

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust

Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 30 November 2010

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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

Location:	Kaikohe
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	1992
Number of students:	15 students funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Ten students funded the Ministry of Education (MOE) Alternative Education contract
Number of staff:	One full-time equivalent (TEC contract) Three part-time tutors (MOE contract)
Scope of active accreditation:	NQF accreditation from a wide range of subfields and domains. The subfields and domains that Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust (the Trust) uses for its current courses include generic computing, business management and administration, communication skills, and core generics.
Sites:	Kaikohe
Distinctive characteristics:	In addition to its role as a tertiary education and training provider, Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust oversees a number of community projects in collaboration with other government agencies such as Child, Youth and Family Services and Ministry of Social Development.
Recent significant changes:	NA
Previous quality assurance history:	The organisation was previously quality assured by NZQA in 2006 against QA Standard One, the quality assurance standard then in force, and met all

requirements.

Other:

The Trust has instigated a number of community projects. An example is the gym located on site. It is open to the public and is used by sport teams, business and corporate staff, and government agencies such as the Police. The gym has attracted a cross-section of people who would not usually access the Trust facilities. This has led to a positive perception of the Trust's community activities.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The agreed scope of the external evaluation and review of Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust included the following mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management, and strategy

The programme focus areas included:

- Freestylz (a life-skills programme offered to mature learners)
- Whatever It Takes (a life-skills programme offered to youth).

This was a whole-of-organisation EER. The two programmes are managed and delivered as one class and will be reported as such in the focus area section of this report.

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/>

Prior to the EER visit, Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust provided the external evaluation and review team with a comprehensive self-assessment summary.

During the visit, the evaluation team met with key staff, including the trustees, the manager, administrator, students, and tutor. While on site, the evaluation team viewed a range of documents.

Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust (the Trust)**.

Key reasons include the following.

- While the Trust did not consistently meet its contracted outcomes in some areas in 2007 and 2008, it reviewed and improved its self-assessment practice and, based on these actions, exceeded contracted outcomes in two of its three measures in 2009 including the achievement of a 100 per cent success rate in progressing all students into further training or employment. The Trust has identified unit standard credit achievement as the area that needs continual monitoring to ensure that all effort is made to meet contracted outcome requirements for 2010. Past achievements averaged 18 credits and the contracted requirement is 20 credits.
- Numerous examples were provided of students who had enrolled with little or only part credit towards national certificates. The Trust has used this information when determining student learning pathways to give students an opportunity to complete qualifications. This has resulted in a number of students completing national certificates (13 in 2008 and 12 in 2009). These are excellent outcomes benefitting the student, whānau, and community.
- The organisation has well-established processes. It purposefully monitors its interactions with stakeholders to ensure it remains aware of their diverse needs, and actively works towards meeting those needs. This ensures the programmes are relevant and of value to the stakeholders. Ample stakeholder feedback supports this conclusion.
- Students and trainees reported that their improved well-being, confidence, and enhanced personal development added value to the skills and abilities achieved through the programmes.

Collectively, these activities and achievements demonstrate the planned, purposeful, and effective direction of the Trust. The evaluation team agrees that, given the improvement in educational performance shown in 2009 and from results to date in 2010, a continuation of this trend should result in a highly confident rating.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust (the Trust)**.

Key reasons include the following.

- The Trust has improved its review processes to strengthen its self-evaluation practice. Management has made a concerted effort to instil self-assessment as a practice that all staff engage with, and numerous examples to demonstrate this were provided to the evaluation team. The improvement in student educational achievement has shown the improved effectiveness of the Trust's self-assessment practice.
- The Trust's engagement, commitment, and response to stakeholder feedback ensures that it is continually monitoring whether it is meeting stakeholder needs. Several stakeholder groups, such as Child, Youth and Family Services and the Ministry of Social Development, regard the Trust as a provider of choice for the services the Trust offers.
- The size of the organisation, its robust policies and processes, and its collective whānau approach enable staff to be flexible and to act and react quickly to change and challenges to the PTE. The organisation has captured achievement data over a number of years and is now using, analysing, and responding to the data more effectively.

TEO response

Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust 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 **Excellent**.

The Trust's key goal is to assist learners to achieve their personal goals. For learners, employment features strongly in goal-setting. The achievement of this key goal provides challenges for the Trust as the economic recession has seen fewer local employment opportunities available to graduates.

Education achievement results from 2007 and 2008 did not consistently meet contracted outcomes and resulted in losses of funded training places. The Trust reviewed and improved its self-assessment practices and through the resulting actions exceeded two of three contracted outcomes for 2009, including the achievement of a 100 per cent success rate for further training and employment outcomes. The only area still requiring improvement to meet the TEC contracted outcomes is unit standard credits. The TEC expectation is to average 20 credits per learner. The Trust recorded an average of 18.67 credits per learner for 2009 and has increased further its monitoring of credit achievement, including a change in teaching staff, and is confident it will meet the 20-credit measure for 2010. The Trust is pleased with the completion of national certificates by graduates, averaging more than nine for the last three years.

The Trust engages learners in a meaningful educational experience in order to increase personal confidence and experience educational achievement leading to increased knowledge and skills and further training or employment. Students interviewed by the evaluation team confirmed this to be so. These outcomes benefit the student, whānau, and the community as graduates use these achievements to improve personal circumstances.

