

# Report of External Evaluation and Review

## Skills Update Training Institute

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 17 January 2014

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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:	Skills Update Training Institute
Type:	Private training establishment
Location:	Head office, 59 Tidal Road, Mangere
Delivery sites:	59 Tidal Road Mangere, 15-17 Walters Road Papakura, 12-14 Cartwright Road, Kelston
First registered:	1 July 1992
Courses currently delivered:	National Certificates in: Building, Construction and Allied Trades Skills (Level 2), Business Administration and Computing (Levels 2 and 3), Computing (Levels 2 and 3), Distribution (Level 2), Employment Skills (Level 1), Goods Service (Core Skills) with optional stands in Dangerous Goods, and Forklifts (Level 2), Health, Disability and Aged Support (Core Competences) (Level 3), Motor Industry (Entry Skills) (Level 2), Carpentry (Level 4). National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) level 2, Vocational Pathway in Services Industry Sector, Vocational Pathway in Manufacturing and Technology Sector and Vocational Pathway in Social and Community Sector. A Forces Pre-entry course is part of the Vocational Pathway in Social and Community Sector.
Number of students:	Domestic: 463 EFTS (equivalent full-time students); 80 per cent Māori or Pasifika

Number of staff:	100.5 full-time equivalents (83 full-time, 35 part-time)
Scope of active accreditation:	As above
Distinctive characteristics:	Skills Update's mission is 'to facilitate the youth and mature community members who experience difficulties in engaging and sustaining employment or education by assisting them to acquire work ethics, functional life skills, financial independence and self-esteem'. The organisation is a provider of commercial and industrial training with a significant proportion of learners coming from Māori and Pasifika backgrounds. Seventy-four per cent are male and 62 per cent are below 25 years of age. All learners have low or no qualifications and have had minimal success in mainstream schooling. The majority also come from low socio-economic backgrounds. All learners receive free training at Skills Update.
Recent significant changes:	New appointments in 2013 include a quality assurance manager and an academic manager.
Previous quality assurance history:	An external evaluation and review (EER) occurred in 2009. At that EER, NZQA was Confident in Skills Update's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment. Skills Update has met all the national external moderation requirements of NZQA and the relevant industry training organisations, including the New Zealand Motor Industry Training Organisation (MITO), where prior good moderation results exempted Skills Update from moderation with the ITO in 2012 and 2013.
Other:	The campuses are owned by a trust. Papakura has new facilities, Kelston has been totally refurbished, and Mangere is undergoing expansion in 2013.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus areas selected were:

- Governance, management and strategy (mandatory)
- National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 1)
- NCEA level 2 Vocational Pathway Social and Community Sector (Forces Pre - entry)
- National Certificate in Motor Industry (Level 2)

These were agreed focus areas between NZQA and Skills Update. They include a core trade programme (Motor Industry), a new non-trade programme (Forces Pre-entry) and a foundation-level programme (Employment Skills).

The employment skills programme is delivered at all three sites (Papakura, Mangere, Kelston) and has the largest number of students as it is a foundation programme required for both youth and mature students. Many students combine a trades qualification with this national certificate to improve their foundation skills. Forces Pre-entry is also offered across all three sites and attracts predominantly youth who are aiming for entry to the New Zealand Defence Force, while also improving their foundation skills.

The National Certificate in Motor Industry is delivered at the Papakura site only and has the highest number of credits among the programmes offered. It also has a work experience training component where students work in automotive workshops in the local area, and is representative of the trades courses offered by Skills Update.

## 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 two lead evaluators who conducted the evaluation over two days. The first day was at the head office in Mangere and the second day at the Papakura site. The evaluators met with the director, academic manager, human resources manager, branch managers, the operations manager and tutorial staff across all three focus areas. They also met students from all focus areas and a range of stakeholders, including staff from Waiouru Military Camp, employers

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who offer workplace experience for the motor industry trainees, and other community representatives, including Māori representatives.

The evaluators sighted a range of documentation including the quality management system and self-assessment booklets that use the six key evaluation questions as the basis for describing and analysing Skills Update data. Each booklet had an appendix of documents that evidenced the content. These six booklets and accompanying appendices provided a coherent self-assessment rationale that aided specific lines of evaluative inquiry.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Skills Update Training Institute**.

