

Report of External Evaluation and Review

PIERC Education

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 27 June 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:	Pacific Island Educational Centre Trust PIERC Education – trading as Pasifika Education Centre
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	17 Lambie Drive, Building 4, Manukau City, Auckland
Delivery sites:	PIERC delivers Adult and Community Education courses in Pasifika languages and cultures at sites as near to its learners as possible, and which currently include Ponsonby, New Lynn and Manukau City.
First registered:	1 August 1994
Courses currently delivered:	Adult and Community Education (ACE) courses
Code of Practice signatory:	Not applicable
Number of students:	Domestic: upward of 700 students in 2013. Similar numbers are anticipated in 2014. The courses are attended for the most part by Pasifika Peoples (migrants and New Zealand-born) including Samoan, Niuean, Fijian, Cook Island, Tongan groups.
Number of staff:	Five full-time equivalents and 13 part-time training staff
Scope of active accreditation:	This provider has a scope of accreditations, including subfields and domains of unit standards

mostly up to level 3, with some at level 5, covering a variety of vocational and generic skills.

At the time of the external evaluation and review (EER), the PTE was not delivering any NZQA-approved programmes or training schemes.

Distinctive characteristics: PIERC offers Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funded ACE courses that focus on strengthening social cohesion. The purpose of the ACE fund is to provide community-based education, foundation skills and pathways to other learning opportunities that meet community learning needs. PIERC delivers ACE courses in the area of Pasifika languages and culture courses to interested members of the community over the age of 16.

PIERC is unique it is the oldest Pasifika community education provider in Aotearoa and is the only PTE that teaches five Pacific languages to adult learners.

Recent significant changes: In March 2014, an entire new board of trustees was appointed. There are seven board members; two of these positions are ex-officio members appointed by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (MPIA) and the Ministry of Education. The remaining five members of the board are appointed by MPIA.

An organisational staff restructure occurred in 2013.

In September 2012, a new chief executive officer was appointed.

Previous quality assurance history: PIERC was previously quality assured by NZQA by EER in April 2010. At that time, NZQA was Confident in the educational performance of the PTE, and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

PIERC has also been subject of a review and report commissioned by MPIA in 2013 with regard to appointments to its board and the PTE's performance in relation to its new trust deed. All matters identified are currently being addressed.

Other: PIERC is a Pasifika Peoples' education provider. The ACE contract enables the PTE to develop programmes that meet Pasifika Peoples' strategic needs.

PIERC also uses ACE programmes to provide participants with foundation learning and encouragement to progress to higher levels of learning. The PTE provides an opportunity for the revitalisation of the language and language acquisition in areas such as Samoan, Cook Island, Fijian, Niuean, and Tongan basic, conversational and advanced (Samoan-only) languages. ACE programmes are non-assessed and are not required to meet external moderation requirements. However, providers are required to meet TEC ACE quality assurance arrangements, that is, providers need to have appropriate processes in place to consult the community, learners and stakeholders and to ensure the information gathered informs the design and development of specific activities to reflect the needs of target learner groups. The information must also inform the longer-term direction of the PTE's ACE programmes.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The agreed scope of the EER was twofold:

- Governance, management and strategy
- ACE programmes (the PTE has been commissioned by the TEC to retain, promote and celebrate Pasifika languages and cultural learning inclusive of sustainable communities and community development).

Governance, management and strategy is a mandatory focus area. The second focus area, ACE programmes, was selected as it was the only set of programmes being delivered by PIERC at the time of the EER visit.

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 evaluators. The evaluators interviewed:

- The chief executive officer and the newly appointed board chair
- The LotoPasifika team manager
- Five part-time tutorial staff members
- Six learners (four participating in the basic Samoan language course, and two participating in the conversational Tongan language course).

In addition, phone interviews were held with stakeholders, including a local high school and an education service provider.

