

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Nelson Technical Institute

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 29 May 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:	Nelson Technical Institute (NTI)
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	3 Elms Street, Wakatu Industrial Estate, Stoke, Nelson
Delivery sites:	One site, as above
First registered:	1 January 1992
Courses currently delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NTI Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (incorporates National Certificate in Goods Service (Core Skills) with strands in Dangerous Goods and Forklift (Level 3)• NTI Certificate in Automotive Engineering (Assistant Service Technician) (Level 3)• NTI Certificate in Commercial Road Transport; National Certificate in Motor Industry (Entry Skills) (Level 2)• National Certificate in Electrical Engineering (Level 2)• National Certificate in Employment Skills (incorporates NCEA level 1 and credits towards NCEA level 2)• MSD Training For Work – Pathway to Success programme• NTI Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Introductory Skills)

- NTI Introduction to Automotive Certificate
- NTI Introduction to Electrical Certificate
- Non-trades – National Certificate in Employment Skills (incorporates NCEA levels 1 and 2)
- Trades – National Certificate in Motor Industry (Entry Skills) (Level 2)
- Trades – National Certificate in Electrical Engineering (Level 2)

Code of Practice signatory? NA

Number of students: Domestic: at the time of the external evaluation and review (EER), 50 equivalent full-time students; approximately 5 per cent Māori.

Number of staff: Five full-time equivalents, three part-time staff

Scope of active accreditation: The qualifications for which NTI has active accreditation are listed above. NTI has consent to assess to the requirements of a wide range of domains, generally at levels 2-5.

Distinctive characteristics: NTI offers flexible, self-paced programmes with a focus on foundation and skills-based training. The primary focus of training is on automotive engineering, electrical engineering and commercial road transport up to level 3, and funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) (through Student Achievement Component (SAC) funding and Foundation Focussed Training Opportunities funding) and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). The National Certificate in Employment Skills incorporates unit standards from these areas.

Recent significant changes: There are no significant recent changes.

Previous quality assurance history: The last NZQA quality assurance of NTI occurred through the audit process in 2009. At this audit, NTI substantially met the standard in use at the time.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER included the following mandatory focus area:

- Governance, management and strategy.

The following focus areas were selected because they represent the main areas of training delivered by NTI:

- Certificate in Automotive Engineering (Assistant Service Technician) (Level 3)
- NTI Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Introductory Skills).

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.

Two evaluators spent one and a half-days on site conducting the EER at NTI's training site in Nelson. During the visit, the evaluators met with the director, operations manager, four tutors and seven trainees from each of the two programmes that were selected as focus areas. Telephone conversations were held with external stakeholders, including five employers, three graduates of the programmes and a representative of the Motor Industry Training Organisation. A range of NTI's documents and records was also reviewed.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Nelson Training Institute**.

NTI has exceeded its commitments to the TEC for course completions over the past three years. Actual qualifications achievement is higher than recorded in the TEC reports, because many trainees 'roll-over' from one year to the next in order to complete their qualification. This is because entry to courses is on a rolling basis, and at any time there will be trainees in a class who are only part-way through their qualification. There has been a steady overall improvement in course completions since 2009, although there was a drop in the qualification completion rate in 2010 (to 40 per cent), with a change of staffing occurring in that year. The qualification completion rate increased to 73 per cent in 2011, and data available to date indicates a continuing improvement in 2012. For the MSD-funded Training for Work programmes, NTI achieved 74 per cent positive outcomes¹ in 2011, and 66 per cent as reported so far for 2012. NTI has additionally demonstrated that its trainees achieve general improvement in the 'soft skills' of communication, enhanced social skills and growth in confidence. NTI has either met or exceeded its commitments to its funding providers over the past two years with its continuously improving course and qualification achievement rates and high employment outcomes, and has been allocated a small rise in TEC funding for 2013.

The programmes delivered by NTI are clearly of value to the local motor industry and commercial transport companies, both of which are strong industries in the Nelson area. Employers who were interviewed by the evaluators spoke of their appreciation of employees who had graduated from NTI, and confirmed that NTI matches their needs to have skilled and qualified employees in their businesses. This is demonstrated by requests to NTI for more employees, and the apprenticeships that have been offered to NTI graduates on a regular basis.

There is a high rate of employment as a positive achievement outcome for this TEO. In 2012, for example, 14 out of the 15 trainees who completed the automotive engineering programme achieved employment in an automotive-related industry. In 2012 all graduates of the commercial driver training programme achieved employment in a related field. Trainees who were interviewed at the EER all spoke of their intention to seek employment, with most intending to seek employment in the relevant industry, and some intending to ultimately own their own business. The opportunities that are provided for adult learners to change careers and re-enter the workforce are also highly valued by some trainees.

