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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 13 December 2017

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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:	Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1 February 1992
Location:	33 Rankin Street, Kaikohe
Delivery sites:	As above
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 1)• Certificate in Business Administration and Computing (Level 2)
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: one full-time student (100 per cent Māori) International: nil
Number of staff:	Two full-time equivalents and one part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/nqf-accreditations.do?providerId=925389001
Distinctive characteristics:	The Trust has been an Alternative Education provider for the past 18 years for 13-16-year-old students alienated from mainstream education. The PTE is a contract holder and governance body for the Kaikohe youth space (2017).
Recent significant changes:	Since 2015, the Trust has decided not to continue with Youth Guarantee funding after two

consecutive years of repaying funds to the Tertiary Education Commission. The Trust has struggled to meet funding requirements with its cohort of students. This has meant significant staff changes as the PTE downsized and prepared for possible deregistration. It has also sold its current building which the PTE now leases from the new owner.

Previous quality assurance history:

Since 2014, the Trust has met NZQA moderation requirements.

At the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2010, NZQA was Confident in the Trust's educational performance and Highly Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the evaluation focused on all the Trust's educational delivery which included the Alternative Education programme for 14 school students and the National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 1) programme which currently has one student enrolled.

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 evaluation team comprised one lead evaluator and one team evaluator. The team visited the Trust's Kaikohe site. The evaluators interviewed:

- All trustees (three), all management (two management staff – one of whom is also the PTE tutor); and the Alternative Education tutor
- The PTE student
- Six external stakeholders of the PTE from a range of entities including the police, Kaikohe Place-Based Initiative¹, a local secondary school and the new owner of the building (Methodist Church).

¹ This initiative facilitated the establishment of the youth space.

Documentation considered as part of the evaluation included general manager reports to the Board; policies and procedures; student files and marked student assessments; internal moderation examples; student achievement data; self-assessment data; strategic planning documentation and youth wānanga summaries.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance and **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust**.

The reasons for these judgements are:

- The evidence for meeting needs is generally good, with a range of community stakeholders in particular affirming that the Trust plays an important role in supporting youth disengaged from mainstream education.
- The educational outcomes achieved for Alternative Education and PTE students vary depending on the needs of the students. Successes include attending class regularly, self-regulating inappropriate behaviours, and improving literacy and numeracy skills and achieving some credits towards a qualification. Given the context, the needs of the students and the range of outcomes with such limited numbers, these outcomes are good.
- Despite its small size, the Trust has maintained effective processes that support teaching and learning including tutor observations, internal and external moderation, regular student feedback, stakeholder engagement and internal reporting. There is also good support for the students, who have a number of learning and behavioural challenges. The PTE student felt the Trust is a welcoming environment that is flexible to her needs.
- The Trust has considered future options including partnerships, and has reviewed the relevance of its current offering and canvassed the needs of young people in the community. This information is informing a strategic review currently being led by the new governance team.
- Self-assessment is limited in terms of informing improvements given the small size of the Trust. However, size has enabled the management team to be agile and flexible to make immediate changes or improvements to improve the learning experience as needed.

Findings²

Key evaluation questions 1 and 2: How well do students achieve?
What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders including students?

The rating for performance in relation to both key evaluation questions is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for both key evaluation questions is **Good**.

The Trust supports and nurtures young people in Kaikohe who are disengaged from education, in particular through its Alternative Education programme for school-aged high-needs students, and also through its level 1 and 2 PTE programme offering. Currently the Trust has 14 students enrolled in the Alternative Education programme and one tertiary student. Many of the Alternative Education students are enrolled at secondary school, but for a number of reasons have chosen not to return to school. Therefore, the Trust's focus is on establishing regular attendance, building confidence and respect, improving their social skills and behaviours, and engaging students in various learning activities to improve their literacy and numeracy. Student achievement and reflection on student goals is monitored by the tutor and management through individual learning plans, student reflection journals, and behaviour plans.

Since 2015 the Trust has had three PTE students, who have come from the Alternative Education programme.³ The tertiary students are supported to successfully complete their programme of study. However, achieving some credits is a success in itself, with many of these young students entering into the programme with no credits or qualifications. The Trust also works hard to ensure that its students have an alternative pathway should they decide not to continue with studying at the Trust, including gaining employment and/or continuing on to further study elsewhere. Of the three students enrolled since 2015, one is employed, one has moved out of town, and the third is not employed or in any further training. Given the small number of students, all achievement and outcomes information is kept on individual student files and not collated unless required. Discussions around performance are informal within the management team, and between management and trustees. If needed, issues are tabled formally at trustee meetings.

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

³ Students who are 16 years and over cannot be enrolled on the Alternative Education programme.

Key evaluation question 3: How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant 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 learning programme is well matched to the needs of the students. Activities are relevant and contextualised to meet the different interests of the learners, in particular the Alternative Education students. The tutor is responsive and attuned to the students' learning needs and makes content changes on a daily basis (and during the day) to engage the students. Learning resources meet the needs of the students, including an on-site gym they have supervised access to. The PTE student receives useful feedback on assessments and was clear about where she could improve.

The tutor is new in his role but well qualified and experienced to work with young people. He is supported by the management team as needed, and by a trustee who is also an experienced educator. He has access to professional supervision given the high needs and challenges of the Alternative Education students. Activities for the learners are short to keep them engaged. Literacy and numeracy and tikanga and te reo Māori practices are integrated into everyday activities. The PTE student comes into the Trust at least three times a week at times that suit her. She is encouraged to work at her own pace with the support of a tutor, and occasionally independently with the management team on hand to help if needed. The PTE student has an interest in working with young children and the PTE has recently found her relevant work experience.

Key evaluation question 4: How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

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 Alternative Education students have individual learning plans with set goals and are encouraged to complete learning journals which are reviewed by the tutor regularly. The journal provides the tutor with information about the students, any personal difficulties they might be experiencing, individual interests and learning successes.

The Trust has established relationships it draws on to support students, including Oranga Tamariki, the police, health clinics and iwi health services, drug and alcohol services, dental health and youth services. Social and health services have spoken to the students on various topics, and the Trust also helps students to set up appointments with particular services and, if necessary, takes students to their appointments.

Attendance is monitored every day and staff visit whānau homes if necessary to find students who do not attend regularly. The Trust also encourages parents to visit the Trust to support their tamariki; most, however, do not. The Trust also has a number of whānau volunteers who they can draw on to support the Alternative Education students and the PTE student to meet specific learning needs.

Literacy and numeracy assessments show that most of the Alternative Education students struggle with basic literacy. This data supports the tutor's assessment that students as young as 14 years of age have trouble with basic spelling. The tutor, therefore, has developed a range of fun and practical activities and games to help students improve their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge. These have helped keep students engaged in the learning.

Some of the Alternative Education students are high risk. For example, one student is only allowed to attend the programme with a minder. The Trust has endured theft, property damage and vehicle damage over the past few years from the Alternative Education students. Matters are dealt with quickly to ensure all students and staff are kept safe. Despite these challenges, the Trust is committed to keeping its doors open for these students, knowing that for some students the Trust environment is the only caring and welcoming place for them.

Key evaluation questions 5 and 6: How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement? How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

The rating for performance in relation to both key evaluation questions is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for both key evaluation questions is **Good**.

The Trust has been through a number of changes since the last EER in 2010. The Trust had intended to deregister the PTE, but in 2016 a new governance group took over the Trust and a new chair was appointed. The new governors bring experience from working in iwi governance and management, and in the education and social sectors. Combined, they bring a renewed energy and depth of understanding about their community and governance to lead and grow the PTE into the future.

Strategic discussions with interested partners have been, and continue to be, held about the delivery of tertiary education to the Kaikohe community and where the PTE fits into this provision, including to what extent the PTE can support the realisation of iwi educational aspirations. The immediate focus, however, has been on working with the wider community to establish a youth space in Kaikohe, Te Uma o Kona⁴, which the Trust has an ownership interest in.

⁴ http://www.nzherald.co.nz/northern-advocate/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503450&objectid=11904544

The Trust has leveraged off its involvement in the youth space by participating in stakeholder and youth engagement in their community to identify their needs and aspirations and what this means for the PTE. The voice of youth will inform the Trust's strategic plan which was being developed at the time of the EER as a priority.

The range of stakeholders spoken to affirmed the value of the Trust to Kaikohe which has extended over 20 years. The Trust has a wide reach into the community as the current management team knows many of the families in the community and uses their personal and professional networks to support learners. The Trust is highly regarded as a safe and comfortable learning environment for high-needs youth disengaged from the mainstream system.

A small team of experienced staff have been effectively managing the Trust to ensure important compliance responsibilities are met. The Trust is aware that its only NZQA-approved programme will be retired in March 2018, and the background work relating to new programme development is underway. However, the Trust will need to engage additional support if it intends to deliver a programme in 2018.

Self-assessment activities are ongoing (tutor reflections and student/stakeholder feedback) but on a lesser scale and with limited opportunity to make improvements with only three staff and three tertiary students since 2015. That said, the Trust has maintained its systems and processes, including good financial controls to ensure it remains viable until such time as decisions are made about its future.

Based on the evidence presented, the evaluation concluded that for its size and context, the Trust has a good understanding of its own performance and is managing its most important compliance accountabilities.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Educational delivery

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

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

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that the Trust:

- Engage additional support to assist with curriculum development and programme approval; or investigate the appropriateness of a training scheme.
- Complete and ratify its strategic plan and strategic direction as it relates to the ongoing sustainability of the PTE.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

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 External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

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).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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