



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Adventure Works Limited

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 7 December 2017

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Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Name of TEO:	Adventure Works Limited
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	6 October 2015
Location:	Unitec Mt Albert Campus, Carrington Road (Gate 3), Mt Albert, Auckland
Delivery sites:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Unitec Mt Albert Campus, Auckland (as above)2. Mighty River Domain, 601 Maungatautari Road, Leamington, Karapiro (temporary site)3. Waharau Outdoor Education Camp, 1748 E Coast Road, Orere Point, Whakatiwai (temporary site)
Courses currently delivered:	<p>Courses currently delivered are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate in Personal Development (Level 2)• Certificate in Adventure Leadership and Risk Management (Level 3)
Code of Practice signatory:	Not a Code of Practice signatory
Number of students:	2016 domestic: 440 students (16 per cent Māori, 20 per cent Pasifika) – all secondary school students
Number of staff:	Three full-time equivalents, six part-time staff

Scope of active accreditation:	<p>Adventure Works has consent to assess a range of domains and standards. See the following for full accreditation details:</p> <p>http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/ngf-accreditations.do?providerId=803555001</p>
Distinctive characteristics:	<p>Adventure Works is located in Auckland and uses sites in the Waikato Region, delivering adventure-based learning. The business has been in existence for around 20 years. The organisation has worked on becoming more established in schools, to help create vocational pathways.</p> <p>The primary clients for Adventure Works are secondary students. Adventure Works provides leadership, mentoring and personal development programmes. Learners gain self-efficacy and a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Adventure Works is approached by schools, and the school leadership programmes are usually run at the start of the year. Adventure Works is also working with Unitec to develop a programme around leadership.</p>
Recent significant changes:	<p>Adventure Works is a newly registered private training establishment with NZQA, and this is its first EER.</p>
Previous quality assurance history:	<p>Adventure Works and NZQA are currently re-assessing compliance responsibilities as per a validation visit undertaken in May 2017.</p>
Other:	<p>Adventure Works operates its own challenge courses in Mount Albert, Auckland, Mighty River Domain at Lake Karapiro, and Waharau in the Hunua Ranges. Regular site inspections are undertaken independently by Project Adventure New Zealand Aotearoa.</p> <p>Adventure Works is OutdoorsMark Safety Certified to operate rock climbing, abseiling and challenge course activities. As part of the certification, Adventure Works undergoes an independent three-yearly audit of its safety systems.</p> <p>Adventure Works is also an accredited provider of the Adventurous Journey section of the Duke of</p>

Edinburgh's Hillary Award, as well as a deliverer of adventurous journeys for the Graeme Dingle Foundation. As such, Adventure Works delivers a series of leadership programmes toward these.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The following two training schemes were selected as focus areas for inclusion in the external evaluation and review (EER):

- Certificate in Personal Development (Level 2)
- Certificate in Adventure Leadership and Risk Management (Level 3)

At the on-site visit, these two focus areas were merged into one focus area as it became apparent that the programme management, tutors and students are the same people.

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Initial planning for this EER commenced in November 2016. A scoping meeting was held in April 2017, where required documentation and potential focus areas were discussed. The EER was conducted over one day at the Mt Albert site by a team of two evaluators.

Prior to the on-site visit, the evaluation team reviewed a range of documentation, including programme information, self-assessment summary, and programme data. The team also reviewed further documentation on site and spoke with the following groups:

- Governance and management team, consisting of the director, general manager and administrator
- Programme management and staff, consisting of the lead instructor and facilitator/instructors (three)
- External stakeholders (four), consisting of a graduate, community representatives and referral agents.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance and **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Adventure Works Limited**.

