External Evaluation and Review Report

Horowhenua Learning Centre Trust trading as HLC

Date of report: 20 December 2019

About Horowhenua Learning Centre Trust trading as HLC

HLC delivers Youth Guarantee, literacy and numeracy and level 3-4 programmes funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), programmes at levels 2-4 under subcontract for UCOL (since 2016), and employment-focused programmes funded by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	152 Bath Street, Levin

Other permanent delivery sites are:

- Lower Hutt: 72 Queens Drive

- Paraparaumu: Level 1, Coastlands, State Highway 1

- Palmerston North: Unit 1, 123 Queen Street and UCOL campus

Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 468 learners enrolled directly with HLC in 2018 (including employment training programmes) being 118.94 total funded and non-funded EFTS (equivalent full-time students) in 2018. The focus area programmes had the following learner numbers:

- Security level 4 – 33 learners (26 EFTS)

- Skills for Industry – 64 learners

- Youth Guarantee – 51 learners (37.8 EFTS).

Of all learners enrolled, 56 per cent are Māori and 7 per cent Pasifika.

HLC delivered under subcontract to 257 UCOL enrolled learners in 2018 (152 EFTS).

Number of staff:	35 full-time equivalents, three part-time
TEO profile:	See: Horowhenua Learning Centre Trust

HLC is a community-owned charitable trust registered with NZQA as a PTE since 1994. It

Final report

delivers vocational training with an emphasis on an employment outcome.

HLC's head office is in Levin. The PTE will move to a new purpose-built Levin campus in 2020 where it will co-locate with the youth services organisation, Life to the Max Trust, with whom HLC has recently merged.

Last EER outcome:	In December 2015, NZQA was Highly Confident in HLC's educational performance and Highly Confident in HLC's capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The following focus areas were selected:

- Security – levels 3-4. This encompasses the New Zealand Certificate in Security (Level 4) which in 2018 replaced the National Certificate in Security (Level 3).

  Security is a long-standing, key area of delivery for HLC (including for UCOL). This focus area provides insight into HLC's delivery at the Lower Hutt site.

- Security Skills for Industry. This focus area provides insights into HLC's delivery of security training to MSD-referred and funded clients. The programme is up to 8 weeks. Learners complete a minimum of 3 unit standards.

- Youth Guarantee-funded programmes with a focus on the New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1) and the New Zealand Certificate in Hospitality (Level 2). While new programme approvals were granted in 2019, HLC's Youth Guarantee-funded programmes are long-standing and a key area of delivery. This focus area enables insights to be gained from programmes delivered from the Levin site.

MoE number:	9535
NZQA reference:	C36190
Dates of EER visit:	16 and 17 September 2019
	The evidential synthesis was completed after the EER visit and following two additional stakeholder interviews and review of additional information requested and provided by HLC after the EER visit.

Final report

Summary of Results

HLC comprehensively delivers effective programmes, meeting the needs of multiple stakeholders and contributing to valued outcomes. HLC's one weaker area of performance in 2018 (retention in Youth Guarantee-funded programmes) has been responded to, with strong results projected for 2019.

Highly Confident in educational performance	• Since its 2015 EER, HLC has continued to deliver successful security training, highly regarded by industry. • HLC continues to deliver strong outcomes for several MSD contracts, consistently enabling learners to gain employment and no longer need income support, and to transform their lives. • HLC is effectively delivering a range of programmes for UCOL which values HLC's contribution to its programmes and outcomes.
Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment	• Typically, qualification completions in the Youth Guarantee programmes have been above identified TEC targets, at between 46 and 59 per cent. Completions reported for 2018 were much lower and is the one main area of weakness found in the EER. However, following changes implemented since 2018, qualification completions are projected at around 70 per cent for 2019. • Highly effective processes contributing to valued outcomes include qualified and experienced staff, relevant programmes and delivery, and high levels of individual support. Stakeholder connections are excellent, and their needs well met. There is a clear focus on continuous improvement. Self-assessment is embedded across all aspects of delivery and is a valued and key aspect of HLC's day-to-day culture. There is strong evidence that HLC's usual high quality performance (excepting the 2018 issue) and self-assessment will be sustained.

