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External Evaluation and Review Report



Edvance Limited

Date of report: 25 August 2020

About Edvance Limited

Edvance delivers training in the workplace and at selected venues to improve workplace literacy, numeracy, communication and interpersonal capability.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	2 Woodbine Avenue, Greenlane, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WLN): 674 – 15 per cent Māori, 34 per cent Pasifika, 21 per cent Asian, 26 per cent European, 4 per cent other (2019) Intensive Literacy and Numeracy (ILN): 106 – 24 per cent Māori, 30 per cent Pasifika, 16 per cent Asian, 24 per cent European, 6 per cent other (2019) WLN and ILN EFTS (equivalent full-time students): 28.75 funded EFTS; 9.57 non-funded EFTS
Number of staff:	Ten full-time, four part-time, 33 contractors (tutors)
TEO profile:	See: NZQA – Edvance Limited
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Highly Confident in the educational performance and Highly Confident in the capability in self-assessment of Edvance at the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2016.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workplace Literacy and Numeracy and Employer-led Workplace Literacy and Numeracy training• Intensive Literacy and Numeracy training
MoE number:	7817
NZQA reference:	C38419
Dates of EER visit:	23–25 June 2020

Final report

Summary of Results

Edvance has a clear purpose, supported by a strong management team, robust systems and capable staff. Strong engagement with clients and learners ensures that training consistently matches the important needs of both learners and clients. This is evidenced by positive stakeholder feedback and high learner gains. Robust self-assessment supports continuous improvement and growth within the organisation.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- A high proportion of learners are making significant gains in literacy and numeracy, completing unit standards, improving their oral communication, and developing other important personal and cognitive skills.
- Māori and Pasifika learners have comparable rates of significant gains to that of the total learner population.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- The learners' use of improved skills supports the value that is added to learners, graduates and the workplace. The skills learners gain have a positive impact on their work performance and personal lives. Many learners described significant improvement in self-confidence and their ability to deal with complex interpersonal situations. Employers value their workers' improved capability, work performance and well-being.
- Training design is systematic and tailored to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners and employers. Tutors are adept at tailoring delivery and supporting learner needs. Learners gain skills contextualised to their workplace.
- Self-assessment and continuous improvement are embedded in the organisation, supported by robust and effective policies and procedures.
- Edvance collects information from programme managers and tutors at regular intervals, which supports the monitoring of progress and achievement. However, some staff commented that some procedures can be onerous and the value

gained is not always clear.

- Key compliance accountabilities are being well managed.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Edvance learners had consistently high levels of achievement in significant gains² and completions of training for the period 2016–2019³ (see Appendix 1). On average over this period, 83 per cent of WLN learners made significant gains in their measured literacy and numeracy.⁴ Eighty-seven per cent of Māori learners made significant gains over this period, and Pasifika learners achieved significant gains at the same rate overall.</p> <p>On average over this period, 88 per cent of ILN learners made significant gains in their measured literacy and numeracy. Completions for ILN training for all learners were 81 per cent, the same as for Māori learners, and 76 per cent for Pasifika learners. However, the significant gain for Pasifika learners is close to Māori learners and all learners overall.</p> <p>Less than 10 per cent of learners completed unit standards in 2019. However, of those that did complete unit standards, 98 per cent achieved the standard.</p> <p>Learners' evaluations showed strong, positive and broad impacts of WLN and ILN training. For example, of the learners surveyed⁵, 98 per cent said they had gained at least one of the</p>

¹ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

² 'A statistically significant gain means that the Assessment Tool is confident the difference between two scale scores represents real learning progress and cannot be explained as resulting from the imprecision associated with the assessment scores. A statistically significant gain is not necessarily a large gain. It merely indicates that the Assessment Tool is confident that the gain is greater than zero. Making a learning gain takes time, explicit acts of teaching and learner engagement' (<http://nclana-archive.ako.ac.nz/resources/355106.html>).

³ These learners completed on average 93 per cent of the unit standards for which they were assessed.

⁴ The significant gains exceed the internal benchmark of 80 per cent.

⁵ WLN and ILN surveys in 2019.