The Trust has strengthened its self-assessment practice by focussing on the areas that require improvement. This enables students to achieve their educational goals, which in turn enables the Trust meet its contracted outcomes. Staff professional development and an inclusive approach to self-assessment are reflected in improved delivery practice and educational achievement. The evaluation team is of the view that with this continued trend of improvement, the Trust's educational performance in relation to this key evaluation question will likely move to an excellent rating.

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 **Excellent**.

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

The value of the training to the learners is increased confidence and the skills to better equip them for employment. Staff are aware that this may mean some learners need to move out of the area because the current economic recession has affected employment opportunities in the town and surrounding areas. Increased confidence and skill ability also enable graduates from the Trust programmes to pathway to higher-level training at organisations such as Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. The Trust is investigating additional collaborative relationships with other providers to provide advanced training as the economic downturn continues to affect employment opportunities. Valued outcomes for students lead to valued outcomes for their whānau and communities.

The Trust operates a gym on site. This facility has made a positive impact on the personal health and fitness of students and staff. Members of the public, businesses, and government departments such as the Police also use the facilities, promoting a positive interaction with the Trust and its students.

Graduates of the Trust programmes have been employed in the community through the Community Max project (national cycle track), again fostering positive interaction between the Trust and the community.

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**.

The Trust has well-developed processes in place to identify learner needs to maximise support, enabling personal growth and educational achievement. An entry interview is followed by a diagnostic test to determine ability in literary and numeracy. Goals and learning plans are discussed, agreed, and reviewed periodically. Student records of learning are checked so that incomplete qualifications can be included in the learning plan. Through these processes, learner needs are identified and addressed.

Students formally evaluate the programme and tutor performance regularly; however, as the organisation is small, any issues are dealt with as they arise. Interviewed students commented that they get feedback on matters raised.

Management and the trustees have wide community and national networks and use these networks strategically to keep abreast of opportunities that will benefit learners, incorporating these opportunities into Trust activities.

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 **Excellent**.

Staff at the Trust are well qualified, have relevant skills, and are empathetic to the learners. The two programmes (mature and youth learners) are taught as one class, utilising tuakana-teina mentoring practice². The teaching and learning environment promotes open and frank discussions in a safe environment. Other staff employed by the Trust are encouraged to utilise their skills and experiences in the class where appropriate, increasing learning opportunities for the students.

Staff professional development is encouraged and supported to improve the skills and qualifications of the tutors. The tutor holds the National Certificate in Adult Literacy Education (Vocational), enabling her to identify literacy and numeracy needs on entry and provide ongoing support.

Learners interviewed expressed a high level of satisfaction with the programme's course content and delivery. This was seen in the documented analyses of learner evaluations and endorsed through the evaluation team interviews with learners.

External moderation reports by the relevant national standard-setting bodies identified that the Trust is meeting the national standard.

The Trust has identified that unit standard credit achievement is a priority for continued monitoring, and the measures in place give confidence that the trust will likely achieve this goal in 2010.

² Tuakana/teina refers to the relationship between an older (tuakana) person and a younger (teina) person and is specific to teaching and learning in the Māori context. Within teaching and learning contexts, this can take a variety of forms:

- Peer to peer – teina teaches teina, tuakana teaches tuakana.
- Younger to older – the teina has some skills in an area that the tuakana does not and is able to teach the tuakana.
- Older to younger – the tuakana has the knowledge and content to pass on to the teina.
- Able to less able – the learner may not be as able in an area, and someone more skilled can teach what is required.

http://www.tki.org.nz/r/hpe/exploring_te_ao_kori/planning/methods_e.php

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**.

The Trust has a strong commitment to providing guidance and support to learners. As reported earlier, the Trust's key goal is to support learners to achieve their goals, and the Trust has a number of support measures in place to achieve this goal. Learners are provided with clear, informative induction material.

Learners are telephoned when they are absent and staff put in place appropriate support mechanisms. Learners are from rural communities, and when they are not able to attend class, staff deliver workbooks to these learners to enable learning to continue. Assessments can be held outside class hours for those learners who require it to maximise access. Transport is provided to ensure learners can travel to and from class, increasing accessibility.

As previously reported, other Trust staff are used to provide one-to-one tuition, either in areas that require extension or in supplementary support.

Learners interviewed commented on the whānau atmosphere of the class and the support provided to help them achieve their goals.

1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

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

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

The trustees of the Trust have wide-ranging networks locally and nationally and utilise these to keep abreast of policy developments that impact the Trust's activities. They have worked hard at identifying and meeting stakeholder needs to keep training relevant. The Trust has set a clear strategic direction and goals for implementation by management and staff.

Teaching staff are encouraged and supported to pursue professional development activities to keep up to date, benefitting themselves and their learners. The Trust is well resourced financially, with sizeable monetary reserves. In interviews with the evaluation team, staff and learners endorsed resource availability.

Management acknowledges the value of staff, involving them in inclusive decision-making. Staff can use Trust resources for personal requirements such as the use of the facilities for whānau functions. Robust quality management systems developed at the Trust are acknowledged and utilised in the community, i.e. by marae and other PTEs.

The other programme offered by the Trust is alternative education for secondary school students. The programme has a waiting list, endorsing its value to schools and students and

providing an alternative until students either re-engage in the secondary school system or gain employment.

The trustees have endorsed management's drive to make self-assessment a business-as-usual activity, supporting staff involvement in NZQA self-assessment workshops and emphasising improvements in educational performance.

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 **Excellent**.

2.2 Focus area: Freestylze

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

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

2.3 Focus area: Whatever it Takes

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

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

Recommendations

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

Further actions

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

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 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) 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).

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