The key reasons for the statements of confidence are as follows:

- Achievement rates show that students are gaining unit standards and achieving the certificates in all unit standard-based programmes delivered by Adventure Works. For 2016, there was an average achievement rate of 99 per cent across three programmes, an increase from 94 per cent in 2015.
- Learners improve their wellbeing and enhance their personal development and ability to engage with their peers. Learners gain skills, knowledge, self-confidence and self-management. These contribute largely to personal growth and positive attitudes. Leadership skills and personal growth are the main objectives of the courses, and these outcomes are being well met.
- Adventure Works has commenced planning to expand delivery, and is supported by its key agencies. Building of internal capability in the expertise and knowledge for programme development will support future growth.
- Programmes are well designed and meet the needs of the stakeholders and relevant groups. Assessment is valid and fair and is supported by internal and external moderation practices that inform improvements to teaching and learning. Assessment also provides useful feedback on progress and learning outcomes.
- Student safety is paramount, and effective systems support the health and safety of students and staff. These systems are monitored regularly, both internally and externally, and clearly meet the needs of the sector.
- Adventure Works has a clear direction and is future focused, including enhancements to programmes such as the current opportunities being explored with the Duke of Edinburgh's Hillary Award Adventurous Journey. Management communicates clearly internally and externally, and engagement is purposeful and ongoing.
- Adventure Works encourages a culture of reflection across the organisation, and is committed to continual self-improvement as shown by the prompt responses to NZQA requirements.

- All staff are qualified and experienced. They are valued and supported with professional development opportunities to grow their own technical competencies and knowledge base.
- Effective systems ensure that the pastoral and academic needs of learners are looked after. This is a collaborative undertaking between Adventure Works and the individual schools.
- Adventure Works is still coming to terms with complying with and understanding the requirements, rules and regulations of being a private training establishment. The organisation continually seeks advice and responds promptly to ensure they operate in a legal and ethical way. However, Adventure Works does not have sufficiently strong internal expertise and knowledge around the requirements, rules and regulations of the various government agencies it needs to comply with. Organisational expansion such as programme development will also benefit from strengthened internal capability.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do students 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**.

Learners complete courses and gain certificates. The majority of students are completing all required unit standards toward the programme. Since 2015, on average 96 per cent of all participants in the Personal Development programme have completed all unit standards. For the same period, on average 93 per cent of all participants have completed the required units for the Adventure Leadership and Risk Management programme.

Table 1. Training scheme completion rates

Training scheme	2015	2016	2017
Certificate in Personal Development (Level 2)	97% (247/440) ²	96% (408/424)	96% (152/159)
Certificate in Adventure Leadership (Level 3)	98% (40/41)	100% (20/20)	N/A (not delivered)
Certificate in Adventure Leadership and Risk Management (Level 3)	86% (19/22)	100% (29/29)	94% (17/18)

For 2016 there was an average achievement rate of 99 per cent across three programmes, which is a growth of five percentage points (from 94 per cent) from 2015. Adventure Works is currently tracking positively toward the achievement rates of previous years. The management of Adventure Works describes the variations in achievement across years – and reasons for non-completion of all credits toward a training scheme – as the result of changes in student attitudes (which are managed by the schools) or personal changes in the student’s life such as moving out of town.

Students improve their wellbeing and enhance their abilities and attributes. Positive relationships and communication are developed among learners. Behavioural changes occur in and between learners during the programme, such as stronger and more trusting social connections with peers, improved teamwork and friendships. The students become aware of these changes on completion of the course when they return to school. These changes are also observed by teachers

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 Actual completion divided by overall participation.

in the school, and comparisons are made to previous behaviours and social improvements after students have completed the programme. Relationships and interactions between students undergo positive changes.

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

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**.

Learners acquire meaningful skills and knowledge, and gain self-confidence and communication skills that assist the growth of relationships with school peers. Adventure Works uses a value framework to focus on four types of growth and development for students: personal, interpersonal, curriculum, and future work. This framework informs effective programme design and delivery. For example, the Challenge by Choice philosophy facilitates achievement based on the student's own comfort and limitations around factors such as heights. All achievements are celebrated by teams, and learners gain self-confidence as a result. Accordingly, personal resilience, achievement and growth are enhanced and encouraged. Summative assessments such as a journal are used to identify and measure the personal growth that students achieve during the programme. While the programmes are only four days in length, daily reflections by students and instructors identify achievements, challenges and personal goals.

Learners gain technical, social and interpersonal skills that develop their cognitive abilities. Learners gain skills in the physical preparation of ropes, and the health and safety aspects of this activity. These skills build trust between the students, which later strengthens relationships that continue in the school environment.

The programme contributes to the achievement of credits toward NCEA. Adventure Works collaborates with schools, and the learning from the training schemes contributes to the health and physical education curriculum in schools. This is supported by the formalisation of delivery arrangements between Adventure Works and each school. Consequently, the programmes contribute to the overall NCEA achievement for students who may not otherwise attain the necessary credits in the 'normal' school setting.