- Skills Update consistently meets or exceeds government funding requirements for the progress learners make into further training, education or employment, the average number of credits achieved by learners and the organisation's ability to deliver the training for which it is funded. The training is free to learners and occurs in excellent facilities. Students are also provided with all the equipment required for learning to occur, such as overalls and work boots.
- Skills Update measures itself against national data and other high-performing organisations offering similar programmes against which to compare its performance. It also measures performance across its three branches to track variations in the same programmes between these branches.
- National data comparisons indicate that Skills Update is performing as well as or above similar providers. The branch comparisons mostly show consistent performance across programmes. When there are differences in performance across branches, this is followed up immediately and solutions are initiated.
- Skills Update creates pathway plans in consultation with learners which identify the employment an individual is most suited to, the duration of training, and plans for the delivery of generic and literacy and numeracy training. These plans are discussed and reviewed regularly by students and tutors. They show the progress each student is making against the agreed outcomes. When milestones are not being reached, this is discussed with the student and the plan is revised accordingly.
- The majority of learners make progress in literacy and numeracy as measured by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) literacy and numeracy assessment tools. The organisation has embedded literacy and numeracy content and strategies into all relevant programmes. This has increased learning opportunities by providing greater relevance and practical application to the learners' work goals.
- Skills Update provides a holistic approach to learner achievement which includes exemplary pastoral support and committed tutors who model the values required to succeed at work and in life. These values are expressed and reinforced by encouraging consistent behaviour from all staff and students at the organisation. The acquisition of these values enhances

learner self-esteem and confidence, which contributes significantly to greater success in study and work.

- Skills Update employs tutors with relevant industry qualifications, most of whom have adult teaching qualifications. Tutors employed without an adult teaching qualification are required and supported to gain one as soon as practicable because Skills Update values an appropriately trained workforce.
- Skills Update provides a balance of technical, trades and foundation skills training that meet the needs of the local community, including Māori and Pasifika youth with low or no qualifications who are at risk of long-term unemployment.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Skills Update Training Institute**.

- Skills Update is responsive to industry through informal and formal interactions that guide programme development and the graduate attributes required to meet industry needs.
- Skills Update's mission and values have been developed to provide guidance to staff and students around appropriate behaviour, effective communication and ways to improve interpersonal relationships.
- Skills Update seeks regular feedback from students on tutors' performance, programmes and facilities, and makes changes as a result of this feedback. Skills Update has developed its own measures of learner success to acknowledge positive outcomes that are valued by the organisation and its learners, in addition to those outcomes required for ongoing government funding.
- Skills Update engages proactively with community and interest groups and ensures that learners, through their training, also make connections with the community. Collaboration with other educational organisations maximises positive learner outcomes by providing staircasing opportunities to the next level of learning.
- Skills Update has processes and procedures that audit administration of academic, health and safety and educational outcomes regularly across all the branches. These processes ensure that systems are being followed, are quickly corrected if not being followed, or are changed to better meet stakeholder needs.
- Regular review of learner progress is guided by NZQA's six key evaluation questions. This has contributed to embedded self-assessment practices that are well understood and enthusiastically embraced by staff. Issues that



arise are viewed as opportunities to improve the teaching and learning environment.

- Skills Update is held in high regard by external stakeholders. It uses government funding effectively and efficiently to provide highly valued, work-ready employees. The organisation employs and supports teachers who are committed to second-chance learners, and provides the best possible physical and social environment for learning to occur. All learners are valued as individuals with the potential to lead productive lives.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

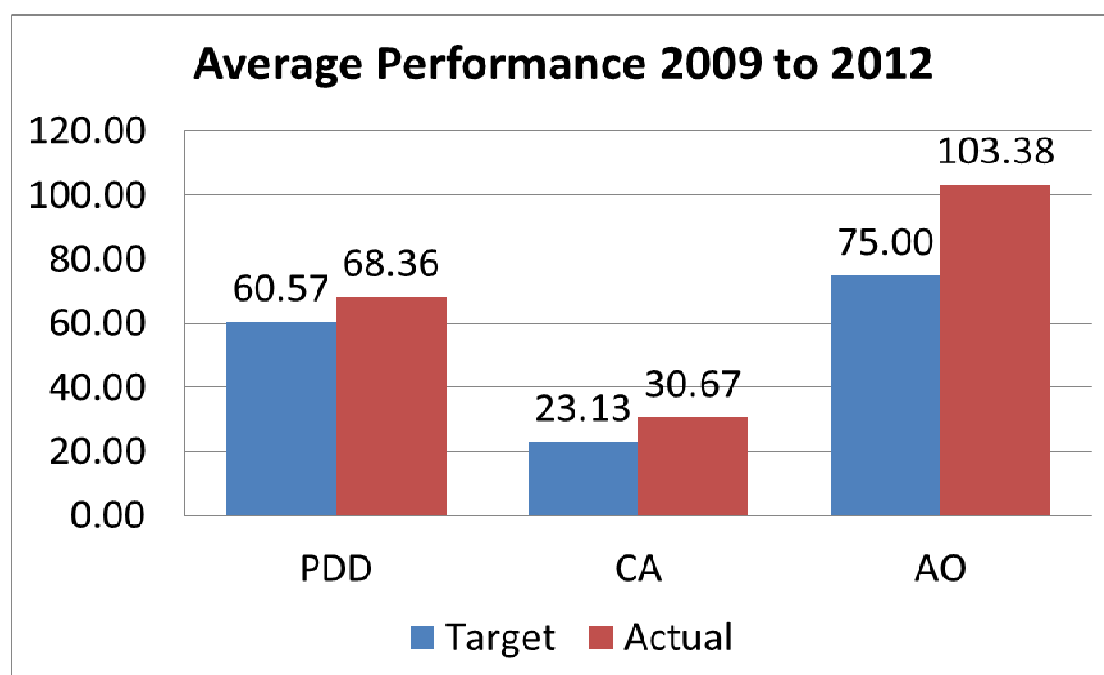
**NB: The graphs and tables used in this report were produced by Skills Update. The validity of the information contained in them was verified by the evaluation team.**