Key evaluation question findings[1]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	HLC's qualification completion data for each TEC SAC-funded programme shows HLC mostly meeting or exceeding an 80 per cent qualification completion target. For programmes delivered by HLC for UCOL, 2018 qualification completions for all but two of eight programmes were at or above 80 per cent.[2]
	HLC's qualification completion data for its security programmes shows completions of around 80 per cent each year since 2016. HLC's tracking shows Māori mostly achieving above other learners. There is variance between HLC's and the TEC's data, but HLC explained this by using its own qualification completion datasets. These are based on HLC's tracking of individual learners as a cohort (rather than by calendar year), given rolling enrolments.[3]
	Skills for Industry learners successfully achieve the unit standards and certificate of achievement necessary for employment in the security industry.
	In 2016 and 2017, Youth Guarantee qualification completions were above an identified TEC commitment of 40 per cent, at around 58 per cent for level 2 and 46 per cent for level 1. Learners are achieving qualifications for the first time, with many coming to HLC from challenging circumstances and disengaged from education and exempted from school. HLC did not present analysis on reasons for Māori completions exceeding non-Māori in level 1 but below non-Māori in level 2.
	Learner retention and qualification completion rates in Youth Guarantee programmes are much lower for the 2018 calendar year following programme re-timetabling and changes required to TEC reporting methods. However, projections based on 2019 enrolments and progress to date are for over 70 per cent

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

[2] Source: HLC self-assessment summary.

[3] See Appendix 1 for HLC and TEC qualification completion datasets.

Final report

	completions for 2019. This reflects improvement initiatives implemented since 2018, and settled data reporting (see 2.3 and Appendix 1). HLC demonstrated a solid understanding of achievement data and has worked with its student management system provider to develop fit-for-purpose cohort data analysis. Data is used organisation wide. Analysis leads to quality improvement.
Conclusion:	Consistent, solid achievement in all but one delivery area in 2018 is evident in HLC's delivery, with HLC mainly meeting or exceeding funder requirements. Significantly higher completions are projected for 2019 in Youth Guarantee-funded programmes as a result of improvements made.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Most Youth Guarantee graduates are in further study or employment. They say HLC has given them a much more positive education experience than they had at secondary school, enabling them to see their potential and opportunities available and to achieve success. Case studies demonstrate the life-changing pathways that HLC has provided. Common outcomes identified across programmes include learners developing confidence, pride, purpose and motivation, and self-belief. Learners' lifestyles and family routines have transformed, including some becoming family role models. HLC's programmes are valued by learners and stakeholders for preparing work-ready graduates to enter the industry with appropriate knowledge. In the Skills for Industry programme, over 70 per cent of learners each year since 2016 have moved from receiving income support to employment in security, consistently meeting or exceeding funder expectations. The level 4 security programme is valued by industry for the advanced training and career pathway provided. HLC is meeting demand for a well-trained and qualified workforce. Graduates are valued for their critical thinking abilities and leadership in situations of risk. HLC's raw data shows around half of graduates gaining security employment in 2017 and 2018, and about 70 per cent in 2016. However, the data does not show

	what the outcomes were for graduates not in employment or whether HLC had been able to track their destinations.
	HLC staff are recognised by industry for their extensive security knowledge and the relevant and quality training provided. All key stakeholders interviewed for the EER confirmed HLC's strong contribution to valued outcomes and meeting of needs.
Conclusion:	Relevant and quality training is supporting learners to achieve transformative outcomes, and strongly meets stakeholder needs.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Purposeful lesson planning ensures relevant learning activities are structured around the needs of learner cohorts and are designed to motivate and engage learners. Learning is applied through real-life learning experiences, contexts and scenarios (e.g. the on-site café and at community events). Security learners attend employment placements and scenario days, enabling learning to be applied and good practices to be observed in a range of situations.
	HLC has excellent stakeholder relationships. Stakeholders are well informed and involved in programme review. HLC uses these relationships well to identify needs and to inform programme development to meet those needs. Several examples showed HLC's introduction of programmes and initiatives in response to community needs. UCOL values the contribution HLC has made to its programmes and identifies a seamless integration of HLC and UCOL delivery.
	Formative assessment, coupled with detailed feedback, supports learning and learner confidence, and ensures learner are adequately prepared for summative assessment. HLC's approach to moderation is learning and improvement-focused, involving staff across programmes to share insights, as well as UCOL cross-campus external moderation. The quality and validity of assessment at HLC is confirmed by positive external moderation results in each of the last four years.
	Mechanisms are in place to regularly gain learner feedback on programme quality and delivery. HLC plans to improve the