¹ Positive outcomes for Training for Work courses are measured by the percentage of students who achieve employment up until 90 days following course completion.

There is thus good evidence that NTI is meeting most of the important needs of its learners, employers and funders. There are effective processes in place that contribute to learning and to the development of positive and productive relationships with the relevant industries.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Nelson Training Institute**.

NTI uses effective self-assessment strategies in order to understand its educational performance, and has used these effective strategies to bring about many worthwhile improvements. For example, the TEO's self-assessment of its performance data over several years demonstrates that, even including those trainees who do not complete, the majority of trainees are achieving employment in course-related industries. Trainee feedback indicates that trainees achieve general improvement of their well-being and the soft skills of communication, enhanced social skills and growth in confidence.

Strengths and areas for improvement are identified through trainee course and tutor evaluations, tutor self-reflection, peer and manager observations of tutoring and a functional performance appraisal process, which is linked with professional development for tutors. In addition, employer and work experience surveys, graduate feedback, annual review of all programmes, six-monthly course evaluations by both tutors and trainees and regular business planning and review all contribute towards the identification of strengths and areas for improvement.

Self-assessment is both effective and comprehensive, enabling NTI not only to gain a good understanding of its performance, but also to identify opportunities for further improvements and growth. Further improvement in both collation and analysis of data could assist in improving achievement outcomes. The TEO may also be able to further improve its analysis of stakeholder feedback by a more systematic and structured approach to recording the feedback from stakeholders, which is regularly received in a variety of ways.

Findings²

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**.

The TEC has reported that, for SAC-funded programmes in 2011, NTI achieved 92 per cent for course completions and 73 per cent for completion of qualifications. For the MSD-funded Training for Work programmes, NTI achieved 74 per cent positive outcomes in 2011, and 66 per cent reported so far for 2012. A key performance indicator for Training for Work funding is that a minimum of 64 per cent of participants beginning a course will be placed into sustainable employment and receive post-placement support. NTI has either met or exceeded its commitments to its funding providers over the past two years, and has additionally demonstrated that its trainees achieve general improvement of their well-being and the soft skills of communication, enhanced social skills and growth in confidence.

NTI has a clear record for each of its courses of how many students have completed both the course and the qualification, those who did not complete and the individual reasons for non-completion. This information is compiled from individual tutor records, regular course and tutor evaluations undertaken by the trainees, and the tracking of all trainees after graduation to determine the longer-term outcomes of the training. This is done at 90 days post-training as a requirement of MSD funding for the Training for Work programme, but also routinely with respect to all trainees. The comprehensive data concerning performance over several years also assists with initial needs assessment and with further course developments in order to give best value to employers and other stakeholders.

Testing for literacy and numeracy, using the TEC assessment tool, is carried out at the beginning, middle and end of each programme for Youth and Training Opportunities trainees, and any others who require it. Improvements in literacy and numeracy are generally observed between these two tests; however, improvement is further enhanced by personal maths coaching undertaken by tutors, and the expectation of trainees that they will apply themselves during their programmes to increasing their literacy skills. Case studies were provided to the evaluators as evidence of the growth in literacy or numeracy skills that is routinely achieved. In the National Certificate in Electrical Engineering course, for example, the enhancement of maths skills is an important and integral part of the programme. The evaluators considered that NTI has effective processes in place to have

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

enabled it to achieve a creditable level of achievement for both its SAC-funded programmes and the Training for Work programmes.

The evaluators further consider that NTI uses effective self-assessment strategies in order to understand its educational performance, and has used these effective strategies to bring about many worthwhile improvements. For example, analysis of destination data shows that the majority of trainees are achieving employment in course-related industries. There has been a steady overall improvement in course completions since 2009, although there was a drop in qualification completions in 2010 (to 40 per cent), with a change of staffing occurring in that year. The qualification completions increased to 73 per cent in 2011, and data available to date indicates a continuing improvement in 2012. This increase is attributable, at least in part, to the continuous self-assessment of performance. For example, when a drop in completions occurred in 2010, the TEO was quick to respond.

For the majority who complete, analysis has demonstrated the value of the individual pathway plan that is completed for each trainee, and the follow-up of all graduates, as is required by the TEC, in order to confirm positive outcomes. The pathway plan is developed for each trainee in order to best meet individual learning needs, and to keep a close watch on the trainee's progress towards completion.

Further improvement in both collation and analysis of data could assist in improving achievement outcomes. For example, the TEO may be able to further improve its analysis of stakeholder feedback by keeping records of the regular informal feedback that is received from employers.

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 programmes delivered by NTI are clearly of value to the local motor industry and commercial transport companies, both of which are strong industries in the Nelson area. Learners, who are generally referred to the TEO by Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ), are given opportunities to try new skills and pathways, and have a high rate of employment in the relevant industries. The opportunities that are provided for adult learners to change careers and re-enter the workforce are also highly valued by some trainees who, as adult learners, are also important role models for the younger trainees.

