

Report of External Evaluation and Review

First Aid Consultants Limited

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 4 September 2013

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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:	First Aid Consultants Limited (FAC)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	12 Musket Lane, Whitby, Porirua, Wellington
Delivery sites:	FAC predominantly delivers training at client sites in the Wellington region.
First registered:	1 November 1993
Courses currently delivered:	Core Health (unit standards 6400-6402; 25459, 26551-2). Outdoor First Aid (unit standard 424)
Code of Practice signatory?:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 2,402 in 2012
Number of staff:	One
Distinctive characteristics:	FAC's sole business is first aid training. The training is delivered by one trainer who is the business owner. Training is mainly workplace-based. A number of FAC's clients are longstanding. FAC is a member of the Association of Emergency Care Training Providers.
Previous quality assurance history:	FAC was last quality assured by NZQA in 2009 and met all quality assurance requirements assessed at that time. FAC met all but one NZQA national moderation requirement in 2012.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

Two focus areas were evaluated:

- Governance, management and strategy, being a mandatory focus area
- First aid training, being the organisation's core business.

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 external evaluation and review (EER) was conducted by two evaluators. The evaluators spent one day interviewing the sole trainer and business owner and FAC's key stakeholders. They also reviewed a variety of documents including the organisation's enrolment templates, client and student evaluation summaries, trainer diary notes, client feedback, and self-assessment analysis and information.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **First Aid Consultants Limited**.

That First Aid Consultants is meeting the most important needs of its learners and key stakeholders is strongly evidenced by a number of factors including:

- Very strong course completion rates. Very few learners do not eventually complete (seven learners who enrolled in 2011 did not complete, and four who enrolled in 2012)
- Longstanding key client training relationships and repeat client business (including those who have gone to other providers but have returned to FAC)
- Positive learner and client feedback, including stakeholder confirmation that FAC is a trusted provider. Using FAC means employers can be assured that their employees are getting high quality first aid training.

Highly effective processes contributing to these key outcomes relate to the activities FAC has in place to ensure that it understands and responds to the needs of its clients and the needs of learners enrolling in each course. This includes pre-training client engagement and the considerable effort that goes into understanding each learner audience and identifying and putting together training scenarios that will be relevant to them. It also involves the adaptation and inclusion of information, techniques and support in class as further information becomes known about each learner through observation and time spent with them in class.

Training is developed and delivered with a complete focus on meeting the needs of learners and clients.

It was evident to the evaluators that FAC goes beyond simply delivering first aid training. Rather, many examples were provided demonstrating that FAC provides clients and learners with additional information relevant to their personal needs, connects them to other organisations that may be of personal relevance, provides advice to enhance business practices, and debriefs past clients and learners following subsequent incidents where first aid training has had to be applied.

The sole trainer and business owner is well up to date with sector requirements and developments. This is achieved through regular networking (including as a board member of the Association of Emergency Care Training Providers), and ongoing regular uptake of professional development opportunities.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **First Aid Consultants Limited**.

The quality and validity of self-assessment information is strong because FAC has well-developed core tools that ensure key information is captured and that this occurs in a way that works well for this sole operator.

Client feedback is obtained verbally and in written form prior to and after training. Key points from conversations are recorded in the owner's self-reflection diaries. Written feedback collected both spontaneously and from survey forms is collated. This information, as well as data from in-class observations, trainer peer observations and learner evaluations, is brought together, analysed and key observations identified at least six-monthly.

Findings are used insightfully to make comprehensive improvements and enhancements at a number of levels including:

- Adapting training timeframes to meet specific learner cohorts' needs, and optimum learning conditions based on a review of past training experiences
- Actively unpacking moderation results to review assessment practices (e.g. changing the way oral information is recorded)
- The adaptation of learner information forms in response to past experiences observed (e.g. ensuring the trainer's mobile number and the lateness policy are explicitly conveyed to learners in advance)
- Subsequent to the first aid training, FAC offers free skills sessions and first aid debriefs to identify areas where training may need greater focus or emphasis if certain skills are not well exhibited (e.g. ensuring the head is tilted before cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is administered).