Final report

	current survey tool to gather more in-depth learner feedback. In the meantime, existing approaches ensure that there are effective processes in place to gather useful feedback.
Conclusion:	Excellent matching of needs is achieved by effective programme review, development and delivery, well informed by a solid understanding of stakeholder and learner needs.

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Individual learner pathway plans are a core tool used by HLC to understand and support learners' needs and goals and to motivate learners to achieve relevant pathways. Where learners are not progressing, plans are proposed to support their achievement. Pathway plans are regularly reviewed.
	Learners value that they are treated respectfully by their teachers and the one-to-one engagement from teaching staff (assisted by small class sizes). Peer relationships and teamwork are encouraged to support the learners. Learners are supported to establish effective social and academic support networks.
	Learners are encouraged to take control of their learning, for example selecting unit standards based on relevance and providing feedback on preferred teaching approaches. Learners actively contribute to the review of their teaching and learning, including being part of the tutor observation process.
	Tutors' strong industry and community connections facilitate relevant learning opportunities and the opportunity for learners to apply their learning in a variety of contexts and to connect to future employment opportunities.
	Scholarships and a pastoral care fund help minimise barriers to learning and the uptake of opportunities. Transport is provided to support learners' attendance. Attendance is closely monitored. Learners are connected with local social and support services.
	Staff are encouraged to capture reflections on their teaching to support an understanding of good practice and innovation that can be shared for the benefit of learners and programme review.

Conclusion:	Learners are effectively involved and supported in their learning through a high level of individual staff engagement and learning that is tailored to support individual goals and needs.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	HLC's organisational purpose and direction is clear and supported by annual business plans and a strategic plan (2018-2022) developed in consultation with the community. Governance and management have a strong understanding of educational performance informed by monthly management reporting to the chief executive and to the trust board. Organisation academic leadership is effective. Monthly academic forums bring staff together for professional development and to review performance information. Programmes are well resourced. Annual budgets include resourcing for each programme, staff professional development, and tutor and learner support. Data is used effectively throughout the organisation and to inform decision-making. Tutors produce monthly reporting on programme and learner performance, contributing to a whole-of-organisation understanding of performance. Annual staff appraisals are based on key performance indicators focused on student achievement and outcomes. HLC fosters a culture of growing and supporting staff to transition to senior roles within the organisation. Recruitment is effective. Staff are recognised by industry as having strong industry knowledge and industry and community relationships. HLC is innovative and improvement-focused. It trials new approaches to strengthen performance and to contribute new opportunities in response to stakeholder and community needs if in alignment with its strengths, vision and purpose.
Conclusion:	Governance and management are highly effective in supporting educational achievement using effective self-assessment. This includes the provision of relevant and well-resourced programmes, knowledgeable and caring staff, and close