Valuable life skills are learned, including communication skills, motivation to succeed and the self-confidence to apply for jobs. Trainees interviewed at the EER all spoke positively of the value that the training had provided, and of their intention to seek employment in the relevant industry, some intending to ultimately own their own business. Several were aware of the employment opportunities that the

rebuilding of Christchurch could offer them. Graduates from NTI are regularly offered apprenticeships in the motor industry, and the value of employees who had graduated from NTI was confirmed in interviews with employers. Employers who were interviewed also confirmed the value to them of having students placed in their businesses for work experience. Feedback on this is formally gathered by NTI through work experience surveys.

The local motor and transport industries value the short courses that are delivered by NTI to meet their individual needs. These include forklift driving and training to meet other specialist driving licence requirements. The value of the specialist short courses delivered to local industry was also confirmed in interviews with stakeholders during the EER.

NTI undertakes ongoing self-assessment and analysis of its education and business activities, in order to continue developing and giving value to its stakeholders. Employer and work experience surveys, graduate feedback, annual review of all programmes, six-monthly course evaluations by both tutors and trainees and regular business planning and review all contribute towards the identification of strengths and areas for improvement. For example, a recent SWOT (opportunities, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis undertaken by all staff had identified some further possibilities for improvement of NTI's training delivery and further business development, such as the development of short courses in welding, hydraulics and the driving of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), in response to industry feedback that has already been received.

The evaluators found clear evidence that NTI is meeting the needs of its trainees to identify sound employment options and to train to meet the relevant industry standards for new employees. Learners are developing a range of skills that will enable them to continue to develop their personal and social skills. Self-assessment is clearly effective and comprehensive, enabling NTI not only to gain a full understanding of its performance, but also to identify opportunities for further improvements and growth.

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 **Excellent**.

NTI provides relevant education and training to meet the employment needs of its trainees, within the portfolio of programmes it offers. The tracking of graduates in employment is regularly undertaken by NTI, to enable the TEO to collect data about the longer-term value of the training that it provides. The TEO also analyses reasons for non-completion. One factor in non-completion, for example, has been identified as being related to students who are referred to the Training for Work programmes with health issues that would preclude them from working in the

commercial driving industry. Because entry is open, and all students are referred by funders, there are also regular issues relating to non-completion that are unable to be mitigated by the TEO, such as drug and alcohol use and police or justice requirements. The use of self-assessment in order to enhance performance begins with a comprehensive needs assessment and individual pathway plan for each trainee at the beginning of their programme.

All staff of NTI have functional communication networks of employers and other stakeholders, including the local representatives of funding bodies and community agencies. Feedback is regularly and freely given by employers. The location of the TEO in an industrial area places the TEO adjacent or close to several large employers within the relevant industries. Employers who were interviewed spoke of their appreciation of employees who had graduated from NTI, and confirmed that NTI matches their needs to have skilled and qualified employees in their businesses. This is demonstrated by requests to NTI for more graduates to consider as employees, and the apprenticeships that have been offered to NTI graduates on a regular basis.

The needs of the funding bodies have been matched by good course and qualification completion rates. NTI has been allocated a small rise in TEC funding for 2013. There is regular liaison between the TEO and WINZ, which has referred many students to NTI for pre-employment training. As noted above, there is an ongoing issue of the unsuitability of some referrals. However, where the prerequisites are not met, or where health, justice or drug and alcohol issues are too substantial for success in the area of training to be possible, the TEO will generally not select trainees who have little or no chance of succeeding, because of the regulatory requirements that are associated with its courses.

Given this, there is still a proportion of trainees (25 per cent) who do not achieve their qualifications, some for the reasons outlined above. There is good knowledge within the TEO of individual trainees' reasons for withdrawal, through systematic tutor self-assessment or feedback. Consideration of ways of reducing the number of non-completions is constantly undertaken; the recent SWOT analysis, for example, gave attention to this issue. NTI undertakes a range of support and follow-up activities in order to match all trainees' particular learning needs. Individual pathway plans are designed to identify trainees' particular learning needs and goals. Trainee diaries assist in tracking individual progress. The learners who were interviewed all reported that their need to be prepared for employment in the relevant industries was being matched.

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**.

The staff of NTI are all well qualified with relevant trades qualifications and experience, and all are either studying towards the National Certificate in Adult Education and Training or already have a tertiary teaching qualification. Employers who were interviewed all expressed confidence in the training offered by the TEO.

