors identify the knowledge areas that the students are struggling with, and provide support to ensure students have sufficient understanding to attempt a further test. This results in most students achieving a pass mark, which enables them to apply to their territorial local authority for a safe food handling certificate. Some territorial local authorities require food workers to renew this certificate periodically. The achievement rate for students on these courses is close to 100 per cent. Courses are specifically designed to meet individual client company needs. Client company feedback and ongoing contracts confirm that these courses meet company needs. Company representatives interviewed confirmed Burwater Pacific's self-assessment statements, that employees are seen to be well trained, and are enabled to implement their food safety plans.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **confident** in the capability in self-assessment of Burwater Pacific.

Burwater Pacific has been delivering training for many years and has well-established formal and informal processes for reviewing its performance. The organisation's self-assessment processes provide sufficient evidence that training is meeting the needs of students and other stakeholders, and includes appropriate and accurate tracking of students' achievements in course tests, and monitoring of the outcomes resulting from training. Informal daily contact with client companies informs Burwater Pacific to adjust successive courses to better meet specific client companies' food safety plans, and to make improvements such as reviewing assessment material to improve the validity and transparency of the assessment process.

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 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITPQuality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and 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).

Findings

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

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/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>

Outline of scope

This external evaluation and review included the mandatory focus area, governance and management, and the organisation's two short courses, Basic Food Safety and Advanced Food Safety, as one focus area.

Answers to Key Evaluation Questions across the organisation

This section provides a picture of the TEO's performance in terms of the outcomes achieved and the key contributing processes. Performance judgements are based on the answers to key evaluation questions across the focus areas sampled. This section also provides a judgement about the extent to which the organisation uses self-assessment information to understand its own performance and bring about improvements, i.e. capability in self-assessment.

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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**

Context

Burwater Pacific sets the standard for students to pass course assessments, in both the Basic Food Safety and Advanced Food Safety courses, at 65 per cent. Assessments are knowledge based, primarily multi-choice, and are designed to provide students with several opportunities to demonstrate specific areas of knowledge of safe food handling. Records show that it is rare for any students to not reach this mark in their assessments. Actual pass rates are commonly between 80 and 90 per cent, which represents an excellent outcome. As a result of passing these courses students are able to apply for safe food handling certificates from their territorial local authorities.. Examples were given of the level of support provided to ensure students pass, and only two specific examples were sighted where students had not been able to achieve success.

Explanation

Educational performance is exemplary, with close to 100 per cent of students achieving success. The courses are meeting client companies' requirements, primarily because employees are seen to be well trained, able to apply for and receive a safe food handling certificate, and able to implement company food safety plans. This means that teaching material is well matched to companies' workplace practices, and therefore the students' work environment. In this way, students are more able to link their learning to their everyday work experiences. This is effective in that it is both student and client focussed, and is designed to provide material and contexts that are familiar to the learners.

Burwater Pacific has well-developed tracking systems to monitor course achievement rates. The director is also an active tutor and is in daily contact with the other tutors. He is therefore well informed of emerging issues, and is able to monitor where changes are needed to make improvements. With the recent introduction of the evaluative approach to quality assurance by NZQA, Burwater Pacific is further developing its existing formal and informal processes for reviewing how well its students achieve. Management is aware of the need to further strengthen its course monitoring processes, such as reviewing the style of the student survey forms and analysing the results to watch for emerging trends and patterns. However, management is reasonably confident that the present system provides valid and consistent information. Evidence from course records and interviews with staff and a client company representative provided sufficient confirmation that student achievement is very high.

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

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

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

Context

The training offered by Burwater Pacific is designed to meet the safe food handling compliance requirements of the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA), and territorial local authorities' by-laws for staff working in commercial food handling premises. Most learners are enrolled on these courses by their employer in order to meet their compliance obligations. Some members of the public also enrol as individuals for the same reason. The organisation monitors student satisfaction with the courses and has daily contact with client companies, and the results of feedback show that stakeholders, including learners, value the course outcomes highly.

Explanation

Training makes up approximately 25 per cent of Burwater Pacific's business. The balance of the business comprises developing food safety plans for a variety of client companies (to meet NZFSA regulations), and conducting food safety audits. This close relationship with client companies has enabled Burwater Pacific to design its training courses to better meet

each client company's needs. Client companies confirm that their training needs are well met. The immediate outcomes of the courses are that learners pass a test of their knowledge of safe food handling practices, or knowledge of contamination hazards and control methods in a food business. This is designed to match some of the requirements of unit standards: 167 *Practise food safety methods in a food business*, and 168 *Demonstrate knowledge of food contamination hazards, and control methods used in a food business*. However, learners are not assessed against these unit standards currently. Learners value passing these tests very highly, in part because they enable the students to apply for and gain a safe food handling certificate, a mandatory requirement for their employment. The organisation's self-assessment shows that very few learners fail and very high levels of satisfaction are recorded in their course surveys. This indicates that students highly value the training. The achievement rate is consistently high across both the basic and advanced courses.

Course material and assessments are translated into several languages to meet learners' English-language literacy issues. This is valued by the learners, client companies, and NZFSA in that it contributes to safe food handling practices.

Burwater was able to provide examples of how longer-term outcomes were valued by learners, such as learners discussing how they apply what they learned on the courses to introduce safer food handling practices in their homes.

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**

Context

As already noted, Burwater Pacific operates both as a consultancy and as a training provider. This combination is working well to enable the organisation to develop targeted courses to address the needs of companies and learners.

Explanation

The primary driver for the courses is to enable clients to meet regulatory compliance requirements. The courses meet client company needs in this regard. Course tests can be conducted orally if learners have literacy challenges, and the timing of courses is adjusted to suit learners' other needs, such as childcare. Learner feedback shows that the learning needs of the participants are well met. Courses are also adapted to specific client company training needs. Ongoing and growing contracts with many client companies show that their training needs are well met.