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

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

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

Programmes are purposefully designed to align to the priorities of the provider, and to meet the needs of stakeholders, including students. Student safety is at the centre of programme design and is effectively integrated into teaching and learning. Adventure Works has developed a strategy to ensure that learners develop leadership skills, which are embedded and realised incrementally throughout the programmes. The learning activities are planned and structured to enable health and safety and leadership skills to be recognised, such as progression from generic team-building games to specific trust-building exercises. School and graduate feedback suggests that this helps students to build friendships and confidence in each other.

Programme planning is effectively informed by stakeholder feedback. Ongoing communication and advice from stakeholders helps programmes maintain relevance to the sector. While similar programmes by other providers are run over three days, Adventure Works is committed to a four-day programme to give sufficient time for learners to achieve all of the desired outcomes at a quality level, and to consolidate leadership skills. Adventure Works is also sufficiently flexible to modify the courses depending on individual needs, group needs or school needs. Annual feedback from stakeholders informs improvements to delivery in subsequent programmes, such as the integration of achievement standards as a programme objective. As a result, stakeholder needs are met, and the programmes enable quality outcomes for learners.

Facilitation skills and the experience of staff are monitored through regular team debriefs with lead instructors, predominantly for their technical skills. Adventure Works has a clear and effective system to ensure its desired set of core skills – technical, facilitation and assessment – are monitored to inform facilitator effectiveness. These lead into an annual performance review and inform professional development such as familiarisation with courses like STAR and techniques like the ropes courses. Increased competencies and training lead to an employment pathway for staff – from assistant, to instructor, to lead facilitator.

Assessment is supported by external (Skills Active) and internal individual and group pre- and post-moderation processes that respond well to necessary changes such as improvements to assessment activities and tools. This has added clarity of expectations for students undertaking assessment activities. Although the courses are short, assessment activities provide students and facilitators with useful

feedback on their progress, which is tracked through reflective journals and reported to the schools.

The programmes delivered by Adventure Works meet the needs of stakeholders and students. Adventure Works has initiated future planning including further programme development with the possibility of attracting additional funding streams. Strengthening of internal capability and knowledge of NZQA requirements will support programme development and future plans for growth.

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

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 **Good**.

Systems are in place to respond to the health and safety and wellbeing needs of students. Adventure Works works with schools to ensure that the pastoral, academic and health and safety needs of students are catered for while they are part of the programmes. These arrangements are formalised and commit Adventure Works and schools to work collaboratively and provide a safe environment with sufficient and appropriate supervision and resources and effective communication. As a result, a supervising teacher monitors the pastoral care and safety and learning needs of the students, while Adventure Works delivers the activities and assessments in a health and safety-compliant environment.

The level of student confidence and comfort is assessed appropriately through the delivery of the programme. The Challenge by Choice philosophy supports an inclusive learning environment where all comfort levels and achievements of all students – with regard to heights and other risk-based activities – are accepted and celebrated. This is helped by small group sizes with a 1:10 facilitator to student ratio whereby facilitators can observe the students' needs and support required. These activities are supported by policies and procedures and an effective and thorough incident reporting system which ensures the safety of all students and minimises the barriers to learning. These safety measures are made evident in the identification and monitoring of all hazards prior, during and after activities.

Student learning and progression are tracked and monitored and inform developments in the programme for subsequent cohorts. For a four-day programme, a student learning journal is the primary source of evidence which enables the facilitator to track and identify support needed, and the progression of outcomes. A pre- and post-programme self-reflection exercise illustrates the qualitative learning by students, and in particular their personal achievements and shifts in attitudes. In addition, a feedback mechanism at day two identifies progress and risk factors of non-completion. Progress and risk factors are discussed with

relevant staff and students, and appropriate actions are initiated in collaboration with schools, such as making up training missed, or withdrawal. Students are supported and are involved in their learning, such as gaining technical skills and confidence.

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

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

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

A small governance and management team guides the organisation with a clear purpose and direction. This is strategic, future thinking and involves stakeholder conversations. As part of this future thinking, Adventure Works registered as a private training establishment in 2015 with the intention of applying for government funding to enable it to enrol adult students and expand the scale of its business for greater viability.