	<p>following personal and cognitive skills: self-confidence, verbal communication, problem-solving, motivation, positive attitude, time management, teamwork, conflict management.</p> <p>Achievement data is actively and regularly monitored at all levels of the organisation. A detailed report analyses learner achievement for each workplace contract or ILN cohort. The governance and management teams demonstrate a rich and comprehensive understanding of learners' achievement.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>High proportions of learners achieve significant gains in literacy and numeracy, as well as gains in other personal and cognitive skills. Of the learners who complete unit standards, there is a high completion rate. Achievement is actively monitored and well understood by the relevant parts of the organisation.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The core business of Edvance is the development of workplace adult numeracy and literacy skills. There is clear evidence of significant gains in numeracy and literacy, oral communication and other personal and cognitive skills which contribute value to the workplace and personal environment.</p> <p>Learners in the WLN programmes are already in the workplace, and the value is demonstrated in the personal and professional improvements in performance in their jobs. For example, a group of learners from one organisation that NZQA interviewed have improved their numeracy and literacy and are more able and confident to address health and safety in their workplace.</p> <p>The ILN learners are well prepared through completion of the Pre-Entry Preparation (PEP) course.⁶ A proportion of learners who complete the PEP programme enter one of the employment areas they are preparing for (For example, all PEP ILN</p>

⁶ Preparation for key entry requirements to the New Zealand Police, Defence Force, Corrections, and Fire and Emergency.

	<p>graduates who were able to be contacted had entered relevant employment⁷). Moreover, the personal and cognitive skills gained are still highly valued by the graduates.</p> <p>The learners and stakeholders that NZQA spoke to highlighted that the literacy and numeracy skills gained by the learners improved their communication, which benefited all stakeholders. Learners also measurably improved their speaking and listening skills (72 and 73 per cent respectively).</p> <p>Self-confidence, problem-solving and interpersonal skills are among the other personal and cognitive that learners and graduates gain, which some stakeholders describe as 'transformative'. As a result of a positive engagement with learning, 81 per cent of learners surveyed wanted to engage in further training and education. Graduates surveyed⁸ said they had gained similar skills as the learners that NZQA spoke to.</p> <p>Of the clients surveyed, all believe the programmes have been effective and would recommend them.⁹ In the surveys, clients said the content was relevant and appropriate to their work contexts. Increased confidence was one of the main outcomes that clients noticed that their employees (learners) gained, which they value. Edvance is also contributing to research on workplace numeracy and literacy best practice.</p> <p>A comprehensive report is produced for each training initiative to demonstrate how well it has achieved its objectives. Data collection from graduates and clients has had some challenges, but is improving. The survey response rate of clients has steadily increased over time.¹⁰</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>The outcomes being created for learners, clients and graduates are of high value. Edvance has a strong understanding of what its stakeholders value and is improving the gathering of comprehensive data on valued outcomes.</p>

⁷ Twelve out of 46 2019 ILN graduates responded to feedback requests.

⁸ Approximately 20 per cent of graduates responded to the survey.

⁹ Fifty-four per cent of companies responded to the survey in 2019.

¹⁰ Eighteen per cent of companies in 2017 responded to the survey, 40 per cent of companies in 2018, 54 per cent in 2019.

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:	<p>Edvance understands and reflects client and learner needs well in their training design. A systematic and well-honed approach to needs assessment ensures the courses are designed appropriately for the work context. A tailored matrix outlines the problem, the outcomes and the assessments. This approach is very effective in meeting the needs of a diverse range of employers.</p> <p>In order to support learner understanding, tutors use workplace documentation and terminology to apply the learning in a real-world context, as confirmed by the learners. The tutors use learning activities that are relevant and engage the learners, and also meet their literacy and numeracy needs, as demonstrated by the significant gains. The programmes are reviewed to ensure they have met the needs of the clients and learners. A report is produced at the beginning of the programme which includes individual and aggregate information on the literacy and numeracy step and learning goals for each learner. At the end of the programme, a final report is produced where learner progress and satisfaction are evaluated against the expectations set at the beginning. Data from these reports demonstrates the value and outcomes of the programme.</p> <p>Client and programme managers effectively monitor and support the clients and learners throughout the process and ensure their needs are being met. This oversight supports the tutors in developing an effective learning environment.</p> <p>The majority of literacy and numeracy assessments are completed electronically, under test conditions. This has proactively supported academic integrity, although academic integrity has not been identified as an issue within the organisation.</p> <p>There are generally robust and effective moderation processes that ensure assessment is fair, valid and consistent. Since the last EER, Edvance has consistently achieved satisfactory moderation results. However, national external moderation did</p>

	identify one issue (insufficiency of evidence). Edvance proactively implemented an action plan, even though this was not required by NZQA.
Conclusion:	Edvance creates a tailored and structured training that consistently meets the important needs of clients and learners. Strong client relationships supported by robust policies ensure learners and client organisations meet their goals.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Edvance has capable and qualified tutors, some retained for multiple years, who understand well learner and client needs and adapt content to the work context. Edvance’s client managers and programme managers use established processes to first determine the needs of the organisation and learner group, and choose a suitable tutor based on those criteria.</p> <p>Many tutors have a strong and improved proficiency in cultural awareness, particularly in relation to the needs of Pasifika learners. They are receptive to learner needs, which creates an inclusive learning environment. Learners interviewed described their tutors as caring, personable and having a positive attitude to support learning. Tutors provide learners with timely and appropriate feedback to ensure they progress through the programme.</p> <p>The goals of the client organisation and learners are collected and understood by the tutors. Learners have opportunities to achieve their goals and use the skills gained in a personal capacity and in their employment. Tutors often work with learners on specific and relevant issues within their workplace. The direct application of the content enhances the learning.</p> <p>A consistently high proportion of learners made gains over 2016–2019 and completed unit standards. This, and positive learner feedback, are convincing indicators of effective support, which enables learners to stay engaged and complete their training.</p>
Conclusion:	Learner needs and requirements are well understood by the tutors and Edvance. Tutors are well prepared and support