Burwater is proactive in ensuring that the courses offered meet the requirements of current central government legislation, and territorial local authority by-laws, and is active in discussions with territorial local authorities to stay abreast with the new requirements in the Food Amendments Act (2002).

Tests have also been translated into several of the students' first languages. This has contributed towards making the courses more accessible to new migrant students.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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**

Context

Staff are well selected and supported in the initial stages of becoming tutors, and students' satisfaction with the courses is regularly monitored. Students' achievement rates are monitored, with very few failing to pass their course. Overall, this has resulted in individual tutors performing to a high standard. However, some issues were noted within the organisation's self-assessment processes in relation to reviewing the effectiveness of its assessments and assessment procedures.

Explanation

Course tutors are industry experts trained in competency-based assessment; many have achieved unit standard 4098 *Use standards to assess candidate performance*. Tutors are well prepared for their role by first observing an experienced tutor in action, jointly delivering their first session, and having their first solo session observed by a peer before delivering training on their own. This process has been in place for some time and has resulted in a consistently high level of tutor performance. Students complete a satisfaction survey at each session, and these are reviewed for emerging issues and trends. The surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with the tutor and the training offered. Tutors attend an annual meeting to review and provide input to course material, and have an annual teaching observation as part of their performance review. Results show that tutors are effective and their performance is well monitored. Course delivery material has recently been re-developed, for example by adding supporting PowerPoint slides to the basic food safety course. This has resulted in improved consistency across tutors.

Assessment materials have been reviewed recently in order to strengthen the validity and reliability of students' competency. This review has resulted in improvements, such as reducing incidents of cheating.

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**

Context

Burwater Pacific's safe food handling courses run for half a day, and the nature of the training is such that students are required to develop an understanding and knowledge of their employer's safe food handling plans and the principles of safety with food handling. The

support provided to students is appropriate for the nature and length of the courses, and is resulting in a very high success rate.

Explanation

A high number of Burwater Pacific's students are new migrants with English as their second language. The organisation has translated the learning and assessment materials into a number of languages appropriate for this group. The number of students on each course is limited to a maximum of 20 to ensure that each student receives personal attention. Burwater Pacific uses a range of strategies to ensure students are well supported, such as including interpreters, identifying literacy issues prior to courses, and including sufficient time for informal chats to check that students are developing sufficient knowledge and understanding. This has resulted in a high rate of student and client company satisfaction, and has enabled students to pass the course. Students' course evaluations confirm that their learning needs are being well met.

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 **Excellent**

Context

Burwater Pacific is a small company with one managing director, who is also actively involved as a trainer. The managing director is supported by two support staff and four trainers. The organisation has sufficient policies and procedures, including matters relating to the delivery and assessment of learning, which are appropriate for its size and sufficiently detailed to provide clarity to all staff. The manager and staff expressed confidence that the organisation has a well-established collaborative culture, and could maintain the quality of delivery and students' achievements for a period of time in the absence of key staff.

Explanation

The fact that the managing director is also active as a tutor is significant because this ensures that the strategic focus of Burwater Pacific is well grounded in the current and emerging training needs of both the client companies and the students. The majority of Burwater Pacific's business is in the development of food safety plans for client companies, and the delivery of food safety courses supports these companies to meet their legislative obligations, by ensuring their staff are sufficiently well trained. This is a purposeful strategy and ensures that the organisation is in daily contact with client companies. This close engagement with food handling companies, the New Zealand Food Safety Authority, and territorial local authorities informs Burwater Pacific management in its business and strategic planning, to ensure courses are up to date with changes in legislation, and current best practice.

The informal feedback received by tutors and management has confirmed that client companies are well satisfied with the course pass rates that their staff achieve, and the application of the new knowledge back at work.

Management has been responsive to students' needs, for example adapting the timing of courses to suit childcare arrangements, and where necessary have sought out new training venues to improve the learning environment.

Statements of Confidence

The statements of confidence are derived from the findings within and across the focus areas. A four-step scale is used: highly confident, confident, not yet confident, not confident.

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **highly confident** in the educational performance of Burwater Pacific.

The overall course pass rate for students on the short courses offered by Burwater Pacific is very high. This is consistent across time and for the two course levels: Basic Food Safety and Advanced Food Safety. Client companies have expressed a high level of confidence in the training offered and in the observed application of that knowledge in the workplace by their employees.

Course surveys consistently show students' high satisfaction with their experience on the courses and in the applicability of the knowledge at work and in their own homes.

The validity of the course material and the learning gained is confirmed through client company and student feedback, and by the organisation's ongoing consulting contracts to develop food safety plans that meet regulatory requirements.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **confident** in the capability in self-assessment of Burwater Pacific.

Burwater Pacific has a range of formal and informal processes to monitor and confirm the effectiveness of the training delivered, as indicated by the high rate of student achievement. This is appropriate and effective for the size of the organisation.

Some information gathered through daily discussions and ad hoc meetings is used immediately to make improvements, and information gathered via the planned and formal reviews contributes to longer-term policy reviews. The organisation has carried out a review of the course evaluation survey form to ensure it provides relevant information, and that it is in the best format; and has analysed the results of student course evaluations to identify patterns or trends and to assess the overall picture that these evaluations provide. Burwater Pacific's internal review processes reflect most aspects of effective self-assessment. However, management is aware of the need to establish a more proactive plan to increase the focus on outcomes and improvements. Burwater Pacific staff are in daily contact with client companies and information gathered this way is used to ensure training courses are managed and adapted to meet their clients' needs.

Actions Required and Recommendations

Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's regular scheduling policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report.

Recommendations

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

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E eeradmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz