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External Evaluation and Review Report

Regent Training Centre Limited

Date of report: 22 June 2021

About Regent Training Centre Limited

Regent Training Centre (RTC) provides vocational education and training, predominantly for vulnerable youth, at campuses in Whangarei and Kerikeri. Programme delivery includes literacy and numeracy services and programmes that provide pathways to further study or employment.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	4 Keays Road, Whangarei, Northland
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 33.11 equivalent full-time students Total number of learners – 61 Approximately 70 per cent are Māori and 20 per cent Pasifika
Number of staff:	30.5 FTE ¹ staff – 14 FTE in teaching and 16.5 FTE non-teaching
TEO profile:	Regent Training Centre Ltd (NZQA website)
Last EER outcome:	July 2016: Confident in educational performance Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2) – Automotive Context, Vocational Pathway• Intensive Literacy and Numeracy• Manaaki – Support Services
MoE number:	9840
NZQA reference:	C47122
Dates of EER visit:	19-22 April 2021 ²

¹ Full-time equivalent

² EER conducted online.

Summary of Results

Matching and meeting taura³ needs is the priority and strength of RTC, which enables disenfranchised youth to engage in learning. Educational outcomes and highly valued personal skills and abilities, and improved wellbeing, are clearly evident.

Confident in educational performance

- Taura engagement is guided and supported by the concept of manaakitanga.⁴ Course completions have tracked upwards between 2018-20, meeting or exceeding Tertiary Education Commission commitments each year.
- RTC is meeting priority taura needs, with 70 per cent of taura identifying as Māori and 20 per cent as Pasifika.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- The design and delivery of programmes is relevant, useful and engaging for taura. The most important academic, personal and social needs of individual taura are well met.
- RTC's values, vision and mission are evident in the PTE's decision-making. Investment in resources and commitment to learners, staff and community are evident.
- The development of more coherent and comprehensive self-assessment activities to demonstrate the full extent and benefits of valued outcomes could be strengthened.

³ Regent Training Centre describe students/learners as taura.

⁴ 'Manaakitanga' is how Regent Training Centre describes pastoral care. This includes the promotion and care of the physical, social, cultural and emotional wellbeing of taura.

Key evaluation question findings⁵

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Marginal
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>RTC recognises achievement as including credit achievement, attendance, engagement in class and off-campus activities, and improvements in literacy and numeracy and wellbeing. There is convincing, although variable, evidence for these achievement indicators. Credit achievement data is collated and analysed for each taura. Literacy and numeracy hours and progress are tracked. Attendance information is gathered and monitored; other achievement indicators are mostly anecdotal and not coherently collated for review and use.</p> <p>Individual taura progress and activity is monitored closely. Timely responses to attendance, participation in class and taura wellbeing promote the likelihood of continued engagement and therefore achievement.</p> <p>Overall, combined PTE course completions of 38-53 per cent show a steady improvement over the last three years, including for 2020. This was despite the impact of COVID-19 which was significant for RTC taura. Detailed analysis and findings have not been comprehensively articulated over that time. However, improvements in tutor and management reporting, and the real-time capability of the student management system have begun to effectively strengthen self-assessment in this area.</p> <p>The focus area automotive programme data indicates that course completions improved for 2018-20, from 34 to 56 per cent, meeting or exceeding Tertiary Education Commission commitments each year. As most taura are Māori and Pasifika, parity is not a strong indicator of RTC's educational performance.</p> <p>External moderation results with NZQA and several transitional industry training organisations has improved in 2019 and 2020, validating achievement.</p>