	community and stakeholder relationships. HLC is adaptable and highly responsive to stakeholder needs.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	HLC has clear policies and processes in place to manage key compliance accountabilities and risk, including an annual operating plan identifying compliance and reporting requirements. In each of the last four years, HLC has met external stakeholders' compliance requirements, demonstrating the effectiveness of HLC's management of key compliance accountabilities. Two issues arose earlier in this period, but were systemically addressed by HLC. One issue related to a misunderstanding in communication with an industry training organisation about the submission of assessment materials for post-moderation. The other related to a TEC 2017 audit finding referred to in 2.3 (the sole issue found by the audit). HLC has achieved strong external moderation results year-to-year. UCOL is satisfied that HLC is meeting its compliance accountabilities. A key funder interviewed for the EER confirmed that HLC consistently delivers to its requirements. HLC has an established complaints process in place. It shared an example of staff performance management to demonstrate the effectiveness of the processes and procedures it has in place to manage these situations and comply with legislation.
Conclusion:	Key compliance accountabilities are well understood and managed. HLC has a strong history of meeting compliance accountabilities and has proactively responded to address issues when they have arisen.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Security levels 3-4

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**

2.2 Focus area: Security: Skills for Industry

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**

2.3 Focus area: Youth Guarantee-funded programmes with a focus on the New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 1) and New Zealand Certificate in Hospitality (Level 2)

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Youth Guarantee-funded programmes are valued for their relevance, quality of delivery and the transformative outcomes being achieved. Most Youth Guarantee graduates are in further study or employment. Qualification completions were above the identified TEC commitment in 2016 and 2017, but dropped markedly in 2018. A key factor was changes to how HLC recorded learner start dates after a 2017 TEC audit found that HLC was incorrectly reporting the start dates for learners enrolling later in the year. HLC also re-timetabled programmes but struggled to retain learners who enrolled later in the year and needed to return after the Christmas holiday period to complete their qualification. Qualification completions projected for 2019 are strong (over 70 per cent), reflecting settled data reporting and improvement-focused initiatives implemented since 2018. HLC could improve self-assessment by analysing why Māori completions exceed non-Māori in level 1 but are below non-Māori in level 2.

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Horowhenua Learning Centre Trust trading as HLC:

- Analyse qualification achievement data to understand why Māori learners exceed non-Māori in level 1 but not level 2 of Youth Guarantee-funded programmes.

- Review the recording of destination outcomes for security level 3 and 4 learners to ensure information is fully and consistently captured.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

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

Appendix 1

Table 1. HLC qualification completion data – TEC SAC-funded National Certificate in Security (Level 2 and 3) 2016-2017; and New Zealand Certificate in Security (Advanced) (Level 4) 2018

	2016		2017		2018		2018 roll-overs to 2019	
Total learners	12		16		33 (20 February and 13 July enrolments)		13	
Qualification completions	10	83%	13	81%	18	86%	10	77%
Māori	7	88%	6	86%	9	82%	2	100%
Pasifika	0	0	3	60%	5	100%	2	100%
Other	3	75%	4	100%	4	80%	9	69%

Source: HLC

Table 2. TEC qualification completion data for all SAC delivery

	QC 2016	QC 2017	QC 2018**
Qualification completion (SAC)	78% 65% (cohort-based)	78%	81%
Māori	78%	73%	75%
Non-Māori and non-Pasifika	91%	88%	93%

Source: TEC

** In 2018, TEC SAC funding was solely for the security level 3-4 programme.

Final report

Table 3. HLC Youth Guarantee qualification completions

Youth Guaranteed-funded programmes	Qualification completion			
Programme	2016	2017	2018	Projected 2019
Level 1				
Māori	56%	46%	14%	80%
Pasifika	0%	100%	0%	0%
Other	40%	42.9%	36.4%	72.7%
Total	46.7%	45.9%	21.2%	74.1%
Level 2				
Māori	63.4%	48.6%	25.8%	75.8%
Pasifika	100%	100%	0%	0%
Other	42.3%	70%	47.6%	82.4%
Total	55.7%	58.6%	31.6%	76.5%

Source: HLC

Table 4. TEC Youth Guarantee qualification completions

TEC Youth Guarantee-funded programmes	Qualification completions	
	2017	2018
Overall	57%	48%
Māori	63%	43%
Non-Māori and non-Pasifika	46%	57%

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/. 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.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud[4]*

- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*

- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

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[4] NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*

- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*

- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 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, training schemes and consents to assess and 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 Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. 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). All rules cited above are available at https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/.

Final report

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz