



Report of External Evaluation and Review

New Zealand School of Food and
Wine

Date of report: 26 January 2010

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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.

Brief description of TEO

Location: 63 Victoria Street, Christchurch

Type: Private Training Establishment

Size: 56 students (three international students) six staff

Site: Christchurch

The New Zealand School of Food and Wine (NZSFW) was registered as a private training establishment in 1995, offering part-time and full-time courses in hospitality. It provides education and training to domestic and international students and delivers certificate level courses to a diverse group of students. Many students go on to work in a broad range of hospitality businesses from cafes to 5 star hotels. There is a significant group of students who attend NZSFW for personal development and to indulge their love of cooking or wine, while some students come from successful careers in other disciplines; many of the latter are mature students.

NZSFW seeks to inspire students and cultivate their intellectual and personal well-being as they learn about the cultural importance of hospitality as a means of celebration, communication, creativity, and identity. The school believes that a better understanding of food, wine, and hospitality enriches New Zealand society.

NZSFW is associated with the award-winning Christchurch restaurant, Hay's. This association helps to ensure the curriculum remains current and innovative, and reflects industry trends. It also provides the opportunity for students to gain hands-on training in their respective course requirements by working in a commercial kitchen and restaurant. This experience helps prepare them for future employment as an employee or employer in the hospitality industry.

Courses offered are:

Certificate in Cookery – 16 weeks

Certificate in Restaurant and Cafe Management – 22 weeks

Certificate in Cookery and Hospitality (Introduction) – 15 weeks

Certificate of Western Cookery and Wine – 12 weeks

Certificate in Professional Wine Knowledge (Sommelier) – 12 weeks.

The previous quality audit of NZSFW was in 2006. The school met relevant NZQA requirements and the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

Executive Summary

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **highly confident** in the educational performance of **New Zealand School of Food and Wine**.

Key reasons for this are:

- Students enrol to learn or improve their knowledge and skills around cookery, hospitality, and wine skills. Students and teachers both reported significant improvements compared with the students' entry-level skills.
- The 2008 student evaluations show that on an ascending scale from 1-5, 100 per cent of the students ranked all aspects of their courses over three.
- In 2008, 75 per cent of students completed their courses; 90 per cent completed in 2009.
- Students are assessed regularly throughout their course of study. Accurate records of both formative and summative assessment are kept.
- All issues, academic or personal, are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- Students reported consistently high levels of satisfaction with course content, tutor preparation and presentation, and the equipment and ingredients provided for their use.
- Students also reported that the staff were skilful at managing individual student needs and class needs.
- The introduction of a new database means the school will be able to collate and update student records and provide data to government agencies more efficiently, freeing up staff time to concentrate on teaching and learning.
- Students and staff mentioned the quality, responsiveness, and availability of the director to address issues and concerns, include them in decision-making, and provide guidance and support.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **highly confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **New Zealand School of Food and Wine**.

Key reasons for this are:

- The school's self-assessment was comprehensive and robust. It accurately reflected the depth and breadth of the school's activities and emphasised the importance of learning outcomes for students.
- The processes and procedures reported in the organisation's self-review document were carried out in practice and enabled staff to monitor and review their educational effectiveness.
- Staff contributed to the self-review document and showed understanding of the evaluative process.
- Staff showed understanding and commitment to the business and valued the working environment where open discussion and sharing of ideas occurred on a daily basis.
- Ongoing formal and informal review is a strength of the school, allowing it to be responsive to student and staff needs.
- The school understands the interdependence of educational, social, cultural, and personal outcomes for students. This focus was reflected in interviews of students who consistently reported positive experiences from their first to last day at the school.
- NZSFW has recently appointed a board to assist with future decision-making and strategic initiatives and to contribute to ongoing improvement and critical self-review.
- The use of networking tools such as Facebook and a new database allow the school to maintain contact with past graduates, link present students with successful past graduates, and provide current information about NZSFW on its website.

Basis for External Evaluation and Review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.

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 courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITPQuality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and 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 policies and criteria 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).

Findings

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

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/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>

Outline of scope

The agreed scope of the external evaluation and review of New Zealand School of Food and Wine included the following mandatory focus areas:

- Governance, management, and strategy
- Student support, including international students.

The programme and database tool chosen for evaluation were:

- Certificate in Professional Wine Knowledge (Sommelier) (Level 3)
- Student Management System (SMS).

The Certificate in Professional Wine Knowledge (Sommelier) has been assessed as a course where NZSFW attracts many enrolments. The Student Management System provides a database that will make enrolling and reporting student results more efficient.

Part 1: Answers to Key Evaluation Questions across the organisation

This section provides a picture of the TEO's performance in terms of the outcomes achieved and the key contributing processes. Performance judgements are based on the answers to key evaluation questions across the focus areas sampled. This section also provides a judgement about the extent to which the organisation uses self-assessment information to understand its own performance and bring about improvements, i.e. capability in self-assessment.

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Context

NZSFW provides a comfortable, welcoming physical environment in central Christchurch. The school occupies three floors of a building and has room to accommodate greater student numbers if required. The kitchen is well equipped and students have access to a computer room with broadband access. Classes are small, with 14-20 students. Both students and staff reported high levels of satisfaction with students' academic progress.

Explanation

In 2008, 75 per cent of students completed their qualification; in 2009, 90 per cent completed their qualification, and both years' results are well above the sector benchmarks. These completion rates are achieved as a result of students being given clear guidelines. For example, attendance records are monitored and 85 per cent attendance is required for all course activities, including work experience. Staff know students well, and every effort is made to accommodate genuine absence with individual tuition or re-sit opportunities.

The rapport and respect between staff and students encourages honest and open discussion of issues affecting academic performance. At the midpoint of a course students meet the tutor to discuss progress and to give general feedback on the course.

Students are given regular feedback throughout the course. The feedback may be written or verbal and could include outcomes from self-testing, group discussions, practical exercises or role plays. Final assessment involves activities such as making or cooking a dish, skills observation by an assessor, or work-based assessment at Hay's restaurant.

Students have different reasons for attending NZSFW, but all the students interviewed agreed they had acquired useful skills and knowledge from their course and had developed their cognitive abilities. Students were relaxed and focussed on their goals. They said the courses were challenging and the rewards great, and that the course had boosted their confidence in other areas of their lives. Students found the staff enthusiastic and committed to student achievement. They respected the industry knowledge of the tutor group and were confident that they were being taught by well-qualified industry specialists.

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**.

Context

NZSFW owns the award-winning restaurant Hay's which has a high profile in Canterbury. The restaurant and school are located in the same building and students are able to gain work experience at Hay's. This close association ensures that the curriculum is current and reflects industry trends.

Explanation

Hay's attracts locals and overseas tourists who want to taste New Zealand food, in particular Canterbury lamb. The lamb is sourced from the owner's farm. This is a unique situation, where the production process, from farming the stock to presenting the cooked product to the customer, is controlled by the owner of NZSFW. In addition, the waiter or waitress who serves the food and wine to the customer has probably been trained by NZSFW. In this way, NZSFW meets its aspiration, "to be a recognised leader of hospitality education in New Zealand".

In 2006 NZSFW successfully tendered to deliver the Modern Apprentice Food and Beverage programme for the Hospitality Services Industry (HSI). This was initially to last for one year but was renewed in 2007 and in 2008 as a two-year contract. The successful tender shows that NZSFW is competitive with public organisations that have won the tender previously.

Each year NZSFW holds lunches and dinners, attended by business and educational stakeholders, to showcase the cookery and beverage skills of its students. Staff and students have participated in fundraising for a Christchurch children's home. A recycling and waste management system which was trialled during 2008 has now been adopted. The Bokashi system for green waste uses micro-organisms to convert kitchen scraps into garden compost, and is an example of NZSFW's commitment to recycling and waste reduction.

The school is actively involved with New Zealand hospitality stakeholders and employers. The owner is an accomplished businesswoman with well-established networks which allow her to provide staff, students, and customers with a unique and complete culinary experience.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

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

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

Context

Learners noted that the teaching they received was relevant as they were well prepared for work experience. The classroom atmosphere promoted interaction between the students and with the tutor. Learners enjoyed this as it made the learning fun and they were able to learn from each others' experiences as well as from that of the tutor. Students also commented that the school was well resourced with modern equipment and facilities.

NZSFW is responsive to the Canterbury community and international visitors. It understands that it is essential to respond to client needs while maintaining high standards.

Explanation

Student surveys indicate high levels of satisfaction with the programmes. Many students commented on the school's generosity, for example allowing them to use expensive ingredients in their cooking.

Part-time courses offered by NZSFW, such as general cookery classes, hospitality seminars, demonstration classes for inbound international tourists, and corporate team-building events accounted for 250 enrolments in 2009. NZSFW recognises that these part-time courses meet a need and help raise the profile of NZSFW.