## 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**.

**Achievement in the Skills Update context.** Learner achievement at Skills Update is measured by three factors. The first is positive destination data (the progress a learner makes into further training, education or employment at two months after leaving the programme). The second factor is average credit achievement (average credits achieved by a learner in the course), and the third is occupancy rates (whether an organisation delivers the training allocated or funded). The funding bodies, the TEC and the Ministry of Social Development have specific targets attached to these measures. The graph below shows the average performance from 2009-2012 across all TEC-funded Skills Update programmes and clearly indicates that Skills Update consistently exceeds performance expectations for all three measures.



PDD = Positive Destination Data; CA = Credit Achievement; AO = Average Occupancy

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

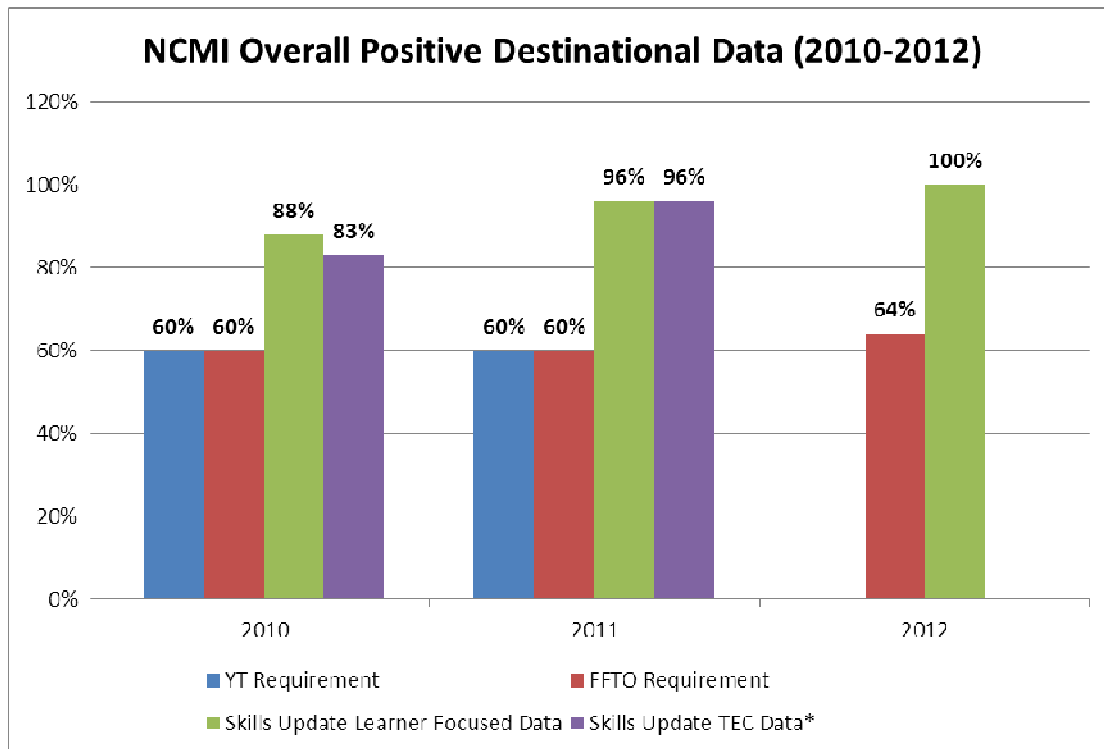
The percentage of students achieving the minimum requirements in the Employment Skills programme over the period 2010-2012 is shown in the table below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>TEC requirements</b>	<b>National data</b> <i>(Percentage of all students meeting TEC credit requirements (2010-2012))</i>	<b>Skills Update data</b> <i>(Percentage of Skills Update students meeting TEC credit requirements (2010-2012))</i>
2010	YT/YG = 20 credits FFTO = 20 credits	36.5% 35.6%	75.3% 75.3%
2011	YT/YG = 20 credits FFTO = 20 credits	36.5% 35.6%	64.5% 64.5%
2012	YT/YG = 40 credits FFTO = 25 credits	18.3% 35.6%	54.5% 69.7%

YT = Youth Training; YG = Youth Guarantee; FFTO = Foundation-Focused Training Opportunities

This table shows that Skills Update has consistently exceeded TEC requirements for credit achievement over several years. It also shows that in 2012 – when TEC credit targets were raised and national credit achievement percentages were very low – Skills Update was able to continue a comparably high level of credit achievement, indicative of the organisation’s ability to respond quickly and positively to learner needs and funding requirements.

**Positive Destinalional Data in the Skills Update context.** In January 2013, Youth Training became Youth Guarantee, which meant multi-skills programmes were now Student Achievement Component (SAC) funded individual qualifications. This meant that a qualification-by-qualification approach was mandatory, and the key performance indicators were the same as those used for Student Achievement Component-funded key performance indicators, with some variation as per the TEC Youth Guarantee requirements. For Foundation-Focused Training Opportunities (FFTO) students, Skills Update noted that there was a difference between Ministry of Social Development and students’ criteria of a positive outcome. For learners, part-time employment and progression from FFTO to Training for Work programmes, where learners can enhance their employment skills following foundation training, were considered positive outcomes. However, funder criteria demanded full-time work related to benefit type. To acknowledge and reconcile the needs of both the funding bodies and the learners, Skills Update introduced Skills Update Learner Focused Data, a measure it uses internally to track positive learner outcomes as shown in the graph below for National Certificate in Motor Industry (NCMI) data.



The National Certificate in Motor Industry programme is being delivered solely at the Papakura site and has consistently met the TEC's positive destination data requirements.

The EER focus area of Forces Pre-entry has only been offered since 2011. In 2011, 82 per cent of trainees had positive outcomes and 18 per cent did not. Average credit achievement during 2011 was 21.08 credits, meeting TEC requirements. However, the Mangere site average credit was only 17.21, below the required 20 credits. Skills Update attributes this to staffing issues. The site manager was unwell, there was a temporary manager, and the tutor was not a good fit for the role. This resulted in a new tutor appointment, and the Mangere site average credit achievement for all the programmes offered more than doubled in 2012. Every two weeks, branch managers report on the average credit achievement per week, branch occupancy and labour market outcomes. The planned update of the student management system will allow access by smart phones and tablets, as well as off-site access, which may improve monitoring further.

Skills Update benchmarks itself with a number of Category 1 providers with similar programme delivery. This has provided further evidence that it performs well by comparison. The National Certificate in Employment Skills is predominantly classroom-based, while Forces Pre-entry is semi-vocational training, involving extensive physical and discipline requirements, and the National Certificate in Motor Industry is industry-based and vocational.

In summary, all programmes at all sites are systematically tracked and reviewed to ensure learner achievement meets or exceeds external funder requirements and national averages and recognises Skills Update key performance indicators. On *Final Report*