⁵ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

Conclusion:	RTC has a holistic perspective on what constitutes authentic and appropriate achievement for tauira. RTC’s capability in using data and information in relation to achievement is variable. Where the individual journey travelled is strong, so is the educational achievement of tauira. Finding ways to articulate and provide evidence for all indicators of achievement going forward would significantly improve ratings for this key evaluation question.
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1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Holistic outcomes are the most important for tauira. Fundamental needs such as food, clothing and being in a safe environment are a priority and prepare and enable tauira to contemplate further training, employment and connecting with community once their study at RTC is concluded. Through RTC’s knowledge of and engagement with Northland communities, these holistic outcomes are well met, and tauira improve their wellbeing and enhance their abilities and attributes.</p> <p>Tauira progress to other programmes within RTC to build on their learning and positive experience of education and training. RTC has participated in four NZQA consistency reviews, and successfully demonstrated that graduates have the skills and knowledge required at the level of the qualification they completed.</p> <p>Self-assessment information is focused on each individual and their specific needs. The overall impact and the extent to which change has occurred for both tauira and whānau is clearly evident. The full extent and benefits of these legitimate and valued outcomes could be further validated through organisation-wide analysis of outcomes and findings for further improvement.</p>
Conclusion:	RTC’s relationships with tauira and communities is a strength. This understanding underpins and supports activities to ensure the most important needs of tauira, both personal and educational, are well met.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Programmes at RTC are all highly relevant to taura and the community.</p> <p>Programme design accommodates rolling enrolments to ensure the taura can be engaged the moment they are ready to learn. Wellbeing is incorporated into learning, regardless of the programme, and all taura undergo a literacy and numeracy assessment by a well-qualified and experienced tutor. Many taura concurrently undertake intensive literacy and numeracy tutoring alongside the programme of study they are enrolled in, which enhances their learning and confidence to learn.</p> <p>Practical ‘hands-on’ programmes are delivered, and the mix of theory and practical-based learning is skewed to favour the practical. The introduction of individual learning plans as a new initiative is still embedding across programmes and campuses. There is real potential to demonstrate the distance travelled by taura. The initiative is not consistently embedded and the full impact is not yet evident.</p> <p>Programme reviews, and academic activities such as moderation, are occurring reliably and are effective. Staff meetings and reporting are comprehensive to ensure individual taura needs are discussed and addressed.</p> <p>Self-assessment is effective in matching the needs and ongoing review of individual taura.</p>
Conclusion:	RTC designs and delivers programmes that are relevant, useful and engaging for taura. Needs are well matched and met.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>RTC's core values dictate the manaakitanga, support structure and targeted activities that support taura. Establishing meaningful relationships between taura and staff is the PTE's priority, in order to create and support a readiness to engage with education.</p> <p>Disenfranchised taura have generally not achieved well educationally and have complex personal and learning needs. The provision of a safe place to learn and belong – where taura are encouraged to follow their area of interest within RTC programmes – and timely study information and advice contribute to taura willingness to be engaged in training.</p> <p>Responses to the wellbeing needs of taura and whānau are appropriate. Examples include the provision of transport to RTC, two meals each day (which taura prepare), devices and resources appropriate to the location of taura, and access to the internet. Taura are linked to relevant social and community services. Academic progress is closely monitored and reviewed weekly by staff, leading to interventions to aid progress. These worthwhile activities support retention at RTC and benefit taura wellbeing and educational achievement.</p>
Conclusion:	Academic and wellbeing needs are effectively supported, enabling taura to commence their journey to tertiary education and to be retained in training.

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The ownership and board have been stable and well established for many years. Together with the general manager, the PTE has been effectively guided and led through a wide range and number of significant changes, including the profile of the learners, delivery sites, programmes, funding, staffing restructures and turnover. RTC navigated COVID-19 well, supporting both staff and taura.</p> <p>The clear purpose of the PTE is strategically and continuously reviewed to navigate the future direction and inform decision-making that is aligned to the core values and mission of RTC. There has been an improvement in keeping the board well informed of operational matters through comprehensive reporting; more stringent processes around the authorisation of funds have been introduced.</p> <p>RTC staff have an essential role in the manaaki of taura. The role is an important and challenging one, and the demands on staff are broad. RTC values its staff and provides appropriate personal and professional support. The PTE also recognises the need to better articulate the parameters of staff roles to reflect the reality and limits in terms of personal engagement and commitment to taura, to ensure staff wellbeing is maintained.</p> <p>Facilities and resources are sufficient for teaching and learning. Embedding of initiatives such as the introduction of a systematic taura individual learning plan and staff individual staff plan alongside the improved functionality of the student management system will provide useful information to support and further understand educational performance.</p> <p>Self-assessment information is focused on each individual and their specific needs. The extent and impact of these outcomes per programme, campus or RTC as a whole, could be more cohesively developed; it would be useful going forward to consider trends and patterns.</p>
Conclusion:	The values RTC expresses through its vision and mission are evident in decision-making for investment in resources and through leadership and the commitment to learners, community and to staff.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>RTC has an effective management system to ensure compliance obligations and commitments are monitored and addressed on time.</p> <p>The PTE's obligations to the Tertiary Education Commission and NZQA are well understood and there is sufficient educational expertise within the PTE to ensure currency with these obligations. RTC is working to extend the knowledge and engagement of more staff in this area, for example in the review of the interim domestic Code of Practice, and assessment and moderation.</p> <p>There are policies in place to address important compliance accountabilities specific to delivery of programmes to youth. For example, there are systems and processes to ensure health and safety in the automotive programme, and police vetting of all staff as a condition of employment every two years.</p>
Conclusion:	Important compliance accountabilities are monitored and managed.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: New Zealand Certificate in Foundation Skills (Level 2) – Automotive Context, Vocational Pathway

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.2 Focus area: Intensive Literacy and Numeracy

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

2.3 Focus area: Manaaki – Support Services

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

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 Regent Training Centre Limited:

- Consider analysing the extent and impact of achievement and outcomes per programme, campus or RTC as a whole, as a way to evidence trends and patterns going forward.
- More clearly determine and monitor the parameters of the staff role in manaaki of tauira to ensure a common understanding of the extent and limits of the role.

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

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 fraud⁶*
- *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.*

⁶ 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/>.

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