Since 2008 NZSFW has offered a basic cookery programme for 10-11 year olds where simple cooking skills, such as poaching eggs, are taught. These have been very successful and NZSFW plans to form a charitable trust to help fund these activities. The director is passionate about food and about introducing good eating habits to children. The charitable trust would be a concrete way to contribute to better eating habits for children and their families.

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**.

Context

Student surveys and interviews with students indicate high levels of satisfaction with the delivery of the courses. Students said tutors were well prepared, knowledgeable, responsive to individual student needs, and available to give extra tuition if required. Tutors accommodated different learning styles and appreciated that there was a diversity of reasons for being in the class, and they worked with students to meet their particular learning goals.

Explanation

The management of NZSFW is committed to staff development in terms of both technical and interpersonal skills. At annual appraisals a professional development plan is developed for each staff member. Tutors are encouraged to work towards obtaining a formal qualification in teaching such as the Certificate in Adult Education. Staff have detailed job descriptions which outline the technical skills required for each role and the interpersonal skills and personal characteristics required to work successfully at NZSFW.

The director also tutors, which means she is aware of and sympathetic to the demands of the tutor role. She has Masters degrees in education and business and has written a textbook which is used for the Certificate in Restaurant and Cafe Management. Staff and students respect her academic credentials, knowledge about classroom practice, and considerable experience in the industry.

The evaluators were impressed with the balance between theory and practice. Theory is taught in the mornings and applied in the afternoon. The afternoon programme might involve observing the tutor cooking or students making something themselves. Tutors commented that they promote an interactive inquiry style of learning, often learning new ways to approach a subject from listening to the students' feedback. This partnership approach was evident when the evaluators observed a class working in the kitchen. They were engaged, focussed, and enjoying learning.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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

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

Context

Students are provided with comprehensive study information and advice, such as information about welfare and support services in Christchurch, course and equipment fees, and methods of assessment and re-assessment.

Explanation

All learners reported that they could approach any staff member with a query. They were impressed that staff took time to assist students with a variety of queries ranging from accommodation to class work. They reported that the learning environment was inclusive and there were no barriers to learning.

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

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

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

Context

NZSFW annually reviews its financial accounts, capital expenditure budget, and current courses and measures its performance against its goals. It is evident from board minutes that NZSFW understands that learner achievement is central to the success of NZSFW and that “word of mouth” recommendations account for a significant proportion of enrolments.

Explanation

As NZSFW is a small organisation the governance and management functions are closely aligned. In 2008 NZSFW appointed a management board. This meets regularly to review and monitor the performance of NZSFW and how it is achieving its goals. It is a small board with three members, including an experienced businesswoman, an accountant, and the director of NZSFW.

The director of NZSFW is on site often. This means that any issues that arise can be quickly addressed. Staff satisfaction is very high; this is reflected by low staff turnover, some staff having ten plus years’ employment with the school. The continuity of staff and commitment to NZSFW is reflected in the consistently high student achievement rates.

The creation of the board acknowledges the need for more formal input into the business from people not as actively involved in the day-to-day running of NZSFW. It is also recognition by the director that board members have skills and expertise that can help “grow the business” to the next stage.

Part 2: Performance in focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

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

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

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

2.2 Focus area: Student support – international students

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

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

Context

Many of the international students at NZSFW are privately funded students. They come to the school with very clear goals and objectives, and having completed the course return home. The school understands this market well. The combination of an excellent course, enthusiastic teaching, and catering for students' individual needs are evidence of the importance of this repeat market for NZSFW.

Explanation

The recently appointed international marketing consultant is responsible for international enrolments, developing opportunities to maximise the school's potential, and liaising with agents and partner language schools. NZSFW is currently discussing working with other English language schools in Christchurch. This could provide joint marketing advantages, greater networking opportunities, and sharing of students between NZSFW and other English language schools. This would enhance the international students' experience by introducing them to courses available at NZSFW. Comparable courses in their home countries are prohibitively expensive.

The presence of many cultures on campus is an added benefit for all students, domestic and international. For example, the evaluation team watched a Japanese student prepare lunch, explain the ingredients and cooking techniques involved, and serve it to his classmates.

2.3 Focus area: Student Management System (SMS)

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

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

Context

A new student management system has been purchased which will manage full and part-time enrolments, inquiries from students, and deposits and payments for international students. It will also interface with other websites such as the Public Trust and government agency databases. This will streamline and improve risk management within the school through accurate and timely reporting. As a consequence of adopting the new software package the purchase of new hardware is under review.

Explanation

A computer consultant and an international marketing consultant have been appointed. The computer consultant, a 2002 graduate from NZSFW based in Silicon Valley, will mentor the manager's son in Dreamweaver so he can take an active role in maintaining Hay's website, which will continue to be hosted locally. This relationship will be managed by Skype and phone conferences. This person will also work on digital marketing strategies such as Facebook and interactive surveys to have on Facebook, such as, "What kind of wine drinker are you?"

NZSFW is a family oriented business with a forward-looking approach. The owner is committed to maintaining the high standards and reputation of the business by involving family members in NZSFW.

The director has identified potential markets for business growth. The SMS is a way to increase efficiency around compliance and accuracy of data. It will allow NZSFW to extract data and track trends which will inform allocation of resources and business decisions. These efficiencies free up staff and management to explore alternative markets and new ways to meet stakeholder needs.

2.4 Focus area: Certificate in Professional Wine Knowledge (Sommelier) (Level 3)

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

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

Context

Wine has become very fashionable but obtaining a formal qualification in wine appreciation has only recently become available in New Zealand. The Certificate in Professional Wine Knowledge (Sommelier) is a full-time, 12-week course, at level 3. It is based around two respected international qualifications from the London Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET), the WSET Intermediate Certificate in Wines, Spirits and other alcoholic beverages and the WSET Advanced Certificate in Wines and Spirits, both registered on the British National Qualifications Framework. They are widely used by the hospitality

industry in Britain and are mandatory qualifications for people who wish to study for a Masters of Wine.

Explanation

This course has attracted increased enrolments as it is one of a few of its type in New Zealand. The British qualifications which form part of the course are sought after in the international hospitality trade. The British qualifications are marked externally by the Wine and Spirit Education Trust and each provider receives benchmarked results. Pass rates for the Intermediate Certificate in Wines and Spirits (Level 2) for the year 2008-2009 were 100 per cent for NZSFW students compared with 90 per cent globally. Pass rates for the Advanced Certificate in Wines and Spirits (Level 3) were 100 per cent compared with 92 per cent globally. These results clearly demonstrate the high quality of the teaching and learning environment at NZSFW.

NZQA accredited NZSFW to deliver the Certificate in Professional Wine Knowledge (Sommelier) in 2004. NZSFW has applied for NZQA re-recognition of this certificate from level 3 to level 4. NZSFW believes that raising the certificate level would more accurately represent the level of difficulty of the WSET certificates embedded in the NZSFW Certificate in Professional Wine Knowledge (Sommelier).

Of 56 enrolments at NZSFW at June 2009, 19 were for this certificate. The enrollees came from USA, China, South Korea, Czech Republic, and Brazil. Eighty-one percent of the students were female and 19 per cent male. Eighty-five percent successfully completed the Sommelier certificate.

The combination of international enrollees, successful completions, worldwide interest in studying wine knowledge, word-of-mouth recommendations from former students, and NZSFW's reputation and competitive fee structure mean that wine knowledge courses have potential for significant growth for NZSFW.

Statements of Confidence

The statements of confidence are derived from the findings within and across the focus areas. A four-step scale is used: highly confident, confident, not yet confident, not confident.

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **highly confident** in the educational performance of New Zealand School of Food and Wine

Key reasons are:

- The evaluation team sighted documentation and observed behaviour that showed coherence in policy, planning, record-keeping, staff and student comments, and academic achievement.
- Students make significant gains in academic, social, cultural, and personal development.
- Feedback from internal and external stakeholders attests to the value of the learning acquired at NZSFW.
- NZSFW welcomed the opportunity to discuss its core business with the NZQA evaluation team and regularly seeks input from external sources, such as the newly formed board.
- Students commented that teachers are experienced, well resourced, and supported in their work by their colleagues and management.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **highly confident** in the capability in self-assessment of New Zealand School of Food and Wine.

Key reasons are:

- Staff and management are able to describe clearly what they do to review their organisational programmes, track student progress, collect and analyse stakeholder satisfaction ratings, and review policies and procedures.
- Management reflects objectively, sets realistic goals, and prioritises these. This has led to coherent policy-making, accurate documentation of practice and processes, and good record-keeping.
- Staff will continue to use ongoing self-review to inform strategies to improve the business and keep themselves well informed and included in decision-making.

Actions Required and Recommendations

Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's regular scheduling policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report.

Recommendations

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

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