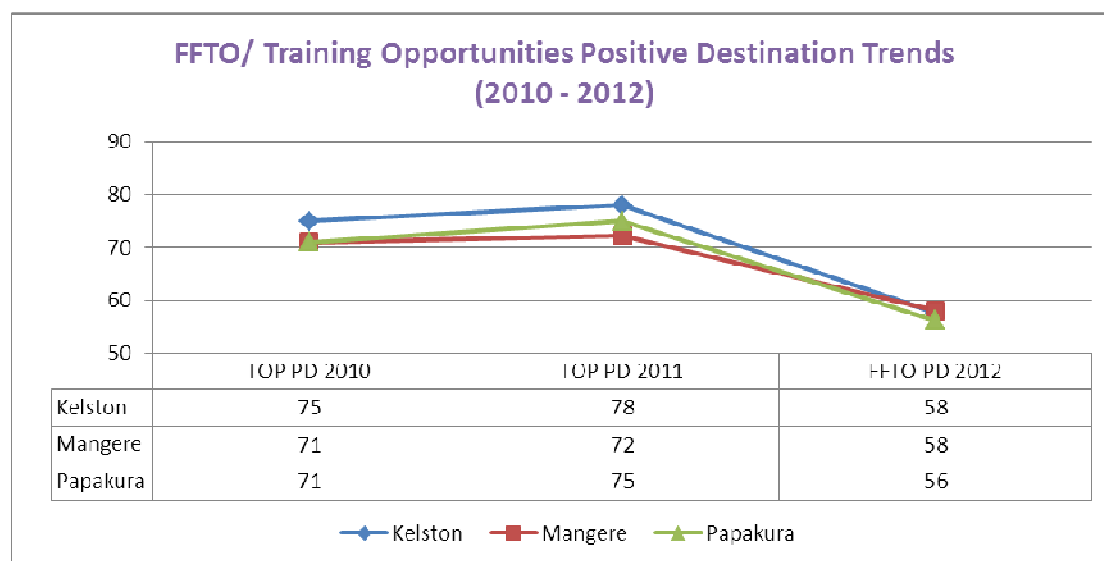
the rare occasions where these indicators are not met, Skills Update is proactive and takes action to address any contributing issues.

## 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**.

In response to a suggestion in the 2009 EER report that, 'processes to critically analyse contributing factors to student achievements and results across all sites are not yet fully developed', Skills Update now carefully tracks performance across all three branches. The graph below indicates that there were no significant differences between the sites in relation to positive destination data for FETO and Training Opportunities (TOP) programmes. The drop-off in results between 2011 and 2012 was due to a decline in the labour market and occurred consistently across all three branches.



Comparative learner achievement data, benchmarking analysis and the longer-term tracking of the outcomes for students who did not achieve the required credits indicate that Skills Update understands its learners well and has successfully maximised their opportunities to gain credits and achieve work-readiness and subsequent jobs. Of 400 long-term unemployed who trained with Skills Update in 2012, about 70 per cent have gained employment or taken up further training. Outcomes for students who did not achieve the required TEC credits over the years 2010-2012 show that two-thirds of National Certificate in Employment Skills students who stayed at Skills Update for more than two weeks were able to arrive at a positive outcome and use the credits they achieved as a means to a positive pathway of either work or further training. This is a significant result considering that the typical learner profile of a person who enrolls at Skills Update is a person

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with no or minimal learner qualifications, lacking in confidence and having low self-esteem.

Skills Update uses the TEC online literacy and numeracy assessment tool at enrolment for all students to gauge preparedness for study. Students are reassessed quarterly. On average across all branches, 70 per cent of learners showed progression in numeracy and 73 per cent in literacy at the first reassessment. Since 2012, numeracy and literacy have been embedded into all programmes, a process that targets industry-specific terminology and makes the learning more relevant to the learners. Papakura branch has a dedicated numeracy and literacy assistant for the Forces Pre-entry programme as most students do not have the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) level 1 at the time of enrolment. The TEC requires all learners to show improvement in literacy and numeracy, although no levels are specified. Skills Update intends to set its own literacy and numeracy targets based on data from industry performance and clarification from the TEC.

Skills Update's consistently high labour market outcomes are attributable to industry stakeholders valuing the training that the learners receive. Employers interviewed by the evaluators said they liked Skills Update graduates as they have good work attitudes, can work well with others and are eager to learn on the job. Students were also very positive about their work prospects and reported that the discipline and manners taught on their courses had improved their relationships with parents and siblings.

Skills Update forms relationships with employers through advisory groups and other less formal meetings. For the National Certificate in Motor Industry programme alone, Skills Update has relationships with approximately 44 employers. These relationships allow the organisation to gain a better understanding of employer needs from a variety of employers, to inform programme development, understand the characteristics required for learners to be work-ready and to help place a large number of people into employment. Employers contact Skills Update directly and there are sometimes more job offers than available students to take them up, an excellent indication of the high regard industry has for Skills Update trainees.

Skills Update engages proactively with community and interest groups and ensures that learners, through their training, also make connections within the community, for example through volunteering for activities such as the Great Spring Clean in 2011 and, more recently, the International Day of Older Persons in 2013. These community links include churches, iwi and a wide range of social service agencies. These relationships are of mutual benefit to Skills Update students and the groups involved as they provide insight into current community needs and support and guidance to learners, and expand learners' worldviews. In the last five years, Skills Update has also made significant financial contributions to a range of community organisations.

Research indicates that the attainment of tertiary qualifications results in higher incomes, better health outcomes and lower crime rates. Skills Update contributes

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to these positive community outcomes through its excellent employment outcomes and comprehensive and genuine links with a wide range of community organisations. Since the last EER in 2009, Skills Update has developed a more sophisticated and explicit analysis of its data, including between branches, and a greater understanding through evidential analysis of the value it adds to a wide range of stakeholders.

### 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**.

Resourcing for students at Skills Update is excellent. The students are provided with free overalls, work boots, a bus to pick them up in the morning, and access to other services in the community. Programmes are developed for the whole organisation, but each branch delivers its own set of programmes, determined by ongoing needs analysis that meets the needs of stakeholders in its locality. Each branch has a work broker to assist students to find relevant employment, provide career progression support and develop job search skills. The primary focus on employment means that programmes need to respond to changing market needs. This responsiveness is evidenced by the occupancy rates across all programmes delivered at Skills Update having exceeded the TEC requirement of 75 per cent, most tracking at 100 per cent over the last four years.

Priority groups of Maori, Pasifika and youth are considered when developing current or future programmes. Recently, Skills Update has added women to these priority groups as women are under-represented in the current programmes. As a consequence, Skills Update has applied to NZQA to deliver a range of programmes in 2014 targeted to this group. These programmes include the National Certificate in Recreation and Sport (including event management to appeal to both men and women) and National Certificates in Beauty Services and Nail Technology. Once a programme is approved by NZQA, a functioning advisory board is developed comprising the quality assurance manager, industry and academic staff and course experts to guide programme development and design. Once the programme is being delivered, a more formal advisory board is developed.

Barriers to learning are minimised. Common barriers identified for learners include: literacy and numeracy, family issues, gambling/drugs/alcohol, gangs, punctuality/attendance, poverty, behavioural problems, lack of motivation and self-esteem, and previous negative experiences with mainstream schools. To address these barriers, Skills Update includes programmes such as alcohol and drug workshops, communication workshops, embedded numeracy and literacy programmes and career and employment workshops.

Skills Update also has excellent modern facilities at all its branches, such as distribution, fabrication and engineering workshops and well-lit, spacious, modern classrooms with up-to-date technical equipment. In addition, all branches have a small gym and recreational facilities for students' use, with gym equipment and pool and table tennis tables. Extracurricular activities also occur. These include sports, Matariki celebrations at Papakura Marae, and Forces Pre-entry students using Redhill Community Centre's physical training facilities. Students from the Forces Pre-entry programme work at the Returned Services' Association to learn about New Zealand's war history, and many find connections with past family members who have been in the army.

All the workshop placements used by the motor industry students are with Motor Trade Association-assured businesses, an external indicator of the quality of the employer. These placements sometimes lead to employment. Workplace learning assessments are undertaken by workplace assessors, with some task verification on site where appropriate.

The mission and philosophy of Skills Update is contained in the Human Qualities at Work Programme introduced in 2011 to address learner needs, work ethics and other issues that are often barriers to sustainable employment. This is a practical, holistic way to incorporate values formation into curriculum and classroom delivery. The programme is supported by a tutor manual, student handbook (including games) and other resources. Tutors receive training on its delivery, and assistance was sought from a Māori elder to introduce Tikanga Māori and principles of human quality at work.

The programme defines human qualities in terms of behavioural practices, and students work through practical scenarios that require discussion and internal reflection. It is sometimes referred to as the 'Fale Model', as excellence is achieved through the foundation of truthfulness and a number of pillars such as honesty, self-discipline and service. The model serves as a reference point in daily behaviour and interactions for both students and staff. The evaluation team noted that both these groups were courteous, friendly, tidy, helpful and enthusiastic.



## 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**.

Skills Update ensures teaching effectiveness by employing staff with relevant industry qualifications and current licences and tickets of technical proficiency. Many staff have long service. All tutors have the required industry qualifications and 66 per cent of staff have an adult teaching qualification. All tutors either have the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training Level 4 (NCAET) and/or the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education (Educator) (Level 5) (NCALE) or are working towards NCALE. The internal focus for 2013 has been to develop tutor skills in literacy and numeracy, and Skills Update has allocated resources towards the NCALE.

Teacher performance is managed closely by explicit performance indicators in job descriptions and yearly performance reviews against these agreed indicators. This is supplemented by learners providing feedback twice a year on tutors' skills and performance, programme satisfaction, administration, assessments, facilities and resources.

Internal pre- and post-assessment moderation is conducted across all programmes, and assessments produced or purchased are moderated before use. Post-assessment moderation findings are reported to the quality assurance manager and the assessing tutor. If there are any issues with marking, the tutor is notified and monitored until the required standard is reached. Training and support is offered to staff that need to improve their assessment practice. NZQA external moderation for 2010-2012 showed that 15 submissions out of 20 samples provided met national external moderation results, four required modification and one did not meet the standard. In the same years, 46 of 58 samples met assessor decisions. In 2012, all assessor decisions were validated.