Moderation results demonstrate that the standard-setting bodies are satisfied that their respective national standards are being met by the assessment undertaken by NTI, and are an indicator of effective teaching. The representative of the Motor Industry Training Organisation, who was interviewed by the evaluators, stated that NTI's assessments are examples of good practice in the sector. There has been no moderation for the commercial driving standards as yet in 2013. Until 2012, moderation by Tranzqual for these standards had consistently demonstrated the meeting of standards. Two recent minor issues had been addressed by NTI, with no further comment by Tranzqual on record.

Another indicator of effective teaching has been the improving rate of qualification completions and employment outcomes over the past two years. All trainees have individual learning plans which are referred to in regular formative assessment and one-to-one meetings with tutors. Trainees value this attention, several stating that the individual attention given to them was an important factor in their achievement.

As noted above, all staff and managers recently undertook a SWOT analysis to determine some further directions for the TEO. A particular strength of this activity was the engagement in it by all staff, and their anticipation of individual involvement arising out of the action plans, which were to be further developed at the next staff meeting. Staff members who were interviewed all spoke of the value of this exercise, and its demonstration of their own value as contributing to the improvement of the performance of the TEO. All staff and managers consistently engage in looking at their performance and finding ways to improve it. All spoke of their team approach to their business, the value that they each place on this, and the value that they consider that they give to their trainees through this approach.

The range of self-assessment activities engaged in include trainee evaluations, employer feedback and moderation results. Staff members support each other through peer observations, an ongoing 'buddy' system, and regular formal and informal meetings for planning and critical reflection. These activities give a broad view of teacher effectiveness, and are used routinely to bring about worthwhile improvements to the educational performance of NTI.

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**.

Guidance and support is intrinsic to the training delivered by NTI. The value and scope of its provision was confirmed in interviews with learners, and by other formal records, including learner feedback and tutor records. Tutors work to foster an effective and supportive learning environment, and very often spend additional time to ensure that learning needs are met.

Some of the strategies for achieving this supportive environment include literacy and numeracy testing and ongoing support, individual learning pathways for trainees, one-to-one tutor-trainee meetings and comprehensive support and referral mechanisms on an as-needed basis. While there remains a percentage of trainees who do not complete their programme for a variety of reasons, all of which are known to the TEO, the learning environment is an inclusive one, and is valued by those who are committed to completing their course or qualification.

Because support and guidance is usually provided on an as-needed basis, self-assessment of the effectiveness of systems in place for support and guidance is also less systematic. Further analysis of the reasons for early withdrawal and non-completion of courses, or for early identification and support of 'at-risk' trainees, could identify areas where guidance and support could be further improved. Nonetheless, trainee and employer feedback indicates that a high level of support is routinely provided by NTI. There is good evidence that self-assessment relating to the total performance of NTI, including the support that is provided to trainees, contributes to the educational performance of the TEO, and that improvements in support and guidance are constantly being sought.

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**.

NTI has a strongly based knowledge of systems and results, and the management of networks and data collection that is required to achieve a creditable level of performance. The sole managing director and the operations manager, as the only managers within the TEO, work effectively and closely together as a team. Their management style is inclusive and transparent, with close involvement of all teaching staff in decisions relating to the provision of training and to the further development of the business. The words 'family' and 'team', as relating to the staff and management, were heard in different contexts by the evaluators. Governance and management focuses on supporting educational achievement in order to achieve valued outcomes.

The model thus described is an effective one for a small business. A more formalised model may work as well, and might also ensure a workable succession for new management in the future. There was strong evidence, however, that the manager and staff are looking to the future in their planning activities, for example with the recent SWOT analysis, to ensure that self-assessment is a significant component of planning within this TEO, and is valued as an activity by all staff.

There is good evidence that self-assessment is routinely contributing to an understanding of NTI's educational performance, and that the TEO uses it to assist in bringing about improvements that will lead to increased performance. Some improvements could nonetheless be made, for example a more centralised system of results recording, so that data could be more available for results analysis and self-assessment by managers as required.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Certificate in Automotive Engineering (Assistant Service Technician) (Level 3)

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

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

2.2 Focus area: NTI Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Introductory Skills)

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

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

Although these two programmes were identified as different focus areas, the six sections of the above report considers them together.

2.3 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**.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Nelson Technical Institute further improve its analysis of stakeholder feedback by a more systematic and structured approach to recording the feedback that is already received from stakeholders in a variety of ways.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of programme approval and accreditation (under sections 249 and 250 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the Criteria for Approval and Accreditation of Programmes established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act and published in the Gazette of 28 July 2011 at page 3207. These policies and criteria are deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under the new section 253.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual programmes they own or provide. These criteria and policies are also deemed, by section 44 of the Education Amendment Act 2011, to be rules made under section 253. Section 233B(1) of the Act requires registered PTEs to comply with these rules.

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 EER process approved by the NZQA Board.

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).

Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>

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