The organisation's self-assessment is highly authentic because it is valued for the important contribution it makes to ensure high quality training that meets the needs of learners and clients. This translates to self-assessment processes that are regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the organisation's evolving information needs (for example, student evaluation forms redesigned to capture different information on the quality of teaching over time).

Findings¹

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**.

Learners who enrol in first aid training with FAC seek relevant unit standards and associated first aid knowledge and skills. Course completion data demonstrates that these outcomes are almost always achieved. For example, of all learners enrolled in 2012, only four did not go on to complete their course. In 2011, seven did not complete overall, and in 2010, eight.

FAC actively follows up on learners who do not complete (through subsequent phone conversations with clients and learners) and confirmed that this was always for reasons outside of its control – learners not completing because of sickness, changing or leaving programmes of study, or leaving employment.

This excellent achievement is supported by the organisation's flexibility and high responsiveness to learners' individual needs. The evaluators heard many examples demonstrating how FAC has tailored training and support to individual learners, including offering assessment at a later date if this was not able to take place during training; enrolment in a subsequent course if this was identified as preferable for learners currently struggling; and verbal assessment to learners 'panicked' by written assessment or with literacy or language difficulties.

FAC has an in-depth understanding of individual learner progress and achievement and is able to respond appropriately to individual needs through active engagement with individuals in the course. This is enabled by the organisation's insistence on minimum and maximum numbers per class, which are managed through planned and staggered small-group work, as well as observation of individual participation in class and, as mentioned, subsequent conversations with learners and clients post-training.

While it can be difficult identifying how well first aid training has been applied in practice, particularly if circumstances do not result in trainees needing to later apply first aid skills, FAC nonetheless has sought to implement or maximise different ways to understand application of the training. The organisation asks each client to contact it if first aid is subsequently applied, with the aim of using this information to reflect on the training provided, and to offer learners and clients affirmation or advice on ways to do things differently. For example, after a serious incident at a

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

gym, FAC not only talked to past learners and the client about how well they had responded, but also suggested that the client include support for witnesses to the event. The organisation also offers free 'skills sessions' post-training to provide a mini-recap on the training provided and to ensure information and skills attainment and retention.

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 significant value of the training provided by FAC is seen through the longevity of its client relationships and repeat business. FAC was able to point to several clients who have used FAC over a number of years. This includes clients who have temporarily trialled other providers (usually for cost reasons or because the wider organisation has selected a sole provider), but have either returned to FAC because they or their learners have preferred the training provided by FAC, or because other providers have not been able to provide added value to the training in the way that FAC was able to do (for example, responding well to the needs of ESOL learners (English for Speakers of Other Languages)).

This information is understood as a result of the self-assessment processes that FAC has in place. For example, if a client indicates a decision to change providers, or does not return for further training, FAC will contact that client to find out why. Reasons have not included dissatisfaction.

Because of typically longstanding relationships, clients interviewed during the EER identified FAC as a trusted provider, enabling a relationship where they had complete confidence that they could leave FAC to get on with the job of first aid training, secure in the knowledge that this would be of quality and would meet their needs and that of the learners.

Through enabling a significantly large number of learners to successfully complete or refresh first aid training, this sole provider is strongly contributing to a community need for people to be trained in first aid.

FAC is meeting employers' and training providers' needs by training learners in first aid as required to meet workforce and health and safety compliance requirements. It is meeting learners' needs for first aid skills and knowledge and unit standards to complete wider training, to achieve qualifications, or as a core requirement of employment.

It was also evident to the evaluators that FAC provides stakeholders with added value beyond simply providing quality first aid training and seeks to do this wherever possible. Several examples show this, including:

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- FAC using established sector networks to provide additional relevant information to learners and clients (e.g. information about living with asthma; inviting different guest speakers to engage with a class)
- Communicating with clients to suggest additional support of potential benefit to learners
- Providing suggestions to clients about other activities that could enhance a safe environment (e.g. suggesting a mechanism to show that employees working on their own are safe; different communication strategies to better ensure employees are aware of defibrillators; suggesting a 'first aid drill')
- Offering to return to provide free skills sessions post-training
- Offering to return to speak to past trainees if they have been involved in a first aid situation to answer any questions and provide additional advice.

FAC has an array of self-assessment processes in place to understand the value of the training provided, including learner evaluations, diary notes of pre- and post-training conversations with clients to understand needs and whether these have been met, a client survey administered by phone post-training, and a 'skite file' containing numerous emails from clients from 2011 to 2013 relaying satisfaction. Information from all of these sources is collated and reviewed at least six-monthly and used either to make improvements to training delivery or to record key information to inform and meet the needs of future training delivered to specific clients (e.g. the timing of training provided for certain clients).

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**.

A cornerstone of the training delivered by FAC is that it is shaped and delivered with a core focus on delivering to the needs of individual clients and learners. This includes how training is timetabled, the way the training is structured, and the time and thought and engagement with clients to identify relevant scenarios to be included in the training particular to each cohort. For example, in planning the training for a power company, the trainer spent time with the company supervisor to identify what scenarios would help to emulate the workplace environment. Subsequently, the training was tailored to high-voltage scenarios, it commenced at employees' usual work start time, utilised the company's equipment and was partly conducted outdoors.

FAC utilises a number of approaches to ensure the needs of clients and learners are understood at the outset and during the training, including pre-training

discussions with clients, enrolment forms completed by both clients and learners, introductions that occur at the beginning of each training session, and individual engagement with learners during the training and breaks. This knowledge of learners' needs is assisted by the organisation's insistence on minimum and maximum numbers per class, which are managed through planned and staggered small-group work.

FAC responds well to identified needs, assisted by the trainer's flexibility, skills and ability to convey informed and diverse information. This is underscored by up-to-date subject knowledge and awareness of sector developments as a result of ongoing professional development activities and strong sector linkages (as discussed more fully in section 1.4).

Examples of how learners' needs have been identified and responded to well include the trainer introducing additional information into learning as individual experiences conveyed open the way for important avenues of focus (e.g. how to best respond if people have asthma), assessing learners orally if preferred, and supporting well the needs of learners who have English as a second language, including using different terminology to discuss concepts, using lots of repetition and clear language, and staying on if learners require this. FAC identified at least two clients who had moved to another provider but then returned specifically because FAC could better meet the needs of their learners.

Learner evaluation and client feedback, client survey data and post-client follow-up confirm that the training and activities match needs very well. Where feedback identifies areas for improvement, this information is actively used by FAC to reflect on the training and to make changes. This has mainly been in relation to feedback about training timetabling and venues.

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**.

The sole trainer is the business owner who is well qualified (holding the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training (Level 5) and including unit standard 4098 *Use standards to assess candidate performance*) and keeps up to date with sector developments through ongoing professional development. This includes membership on the board of the Association of Emergency Care Training Providers, attendance at Resuscitation Council workshops two-yearly, and refreshing her Pre-Hospital Emergency Care certificate every two years and renewing her New Zealand Resuscitation Council-approved Emergency Care Instructor Certificate annually.

Since the EER visit, the trainer has attended training provided by other organisations, completing a unit standard in child first aid with St John and the online 6400 series course online with the Red Cross.

Client and learner feedback highlights the trainer's use of clear communication and fun and tailored learning, and her ease of engagement with diverse learners. As stated in section 1.3, a core focus of this approach is ensuring training is delivered in ways that are relevant to different cohorts of learners, including through the use of well-considered scenarios particular to each group.

The training is well resourced, and includes a more than sufficient number of infant, child and adult mannequins to enable entire classes to work on these in pairs at the same time.

The trainer demonstrated her strong commitment and adherence to meeting sector requirements, including requiring evidence of appropriate certification as part of completing refresher training courses and compliance with minimum training hours (confirmed by stakeholders and FAC).

The trainer has been a national moderator in the area of first aid training and demonstrated her understanding of the importance of moderation to ongoing improvement, for example improving the recording of oral assessment information after past practices led to FAC not meeting national moderation requirements for the verification of two assessments for one unit standard in 2012.

FAC did not meet moderation requirements for the verification of one assessment in one unit standard in 2011 (though in both 2011 and 2012 all assessment materials reviewed met requirements). This related to an oversight in the reading of an assessment requirement and which FAC quickly rectified to minimise any impact once identified. Possibly FAC could look at potential opportunities to strengthen internal moderation through ongoing shared discussion of assessment and teaching practices with another first aid trainer/assessor.

FAC has a number of self-assessment processes in place to ensure effective teaching, including learner observations recorded and reviewed through tutor diary notes, student evaluations, observations of teaching, client surveys and post-training discussions. FAC's self-assessment is evolving positively in this area. For example, while recent observation of teaching was affirming and based on areas of focus set by the observer, looking ahead, FAC wishes to set particular areas of focus for the next observation.

Since the evaluation, FAC has also approached an independent organisation about accessing an educator to provide teaching observations (in 2013 FAC utilised an ex-national moderator of core health and in 2012 observations were undertaken by the trainer's partner who holds unit standard 4098). Similarly, student evaluation forms have recently been adapted to refocus the nature of information being obtained. A rider, 'please offer potential solutions', has also been added to yes/no questions to actively prompt learner input into how teaching can continue to evolve.

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**.

Guidance and support is excellent because it goes well beyond minimum requirements and is targeted at ensuring individual needs are responded to. Examples include: linking learners to organisations and websites and providing information relevant to specific matters that emerge from learner experiences in the training; the trainer staying longer than the set hours to provide extra time for individuals to better understand a concept or to attempt a re-sit; and structuring activities and assessments around individual needs (including the involvement of key support people or providing oral assessment).

It was evident to the evaluators that FAC goes out of its way to seek to identify and respond to learners' needs. Learner support needs are well understood through pre-training discussions with clients, a trainee enrolment form which specifically asks about support needs, and the trainer's observation and ongoing 'reading' of learners during the training. For example, the trainer relayed how factors such as 'taking a long time in the toilet' might signal that certain aspects of the training have raised issues about a learner, requiring sensitive handling.

Learners are provided with key information prior to the training commencing, including policies, procedures and minimum requirements for the training.

Positive documented stakeholder feedback, and repeat business, especially from clients who have learners with very specific needs (e.g. ESOL learners and learners with disabilities) confirm the excellence of guidance and support provided. Trainer diary notes are used to record and subsequently reflect on specific learning needs and how well these were addressed.

Following some previous instances where some learners had arrived late, FAC has added a question to the student evaluation form to monitor whether learners believe that they have been provided with adequate and appropriate information about course venues and times. The trainer's mobile phone number and the expected training times have also been emphasised in enrolment information.

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**.

FAC has grown substantially since its establishment, with a key feature being the repeat clientele it enjoys. This is one indicator of the strong value it provides.

Longstanding client relationships are also a hallmark. These are used by FAC proactively to identify different training needs, to reflect and adapt training delivered, and to keep up to date with sector developments. The sole owner and trainer has well-established sector networks, which also contribute to the currency of knowledge and the training. This is further facilitated by a strong commitment to and engagement in regular professional development. Diverse and established networks are used for the benefit of learners, with information conveyed and connections facilitated to further support learners' different situations.

FAC is innovative and strategic, driven by a central focus on how it can best meet client and learner needs. One example is its offer of free 'skills summary' sessions to help trainees review and reflect on their learning, but also as an opportunity for FAC to self-assess that the earlier training had led to appropriate knowledge attainment.

Business decisions are based on research and an understanding of the market and clients' needs. For example, FAC investigated the potential of online training options but, after canvassing the views and needs of existing clients, elected not to pursue this option.

As a sole trader, FAC has given much thought to contingencies, including analysis of the costs and benefits of employing or contracting other trainers. This is an ongoing focus, although in eight years FAC has never not been able to meet training commitments.

Ongoing reflection is a core part of FAC's operation, whether this relates to reviewing training resources and materials (such as current work being undertaken to look at developing video material to support learning), the use of training scenarios, reflection on learner engagement and achievement, or ongoing review of the effectiveness of self-assessment tools. Student evaluations are adapted periodically by FAC to tailor feedback specifically to areas FAC wishes to focus on, and the evaluative sampling of learners and stakeholders is purposefully planned to ensure feedback from an ongoing mix of new and current clients, and clients from different sectors.

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: First aid training

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).

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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