Over the one and half days of the EER visit, the organisation provided the evaluation team with a range of documentation relating to the provision of the courses, including draft strategic intent material, annual course plan, organisation profile, meeting minutes, quality management system documentation, TEC report summary, Department of Internal Affairs report, learner attendance and completion tracking sheet. These documents appended the self-assessment information that had been submitted by the PTE prior to the EER visit.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **PIERC Education**.

- PIERC is meeting many of the most important needs of its primary learners: the Pasifika Peoples groups – including Samoan, Niuean, Cook Island, Fijian and Tongan – and stakeholders through its delivery of ACE courses. The PTE plays a serious role in the revitalisation and development of Pasifika languages and culture. The PTE's local community has recognised the organisation as a reliable adult teaching provider, as have MPIA, the Department of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education, the TEC and service agencies.
- Further continuing development and review of ethnic Pasifika resources contribute to the quality of the education provided. A more focused involvement of tutors, informed by external input and advice, contributes to PIERC's courses and resource development and informal professional development by sharing teaching practice and resources.
- Clearer parameters have been set up to ensure that PIERC targets adult community learning independently, and that access to the PTE's publications and cultural language services is managed separately. This should ensure a greater understanding of the value that PIERC students are getting from their time spent learning at the PTE.
- Extensive community connections also enable effective intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge, providing value for PIERC's key stakeholders – Pasifika Peoples – and to the wider Auckland, and specifically Manukau City communities.
- Learners attain not only increased skill in their chosen language but also greater cultural connectedness and communication with their children, spouses and their extended families and communities.
- Overall, the evaluators found that PIERC is keenly focused on quality teaching and positive outcomes. Despite the fact that the body of evidence for achievement is not yet fully comprehensive, key weaknesses have been identified by the PTE and continue to be worked on, and there are reasonable grounds for confidence in PIERC's educational performance.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **PIERC Education**.

- PIERC demonstrates purposeful self-assessment at both management and governance levels. The newly developed trust deed, new board, the appointment of a new chief executive officer (2012), the staff restructure and the PIERC strategic plan (2014-2017) are firmly focused on the development of Pasifika Peoples' languages, cultures, values and principles, and reflect a good knowledge of what PIERC needs to do if it is to realise its vision: 'Generations of Pasifika people achieving and sharing educational success in Aotearoa'.
- Numerous examples of worthwhile changes and improvements resulting from self-assessment at management level were identified and referred to the evaluation team.
- Appropriate academic and management records are maintained. Learner achievement is to some degree tracked against clearly defined progressions, and data is linked to reports against TEC funding targets. Attendance and regular assessment results are tracked, and this data is used to trace learner progress and satisfaction with the programme. However, at management level there is only limited evidence of a focus on analysis of this data for overall reflection on educational performance beyond that of compliance needs.
- These current practices have sufficed for ACE-funded courses. However, if the PTE is to move beyond non-accessed courses and to ensure continuing responsiveness to stakeholder needs, the PTE will need to further develop current self-assessment practices.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

PIERC plays an important role in the development and strengthening of Pasifika languages and literacy areas of Samoan, Niuean, Fijian, Cook Island and Tongan groups, and the Manukau City and wider Auckland communities. Learners gain increase proficiency in their preferred Pasifika language and culture. A key achievement is that students can use language in different contexts (e.g. church, funerals, weddings) and increase their vocabulary and confidence to use the language in different formal and informal contexts.

Learners interviewed said they experienced personal growth, enhanced self-identity and increased confidence based on their acquisition of language skills and culture. This has enabled learners to develop their communication and connectedness with their children, spouses, families, heritage and communities. Increased skills and knowledge enable parents to converse with children and partners in the home, church community and family gatherings, and gave them a greater appreciation of their heritage.

Although there is no formal assessment on the ACE courses, students receive a certificate of attainment, which can be later used for job-seeking purposes, adding value to the students' learning experience. Learners interviewed stressed that the certificate is not their main motivation for completing the course, and were very clear that it was about gaining a critical awareness of their language and culture and the personal confidence to speak, write and read in their chosen language.