	students in applying their skills to the workplace to reinforce the learning.
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1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Edvance’s mission is ‘To work with individuals to advance workplace skills and personal learning goals’. The organisation relocated its head office from Tauranga to Auckland, which aimed to enhance responsiveness to client needs. Staff were supported throughout the change and there was minimal disruption to the learners.</p> <p>The appointment of an independent strategic advisor has improved governance oversight.</p> <p>There is effective academic leadership to support educational achievement. The flow of information from tutors to programme managers to governance and management supports robust and transparent monitoring of data and outcomes.</p> <p>Edvance has strong and robust policies and procedures that clearly support consistent practice and meet important needs, including compliance requirements. However, some personnel viewed some procedures as onerous and the added value was sometimes not clear. There is no ongoing anonymous staff feedback mechanism to identify emerging concerns of this kind.</p> <p>Staff retention has been a challenge (particularly for the programme manager’s role) for valid reasons. This can create problems for continuity and retaining institutional knowledge. However, staff also commented that the intent of Edvance and the programmes are ethical and client focused, which provides satisfaction and fosters their connection to the organisation and the learners.</p> <p>Given finite resources, the organisation is well equipped in responding to a changing environment, including developing further online resources. Learners have also been enabled to complete the programmes remotely through laptops supplied by Edvance, which is partially in response to Covid-19.</p> <p>The organisational culture is reflective and proactive, and it has a structured approach to gathering information and data to</p>

	inform decision-making. This strong focus on quality directly contributes to Edvance effectively meeting the important and evolving needs of its learners, clients and key stakeholders.
Conclusion:	Governance and management have effective systems in place to support high educational performance. There have been a few challenges, including staff retention. However, most are managed effectively. Self-assessment is comprehensive and, outside of the exceptions noted, is typically high quality.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The Edvance management team has a comprehensive understanding of its compliance requirements. The general manager keeps a calendar of all key requirements. Compliance requirements are delegated to the relevant personnel within the management team, and are reported on monthly from management to the governance team.</p> <p>Strong processes ensure compliance requirements are met, including enrolment of eligible learners. The general manager checks the funding requirements weekly to ensure only eligible learners are enrolled. During the level 4 Covid-19 lockdown, the finance manager checked all the learner files to ensure full compliance. It was notable that the May 2019 Tertiary Education Commission audit found no compliance gaps.</p> <p>Policies and procedures are appropriate and live, considering the business and the way it operates. This ensures that the relevance of the policies is maintained.</p> <p>Edvance has proactively responded to moderation results, including implementing a self-directed action plan.</p>
Conclusion:	Edvance has a comprehensive system for effectively managing compliance, which ensures the compliance policies reflect practice. It has made modifications as requirements change.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Workplace Literacy and Numeracy and Employer-led Workplace Literacy and Numeracy programmes

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

2.2 Focus area: Intensive Literacy and Numeracy programme

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 Edvance Limited:

- Explore ways to improve the proportion of clients and graduates providing feedback.
- Review procedures regularly to ensure they achieve their purpose, add value, and as a system are feasible for staff to carry out in a timely fashion.
- Implement a periodic and anonymous staff feedback mechanism.

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 1

Significant gains and completions

Table 1. Significant gains – WLN

	2019	2018	2017	2016	Average
Overall	81%	81%	83%	85%	83%
Māori	78%	87%	85%	97%	87%
Pasifika	81%	81%	86%	85%	83%

Table 2. Completion rates – WLN

	2019	2018	2017	2016	Average
Overall	93%	93%	92%	94%	93%
Māori	94%	89%	91%	96%	93%
Pasifika	94%	91%	88%	93%	92%

Table 3. Significant gains – ILN

	2019	2018	2017	2016	Average
Overall	85%	91%	96%	80%	88%
Māori	76%	91%	96%	80%	86%
Pasifika	95%	74%	86%	85%	85%

Table 4. Completion rates – ILN

	2019	2018	2017	2016	Average
Overall	87%	70%	78%	89%	81%
Māori	100%	63%	67%	92%	81%
Pasifika	72%	60%	73%	100%	76%

Source: Edvance 2019 self-assessment summary

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 fraud¹¹*
- *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.*

¹¹ 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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