External Evaluation and Review Report

SiS Training & Consulting Ltd

Date of report: 22 June 2021

About SiS Training & Consulting Ltd

SiS Training & Consulting Limited is a small private training establishment delivering training for the seafood, maritime and aviation industries. SiS also provides a range of consulting services for these industries.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment
Location:	24 Harley Street, Bishopdale, Nelson
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 26 full-time students in 2020 (Maritime Operations programme), 60 students (Seafood Processing programmes funded by Primary ITO), and 105 students (unit standards)
	19 per cent Māori (Maritime), 15 per cent Māori and 5 per cent Pasifika (Seafood Processing)
Number of staff:	Two full-time equivalents and six contracted tutors
TEO profile:	[SiS Training & Consulting](#) (NZQA website)
Last EER outcome:	At the last EER, NZQA was Highly Confident in SiS's educational performance and Highly Confident in its capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	New Zealand Certificate in Domestic Maritime Operations (Skipper Restricted Limits) (Level 4) (Prog 124750), Seafood Processing Training (unit standards and New Zealand qualifications)
MoE number:	7677
NZQA reference:	C46878
Dates of EER visit:	15 and 16 April 2021

Summary of Results

SiS Training & Consulting is providing high value training for learners in the maritime and seafood processing industries.[1] Self-assessment practices are effectively identifying and reviewing most areas, with findings used to improve valued outcomes. Identified gaps are being managed.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Overall achievement is high and is externally validated through examinations and moderation results.

- SiS has a good understanding of its learners and their achievement, and is using this information to continually improve delivery.

- Valued outcomes from both the maritime operations programme and the seafood industry short courses are high for learners, employers and industry.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Programmes and learning activities are well designed, quality resources are used, and learners are well engaged in the learning process.

- SiS has sound business plans for the future and strategies to manage identified risks.

- Self-assessment is of high quality in relation to achievement and improving programmes.

- The gaps identified have been taken on board and the evaluators are confident that they will be addressed and the results used to improve business and compliance accountabilities.

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[1] SiS also offers non-assessed training in the aviation sector. This was not included in the scope of this EER.

Final

Key evaluation question findings[2]

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Overall, qualification and course completions are high. Māori and Pasifika achievement is on par with other learners (refer to Table 1, Appendix 1). The Maritime Operations (Restricted Licence) qualification is validated by an external examination conducted by Maritime New Zealand (MNZ). The PTE uses Primary ITO pre-approved assessment materials and moderation outcomes for seafood processing training. This gives the evaluators a high level of confidence in learner achievement. Learners and employers report that relevant skills and knowledge are gained, or credentialed, and applied in their workplaces and future employment. Learners also report increased confidence and communication skills, and improved problem-solving skills as a result of the training. This demonstrates good outcomes for the learners; for many, this is their first formal qualification or achievement. SiS has comprehensive systems in place and regularly monitors achievement data. Reasons for withdrawals, including resignation or incomplete verification processes with Primary ITO, are well understood. The current implementation of a student management system provides SiS with opportunities for further efficiencies in data-gathering.
Conclusion:	Learners have high completion rates and gain useful skills and knowledge to apply in their workplaces. SiS has a good understanding of achievement data and uses this well to inform improvements.

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

Final

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The Maritime Operations (Restricted Licence) programme provides the foundation skills and knowledge for obtaining a skipper's licence and gaining employment or, for those already in employment, to move into skipper roles. The MNZ Training Record book, purposefully aligned to the programme, affords students with a portfolio of achievements and evidence for prospective employment. Group work, simulating the crew on board a boat, assists in the development of teamwork and leadership skills.
	Seafood processing programmes and unit standards provide learners with the opportunity to credential what they already know and do in their workplace. Learners gain an understanding of the underling theory, industry best practices and standards, and meet regulatory requirements and certifications. This provides high value for learners, employers and the industry.
	The students interviewed confirmed that their learnings are implemented immediately in the workplace, and that their achievements have contributed to gaining promotions within their current company and/or new employment with improved prospects. Employers acknowledge the benefits brought to their companies by learners, with their new knowledge, certifications and renewed motivation at work.
	SiS is well connected with its clients, hears about the value of these outcomes, and uses repeat business as an indicator of value. SiS could consider collecting outcomes data to better understand and promote the value of the programmes.
Conclusion:	Industry stakeholders, employers and learners highly value the outcomes from the seafood processing and maritime operations programmes. Graduates gain useful skills for employment.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	The maritime operations programme has been purposely designed, with extensive input from stakeholders. The five-week block course builds on students' practical experience at sea and the assessments completed in the MNZ Training Record book.

Students interviewed reported that the classroom learning is well supported and effectively consolidated during practical sessions on the SiS vessel. The experienced tutor draws on his extensive 'at-sea' experience to stimulate discussion and debate.

Assessment activities are well designed and some are providing learning opportunities, for example formative quizzes with students taking responsibility for developing the quiz questions and monitoring their progress. Student feedback is being incorporated to improve assessments and marking schedules. The external moderation cycle has commenced, with positive results.

The seafood processing assessments provided by Primary ITO are well supported with tutor-developed resources and activities designed to meet learners' needs. Verifiers in the workplace collaborate with the tutor to confirm that skills are learnt and applied. Industry examples and personal experiences are shared by the expert tutor, and opportunities to reinforce learning in the factory and on the processing line are utilised. These strategies enhance the overall learner experience.

End-of-programme surveys are used to collect feedback from learners and are used effectively to make improvements to materials, delivery and assessments. |
| Conclusion: | Programmes are well designed to match stakeholder, employer and learners' needs. Delivery is well supported with purposefully developed and industry-aligned resources and assessments. Moderation results confirm that assessment is fair, valid and consistent. |

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	Learners in both the maritime operations and seafood processing programmes are well supported and engaged in their learning. The tutors understand what learners want to achieve, i.e. licences and meeting regulatory requirements. The learners, in turn, value the experience and expertise of their tutors, and the practical application of the learning. This is reflected in the high achievement rates and positive feedback in end-of-course surveys.
	Seafood processing learners' work commitments are accommodated with classes scheduled in the evenings and at weekends.
	Comprehensive support is provided, remotely by phone, email and text, for the maritime learners while they are completing the at-sea component of their programme and the MNZ Training Record Book. Students appreciate this support as they find their way around the record book and complete the associated assessments. Learners are provided with examination practice as they prepare for the MNZ examination at the completion of their qualification. The examination results to date (100 per cent pass rate) indicate that this practice and support is beneficial for the students.
	SiS has a sufficient understanding of the outcomes and requirements of the interim domestic Code of Practice for pastoral care. After reflecting on their current support systems and how well these met the requirements, SiS rated outcomes one to six as 'implemented'. Opportunities were identified to build on current systems and processes to support the learners.
Conclusion:	SiS knows its students well, and understands their goals and practical learning styles. Students are engaged in their learning and well supported by experienced tutors. Feedback is used effectively to make improvements.

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

Performance:	**Excellent**
Self-assessment:	**Excellent**
Findings and supporting evidence:	SiS has a clear purpose and direction. From the managing director and across the organisation, there is a clearly articulated short and longer-term vision for the organisation. Advice is sought from experts, and there are ample inputs from stakeholders.
	SiS has responded well to the challenges presented by Covid-19 by shifting the non-assessed aviation training online, providing good support to staff and learners, and ensuring regular communication with all stakeholders. This willingness to change and adapt, along with the diversification of the programmes to include the maritime operations qualification with Tertiary Education Commission funding, has strengthened SiS's business model.
	Well-qualified tutors, with both industry and adult education qualifications and/or equivalent experience, are engaged on contract. This model is working well for SiS. However, there are some risks associated with reliance on a small pool of individuals. The managing director is aware of this risk and is currently working on having back-up tutors available. The contractors are also engaged in other training businesses. They are aware of and manage any potential conflicts of interest this may present.
	Appropriate resources are allocated to the programmes and students, including a vessel docked in the local marina for the practical learning, and access to company processing factories.
	Annual professional conversations with the contractors are held, focusing on performance, resource needs and professional learning development and opportunities.
	Self-assessment is effectively implemented with the small team, through regular and open communication, and some external consultancy input for training and report preparation.
Conclusion:	There is a clear vision and direction for the organisation to enable it to sustain quality of delivery and achievement within a changing tertiary education environment.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	**Good**
Self-assessment:	**Good**
Findings and supporting evidence:	SiS's policies and practices are legal and ethical. The quality management system is regularly updated to reflect changes and capture the requirements of external agencies. The managing director has oversight of compliance activities. A schedule of events is used for known compliance requirements and timeframes. Regular contact is maintained with agencies, or initiated as necessary. A recent example was SiS seeking clarification from NZQA on the interim domestic Code and the available tools to undertake the self-review. NZQA attestations have been submitted in a timely manner. Participation in Primary ITO external moderation has met requirements. Primary ITO reported high levels of satisfaction with SiS's delivery performance and learner outcomes. The evaluators identified two areas requiring further attention. SiS did not have signed memorandums of understanding for the first aid and fire extinguisher training, as is necessary when Tertiary Education Commission funding is involved, and to ensure that the responsibilities of all parties are clear and that students are well supported. This gap was acknowledged by SiS, and since the completion of the field work has put these memorandums of understanding in place. The other area is related to credit reporting. SiS was aware of the NZQA rule that students' credits are to be reported within 90 days of the assessment date. However, the PTE did not realise that these timeframes have not always been met by the relevant industry training organisation, which was reporting credits on their behalf. Given that the students are enrolled with SiS, and that the credits are reported against their MoE number, SiS has the ultimate responsibility for credit reporting, and needs to have a system in place to ensure this is being done within the required timeframe.
Conclusion:	Important compliance accountabilities are generally being managed appropriately and in a timely manner. While the gaps identified are having some impact, they have been rectified or are being 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 Maritime Operations (Restricted Licence) (Level 4)

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

2.2 Focus area: Seafood Industry Training

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

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 SIS Training & Consulting Ltd:

- Systematically collect outcomes data to better understand and promote the value of the programmes.

- Maintain and regularly review memorandums of understanding for sub-contracted delivery.

Requirement

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

NZQA requires SIS Training & Consulting Ltd to:

- In accordance with NZQA Rule – Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rule 2021, Section 13, 1 (b), report credits for students within three months of assessment.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Summary of participation and course completion 2017-2020

	2017 non-SAC funded	2018 non-SAC funded	2019 non-SAC funded	2020 non-SAC funded YTD	2020 SAC funded YTD
SAC EFTS	NA	NA	NA	NA	23
Overall course completion	91%	95%	96%	82.4%	100%
Māori participation	31.3%	21.7%	38.5%	15%	19.2%
Māori course completion	81%	91%	97%	72%	100%
Pasifika Participation	5%	2%	6%	5%	0
Pasifika course completion	93%	93%	93%	81%	0
Under-25s participation	16.2%	5.7%	12%	6%	15%
Under-25s course completion	88%	100%	100%	80%	100%

Data supplied by SiS (Self-Assessment Report 1 March 2021)

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

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

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

- *Identify organisational fraud[3]*

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

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

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[3] 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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