Skills Update provides quality delivery and assessment materials and quality physical resources, such as warehouses, forklifts, trucks and engineering equipment. The Forces Pre-entry programme is tutored by experienced army personnel who understand intimately the requirements of the armed services. These personnel impressed the evaluation team as being highly engaged with their teaching and the students and as highly effective 'change agents' with youth. Positive learner outcomes as a result of this programme include trainees accepting the benefits of discipline, improved listening skills and being able to accept criticism.

Professional development occurs both internally and externally to improve sector or teaching knowledge, and tutors described professional development opportunities as generous and that they were encouraged to initiate ideas for their own professional development needs. Tutors are provided with learning packages that

include the unit standard, student workbook, student assessment, teaching guide and resources, assessment marking schedules and assessor guides.

Student satisfaction surveys undertaken twice a year show that for 2010-2012 learners rated tutors highly. This was confirmed by interviews with students across all focus areas and by graduates who noted that attending Skills Update had made an enormous difference in their lives and those of their families. Past and present students consistently described the tutors as being vital to these improvements: 'they do not judge us, they never give up on us, they support us no matter what'.

Sound, well-considered processes and procedures support staff at Skills Update to focus closely on their teaching. Regular review of learner progress individually and across branches is guided by the six NZQA key evaluation questions and has contributed to embedded self-assessment practices that are well understood and enthusiastically embraced by staff. This has led to a highly engaged workforce whose contributions are greatly valued by management, and an atmosphere where learner progress is celebrated and issues arising are viewed as opportunities to improve the teaching and learning environment.

## 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**.

Tutors are very committed to learners and take a holistic approach where they build strong individual relationships with students to identify their needs and circumstances. The most significant barriers to learner achievement are not just lack of skills but attitude, confidence, work ethic, drug and alcohol use, and family issues. Tutors' commitment includes driving students home, feeding them, helping them to resolve personal problems and correcting student behaviours by example. Students often feel safer at Skills Update than they do at home.

Learners may be excluded from enrolling for several reasons: no training place is available or serious behavioural problems are identified that may compromise the safety of staff or students. All branch managers have a Diploma in Career Guidance. Skills Update has strong links with external services, such as Youthline, Relationships Aotearoa, Papakura Marae Health Clinic, Odyssey House, Alcohol Healthwatch and Monte Cecilia Housing Trust, and refers students to the appropriate organisation where necessary.

Student induction is comprehensive. It includes guiding students through the student information booklet and course contract, signing the contract and providing information on NZQA, the TEC and external support agencies. The complaints process is also discussed as part of student induction. Once a student enrolls at Skills Update, the organisation never gives up on them, including taking an active and genuine interest in them after they leave.

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Highly effective pastoral care is reinforced by pathway plans. These are developed for each learner at enrolment to address students' individual needs and aspirations. Learner skills, qualities, abilities and potential are assessed via the needs assessment completed by the learner and the interviews with learners by tutors. These identify the areas of employment an individual is most suited to, the approximate duration of training, and plans for the delivery of generic and literacy and numeracy training based on assessment using the TEC assessment tool. Students and tutors formally revisit these plans at least monthly to track the student's progress against the pathway plan's goals and timelines. These plans mean that changes to overall student needs can be managed without affecting individual learner outcomes as all learners have clear goals and progress at their own pace.

Employment is the most valued outcome for all stakeholders. Tutors are primarily responsible for finding employment for students (it forms part of their key performance indicators), but students are also assisted by work brokers at each branch. Job placement assistance is provided, including transport to attend interviews. A focus on destination data is emphasised from day one. For example, workshops are held with speakers from polytechnics, and students visit polytechnic campuses to experience the environment and gain a sense of the achievement level required to progress.

Guidance and support at Skills Update is comprehensive, appropriate and effective because it is both values-based and practical. It provides boundaries and adult mentors for learners who have missed out on the socialisation required to be able to function effectively in society and at work. Behavioural expectations for learners are reinforced by comprehensive record-keeping by tutors. Each learner's journey is closely tracked and includes learner self-reflection, which provides compelling evidence that once attitudes, confidence and self-esteem improve, the conditions required for learning to occur are established.

## 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**.

Skills Update understands the Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015 well. It has responded by fostering increased literacy and numeracy skills outcomes for learners, increased numbers of Maori and Pasifika students achieving at higher levels, increased numbers of young people moving successfully from school into tertiary education, and by delivering a mix of provision focused on industry and community needs. It also collaborates effectively with others, for example staircasing learners to polytechnics and creating synergies with other private training establishments to share best practice and to better service learner needs.

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Examples are the regular links the operations and quality assurance department managers have with industry training organisations, polytechnics and industry via advisory boards, and referral of a student to another PTE if Skills Update thinks this would better meet the student's needs.

Skills Update's commitment to the Tertiary Education Strategy is evidenced by a clear mission statement: 'Facilitating the transition of youth and mature community members who experience difficulties in engaging and sustaining employment or further education to the point where they can maximise their capabilities through having acquired work ethics, functional life skills, financial independence and self-esteem so they can be successfully integrated into the workforce or continue higher education or, if already in the workplace, attain higher levels of skills and qualifications'. The learner outcomes achieved by Skills Update are a testament to the success of this mission.

This success is a result of the shared commitment at all levels of the organisation to the values of the organisation, which are: 'to offer quality services within the premise of a fundamental belief in the oneness of the human race, to observe honesty and integrity in all affairs of the organisation, to operate as a socially minded organisation, to operate within the highest of human and cultural values and wisdom, to conduct the affairs of the institute free from any form of prejudice and to cater for the needs of diverse cultures and be respectful of their differing characteristics, values and traditions'. These values support, nurture and guide the behaviour towards those who come into contact with the organisation and provide the environment that enables the mission to be achievable.

These ideals are supported by practical processes that meet other important needs at Skills Update. Examples are monthly health and safety meetings to ensure the health and safety of staff and students, regular monitoring of current building warrants of fitness, and implementation of health and safety procedures and emergency evacuation plans. The quality management system is written in plain language and further explained in practice manuals and handbooks to promote easier comprehension for users, such as the Health and Safety Manual, Literacy and Numeracy Handbook and tutor/facilitator induction pack.

Adherence to policies and procedures is checked by the administration auditor, who conducts monitoring visits to each branch to check compliance. Performance management is also audited at all branches at least twice a year to ensure integrity of records and assessments. The Operations manager monitors the key performance indicators of programmes, and the quality assurance department performs post-assessment moderations, ensures delivery and assessment observations and educational audits across all branches, and provides feedback to tutors and assessors. In response to needs analysis, Skills Update has changed the organisational structure and appointed an academic manager and human resources manager and increased the size of the quality assurance team.

Skills Update's success is a result of flexibility and responsiveness and the ability to adapt to changing market conditions. For example, when the boat building industry

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declined and qualified boat builders were no longer in demand, the solution was to deliver a carpentry qualification that could reutilise the resources from the boat building programme. Also, in response to TEC funding policies, Skills Update has realigned itself to be able to deliver new programmes under Youth Guarantee funding. Consistently good learner outcomes have led to the TEC allocating more training places.

Skills Update values students and staff highly. Resources required are provided quickly and staff reported never being denied any resource requests. Staff work individually and in groups, talents are noted, supported, acknowledged and fostered for the individual and common good of the organisation. Sometimes this means staff 'outgrow' the organisation, and governance and management accept this and encourage career moves when deemed best for the staff member.

Students are rewarded with certificates, letters of appreciation, chocolates, movie passes and shopping vouchers at assemblies to encourage others to emulate good performance and effort. These rewards may be for credit achievement or for volunteering or commendations from workplaces. All the organisation's branches are important. Staff work together across branches and, while offering different programmes, staff willingly and enthusiastically learn from each other. The student groups at Skills Update require enormous input from all staff, and to acknowledge this staff are offered rewards and bonuses to meet targets.

Communication is formal at regular staff and management meetings and informal on a day-to-day basis. Information flows freely from staff to management and vice versa. The director is actively involved on a daily basis with staff and students and has created an exemplary organisation where learners enjoy effective pastoral care and excellent teaching and learning in excellent facilities. Skills Update is an important part of the communities it serves and this sense of civic responsibility is evidenced by the generous financial contributions made to community organisations. This generosity also includes offering not-for-profit courses, such as truck driving. Skills Update is held in high regard by external stakeholders. It provides highly valued, work-ready employees for local businesses and well-trained candidates for the armed services by using government funding effectively and efficiently to employ and support teachers who are committed to second-chance 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 **Excellent**.

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

### 2.2 Focus area: National Certificate in Employment Skills (NCES) (Level 1)

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

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

### 2.3 Focus area: NCEA (Level 2) vocational pathway social and community sector (Forces Pre-entry)

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

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

### 2.4 Focus area: National Certificate in Motor Industry (Level 2)

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

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.

# 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](http://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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