Another success indicator for ACE courses is attendance, with regular attendance of over 80 per cent across courses. Student progression to other PIERC ACE courses and involvement in community activities are other indicators of success. Communities are better informed and understand the issues relating to their particular Pasifika group.

A community of language development is supported. Learners gain a level of language proficiency skills and knowledge at basic, intermediate conversational, and advanced levels.² In 2011, the TEC annual summary for PIERC showed a 100 per cent attainment rate for learner outcomes – a significant result for a diverse

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 This course is delivered to Samoan people only.

range of courses. Practical steps have been taken over a period of time at management level to track and understand learner performance. The enhanced performance reflects improvements in not just reporting of the data, but in solid gains. This is an important shift as data collected has been used to pinpoint learners' needs and has given insight into course duration. This has led to a shift from open-entry to four-block course delivery, with defined start and finish dates, which has improved tracking and learner participation and progress.

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 **Good**.

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

Stakeholder feedback shows that PIERC consults widely in the community. The new board membership reflects the community, and the ex-officio membership of MPIA and the Ministry of Education enables policy input and regulatory assurance checks. This ensures that PIERC is informed and understands the business needs of Pasifika Peoples, Manukau City and the wider Auckland community.

The trust deed requires PIERC to engage in the community through the ethnic-specific Pasifika resource advisory group, which the organisation is in the process of establishing. PIERC is the only community organisation that teaches all major Pasifika languages and cultures to adult learners in the region. This enhances the well-being of Pasifika Peoples through language acquisition and cultural revitalisation.

PIERC's programmes ensure improved access and success for nationally identified high-priority group learners. PIERC is an ACE-funded provider and understands the strengthening of social cohesion, promoting life-long learning and increasing Pasifika literacy with Pasifika adults. This has resulted in enriched local knowledge of five Pasifika languages and protocols through engagement with expert local tuition. PIERC is a recognised advocate of the view that Pasifika knowledge, language and cultural skills are specialist forms of educational knowledge. While there was some indication that students who complete the course may pathway into formal programme courses, there was insufficient evidence to suggest that this information is being actively collected and analysed.

The value of the outcomes for the learner are personal, social and cultural. University students, workers, teachers, family, parents and professional people enrol to increase their language and cultural knowledge. Students interviewed confirmed that their language development is reaching into their homes, workplaces, churches and community hubs. Speakers have more confidence to use the language in everyday settings – for example media appearances, and conversationally with spouses, extended family and children. An increased sense

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of self-identity through understanding of cultural activities and their history was also expressed.

PIERC brings value to the sector from an ACE provider perspective. The PTE has a strong presence at conferences, school associations and Pasifika language weeks, and provides translation services and bespoke workshops to stakeholders – promoting and generating understanding of Pasifika language and culture in different learning environments. Stakeholders interviewed confirmed that they value the organisation in the education field for the depth of knowledge about Pasifika teaching and learning.

PIERC engages and maintains alliances with its sector and is valued for the contributions that it makes, and this is acknowledged by the community and the students. For example, the chief executive is currently the chair of the ACE sector strategic alliance groups and collaborates with ACE Aotearoa and other community groups to document the value of the Pasifika literacy research.

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 **Good**.

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

PIERC has made a determined effort to align the language level of its courses to match the needs of the numerous Pasifika communities it serves. For example, the advanced Samoan language courses are determined by community needs and involve normalising the learning of traditional, day-to-day, self-sustaining activities. The community see the value of this, as affirmed through stakeholder and learner feedback.