As indicated in 1.3, Adventure Works has commenced planning for expansion and growth of delivery, such as working toward the development of a training scheme. As such, Adventure Works will benefit from building internal capability with the expertise and knowledge around NZQA rules and requirements, including for programme development.

Networks are maintained within the sector, and are highly regarded by stakeholders for the knowledge and skills that the programmes, leadership and staff possess and contribute to the outdoors adventure industry. This is supported by formal and regular communication, and through meetings and correspondence that feeds information into programme improvements.

Staff are experienced and qualified, and supported by management. The facilitators and the effectiveness of their instruction are monitored and the results fed back to staff. The small team enables easy communication between staff and management. The staff community is supported with quarterly staff newsletters, group moderation and training days, peer technical attestations and regular meetings and communication. Contracted facilitators have access to training similar to part-time employees. This results in a valued community of staff and consistent understanding of expectations and practice by all full-time, part-time and contracted facilitators.

Adventure Works supports and encourages a culture of reflective practice. The organisation is supported by a continual improvement plan, a risk management plan, documented processes and procedures, and systems to identify and mitigate safety hazards. The primary focus of student and staff health and safety is a platform for regular reviewing of facilitator practice and improvement. Affiliations and

accreditations such as OutdoorsMarks New Zealand³, Project Adventure New Zealand Aotearoa⁴ gives assurance around the physical sites, their use and the safety of the users. Adventure Works responds effectively to change and continuously looks for new opportunities for development, such as changes to and in collaboration with the Duke of Edinburgh Hillary Award Adventurous Journey programme. Discussion are currently underway about these developments. Ongoing internal reviews through facilitator and student feedback and meetings also identify developments such as the inclusion and integrated language around 'whānau' for the diverse groups such as teen parents.

Adventure Works ensures ongoing and robust external and internal audit processes for teaching and learning and safety. Programmes and practice are revised, recorded in policies, and regularly reported to governance and management. Health and safety compliance is effectively managed, and while governance and management supports educational attainment, education compliance is still being developed and monitored with NZQA.

The memorandums of understanding with individual schools are adequately managed and monitored by management. The memorandum clearly set outs the academic, administrative, student assessment and moderation responsibilities given to Adventure Works, as well as the programme regulations, administrative and physical resources, and reporting of student achievement to the school. Policies, and ongoing communication with relevant school staff, ensure that the memorandums of understanding are applied appropriately. This results in positive working relationships and clear expectations by the schools and the provider, and smooth and supported programme delivery for the students.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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

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

Adventure Works' practices are legal and ethical, and supported by policies. Health and safety compliance matters are effectively managed by the organisation through ongoing internal and external monitoring processes such as audits. The core business of Adventure Works is to ensure that activities are undertaken in a health and safety-compliant environment. An internal and external monitoring system

³ National outdoor safety audit programme. See <http://www.outdoorsnz.org.nz/outdoorsmark/>

⁴ Developer of Challenge Ropes Courses, and designs, builds and inspects challenge ropes courses. See <http://panza.co.nz/>

ensures that policies and procedures, plans, equipment and staff competence are within the regulatory requirements of Worksafe New Zealand. Recent regular external audits by OutdoorsMark show that Adventure Works meets and conforms to safety audit standards in intention and practice.

As a newly registered private training establishment, Adventure Works is actively becoming familiar with and seeking advice around compliance requirements and NZQA rules. Where advised, and required, Adventure Works has responded effectively and promptly to requirements such as site approval and Code of Practice queries. Communication between NZQA and Adventure Works is ongoing.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Certificate in Personal Development (Level 2) and Certificate in Adventure Leadership and Risk Management (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 **Good**.

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Adventure Works continue to develop their knowledge and capability around the organisation's responsibilities as an NZQA-registered provider.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013, which are 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.

Self-assessment and participation in external evaluation and review are requirements for maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities. The requirements are set through the NZQF Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2013, which 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.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review, in accordance with the External Evaluation and Review Rules (EER) 2013, as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2013 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 and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013.

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).

The External Evaluation and Review (EER) Rules 2013 are available at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/Rules/EER-Rules.pdf>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>.

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