PIERC is purposeful in determining changing sector and government agency requirements and responding accordingly. For example, the PTE meets regularly with MPIA and the TEC to see how well it is matching their needs. More importantly, this activity matches ACE criteria for developing communities. Similarly, the relationship with the Department of Internal Affairs (the regulatory agency) has resulted in a revision of the trust deed dealing with the tenure of board members, to ensure a prescribed timeframe for service on the board to match the changing needs of Pasifika communities.

Centralised delivery sites are established for ease of access of learners to courses. For example, a recent review has resulted in the reduction³ of delivery sites to provide better proximity and location access for learners enrolling in courses.

³ The reduction of delivery sites was from 10 to three.

Fewer sites has also improved the monitoring of programmes. Likewise, the plan to move the PIERC head office to a road frontage premise will improve PIERC visibility and learner/stakeholder accessibility.

Levels of learning are clearly defined so that learners can determine their point of entry and pathway through the ACE courses. Clear evidence was provided indicating that the PTE has responded steadily and willingly to feedback given by learners in providing specific focused block courses at centralised sites.

Learners interviewed noted that they are frequently in cultural situations (funeral, wedding, church ceremonies), the course provides guidance on etiquette and protocols. The PTE is proactive and acts knowingly in understanding changing community needs and responding to them. The PTE has plans to deliver its ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) literacy and numeracy course funded by the TEC – preparation for delivery to 30 learners is well underway, with the start date planned for mid-year 2014.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Through the PTE's wide-ranging Pasifika stakeholder network, the organisation has access to and contracts part-time very skilled and knowledgeable tutors to deliver specific Pasifika language courses for each level of delivery.⁴ Tutors are passionate about language and culture, and the teaching approaches respect and cater for the different ways of learning. The balance between teaching and language proficiency is generally very good. PIERC's review of the learning and teaching of Pasifika languages followed by the staff restructure in 2013 focused not only on content and delivery but on the language skill of each tutor. The soundness of this approach resulted in changes made to part of the interview process where the second interviews were conducted in the language of preference of each person interviewed.

These skills are affirmed in positive evaluation feedback. The tutors have recently reviewed and developed a bilingual course booklet and resources for each individual Pasifika language course, this being a response to the previous booklets being written in English. The resources are used to help the learners to grasp the various language concepts clearly. Teaching staff expressed a desire to continuously improve resources.

⁴ Approximately two hours of delivery is provided per week/per tutor over a four to 10-week block course.

PIERC encourages co-teaching where appropriate. This enhances the flexibility of delivery and adds a new aspect to the learning experience. Locating the delivery of teaching at fewer sites provides further opportunities for team-teaching to occur. Learners interviewed noted that there is good knowledge-sharing across the staff. The success of this soundly based approach was confirmed by the evaluation team, who interviewed a range of tutors of different languages and learners.

As a result of the staff restructure, tutors' interactions in meetings and input into decision-making, resource development and programme content are actively sought and acted on. For example, the scale-down of course content to focus on a theme in a series of weeks instead of in each session is a response to learner feedback and embraced by the tutors.

The tutors review modes of assessment progress against outcomes and share best practice. Tutors adapt their teaching style and use current events in response to students asking for relevant context – for example, learners are engaged through the use of montage to encourage spoken utterances, and the use of costumes and other traditional activities to ensure varied delivery. Regular tutor meetings provide a forum for all staff to focus on educational achievements and areas for improvement of the PTE.

Staff are encouraged to pursue opportunities to enhance their existing skills and knowledge. The tutors are engaged in professional development, which is largely related to research and understanding language through stories, music and culture. One tutor shared a strong desire to become a published author.

Current assessment of learning is based on tutor observation of learning outcomes of speaking, listening, reading and writing against the progress criteria, which is valid within the context of ACE delivery. Formal assessment is a growth area for the PTE and requires further development to ensure the planned delivery of the ESOL course later in the year is valid, consistent and fair and meets the national standard. In this context, effective planning of delivery and tutor training is required to improve teaching effectiveness.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

PIERC does not face the same level of support requirements as providers of full-time courses, but what support services it does provide are generally appropriate to the courses delivered. The PTE has found through experience that many of the support needs of learners involve helping students to physically gain access to courses, as discussed in Findings 1.3 of the report. Course delivery in the evening provides access for working people and parents to enable them to attend class. Established teaching sites such as high schools and church halls to practise

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language enables the learners to become more comfortable about their environment, reduces barriers to learning and encourages further learning.

The 2013 student handbook sighted by the evaluation team shows that the PTE ensures students have access to up-to-date information about the regulations and support available for students. PIERC has recently changed the enrolment process to improve transparency and documentation practices. Entry was changed from open to fixed-block entry; and enrolment guidelines ensure each learner is placed in a course of study. Course evaluations spoke positively about the support provided to students, and these comments were endorsed by the students interviewed.

The organisational review confirmed the need for a designated part-time student support role, and this has been established to record, support and coordinate student enrolments. This type of support shows the learner that they are valued and is totally consistent with the Pasifika ways used by PIERC to establish relationships with learners.

PIERC has a resource centre with a range of information and materials to guide and support learners, such as books, newspapers and magazines. Bilingual language resources are recent additions to the collection. This is a significant change as previous workbooks were only in English. The resource centre has recently been re-cast from a library and designated as the PIERC reference collection, and the change includes an expansion of the PTE's webpage to include access to some online resources.

Students interviewed spoke positively about their activities at PIERC, which they say are helping them to achieve their learning goals. Student progress is guided and supported by regular assignments to present at weekly sessions. The students recalled favourably the encouragement and support provided by the staff and how much this assisted their learning. The dedication of all staff to supporting the students to achieve their goals is clearly evident and this is reflected in the high block completion rates.

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

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

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

The past 18 months have been a time of ongoing challenge and change for PIERC. This has included the appointment of a new chief executive officer (September

2012), a staff restructure⁵ (2013), the recent engagement of a new board (including two ex-officio ministerial positions (March 2014)), and a review of the trust deed. This state of affairs has resulted in the governance and management team working closely together to respond to these changes. An example of teamwork was the decision to introduce at the annual general meeting the new board, and integrate a governance training session with the board members' strategic planning. This process worked not only as a cost-effective measure but also as a way to begin working with staff to help them to focus on their roles. As many of the changes are recent, the full effectiveness and benefits are yet to be fully realised. Staff members, including the chief executive officer, as well as board members, have been involved throughout this process, and the direction and plans of the PTE have been clearly communicated to all staff. The communication, engagement and participation of staff through regular meetings and clear points of discussion and reporting have shown that staff are valued by the PTE. Required meetings have been achieved in 2013 and 2014, and there are recorded discussion, for example on the educational success of learners and on the programme developments that may be of most benefit to the community.

PIERC is meeting the ethical and legal compliance requirements of MPIA, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Internal Affairs and NZQA. The TEC has reported that issues are being addressed effectively. The PTE is challenged by the variety of government agencies it reports to, but is recognised as having relevance within the community. The re-crafting of the constitution and the key strategies flowing out of the constitution has resulted in a strategic focus on strengthening quality assurance requirements and accountability at all levels. This will ensure that external stakeholder targets and regulatory requirements will continue to be met.

These current practices have been sufficient for ACE-funded courses. However, if the PTE is to move beyond non-accessed courses and ensure continuing responsiveness to stakeholder needs, the PTE will need to establish an expanded self-assessment of its educational practices.

⁵ As a result of the restructure, staff numbers reduced from 20 to 10. This included the disestablishment of the community advisor positions.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management and strategy

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

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

2.2 Focus area: ACE (Adult and Community Education) courses

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

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

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that PIERC:

- Continue to develop its self-assessment activities in preparation for when PIERC expands training activities beyond the ACE programmes. This is particularly important as PIERC moves to programmes where formal assessment is required as well as a more rigorous system of monitoring student progress.

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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