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External Evaluation and Review Report

English Language Partners New
Zealand Trust

Date of report: 20 December 2019

About English Language Partners New Zealand Trust

English Language Partners New Zealand Trust (English Language Partners) is a charitable trust which supports former refugees and migrants to participate successfully in all aspects of life in New Zealand through delivery of English language programmes. The organisation has 23 centres across New Zealand.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 7 Ranchhod Tower, 39 The Terrace, Wellington
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	5,906 domestic students at the time of the EER
Number of staff:	41 full-time, 328 part-time, and 1,700 volunteer home tutors
TEO profile:	See NZQA website: English Language Partners
Last EER outcome:	Highly Confident in educational performance Confident in capability in self-assessment
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) (Level 1 and Level 2) delivered in Porirua and Bay of Plenty centres• ESOL¹ Literacy Programme delivered in Auckland South centre• Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring (Training Scheme) and ESOL Home Tutoring Programme delivered in Bay of Plenty
MoE number:	8067
NZQA reference:	C36643
Dates of EER visit:	15-17 October 2019

¹ English for Speakers of Other Languages

Summary of Results

English Language Partners is a supportive and dedicated organisation which is contributing to the effective settlement of former refugees and migrants into New Zealand. This is achieved by relevant and tailored programme design, quality teaching, appropriate student support, and a committed governance structure. Self-assessment practice informs improvements, although could be strengthened across all local centres to ensure best use of achievement data, feedback and the impact of strategies.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- While achievement is generally strong across all focus areas, growth in confidence in using English in daily life is the most important measure of achievement in this context.
- The value of outcomes is life-changing for learners in helping to support the process of settlement in New Zealand.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- The most important needs of learners are understood, addressed and met. The support students receive is appropriately tailored for former refugees and migrants.
- Strong working relationships with key stakeholders in the community positively impact the student experience.
- The governance body is committed to the alignment of the very clear vision, mission and values of the organisation.
- The PTE's evaluative self-assessment framework is a robust framework informing evaluation activities. However, this is not yet fully implemented across all local centres or programmes.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The majority of the delivery at English Language Partners does not normally lead to a qualification (see 2.1 and 2.3 for exceptions). However, students achieve at a high rate in relevant areas of assessment, and the Tertiary Education Commission-funded programmes are meeting achievement targets.</p> <p>Beginning as goals and objectives, other outcomes for students are well met, such as growth in confidence to use English. These are considered as important to students and tutors as academic achievement in this context (see 1.2). In the context of adult and community learning, part-time students are achieving very well, with 94 per cent from the NZCEL reporting that their English had improved in 2018. This is consistent with achievement data from previous years.</p> <p>Learner progress summaries are used to measure student goals, achievement and progress on the outcomes framework for most programmes. A newly introduced student management system allows analysis of real-time data across all centres by management. However, data analysis could be improved in some areas by use of representative sampling and by developing centre staff capability to interpret performance data for their use locally.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Students achieve well across all programmes and make significant gains in their English language development. Collection and collation of achievement data is occurring in some places and is linked to teaching and learning strategies.</p>

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

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Outcomes of the programmes are linked to the PTE's vision, purpose and strategy to support the settlement of former refugees and migrants into New Zealand. Students gain confidence in using English and become more independent. Students value the social participation, enabling community engagement and the ability to make friends.</p> <p>Learning and developing vocabulary helps students to achieve tasks in day-to-day life, for example calling the doctor, catching the bus, or helping children with homework. For students taking the NZCEL, pathwaying to higher-level English study and/or gaining employment is both a positive and achievable outcome. In some special cases, participation in the programmes at English Language Partners is their first exposure, or the first in a long time, to an educational setting.</p> <p>The value of outcomes is the life-changing aspect for former refugees and migrants who are settling into life in New Zealand. Feedback from stakeholders about the value of outcomes was overwhelmingly positive. English Language Partners works with community partners and other stakeholders, including volunteer home-based tutors, to provide services to various local communities. This strengthens these communities and provides opportunities for former refugees and migrants across New Zealand.</p> <p>The evaluative self-assessment framework supports the outcomes model which describes the PTE's aims and directs reporting of outcomes, as well as use of stakeholder feedback to inform change. Further to this, centre managers report on outcomes and stakeholder feedback on a monthly basis.</p>
Conclusion:	Outcomes identified are life-changing for students. The outcomes are also of value to community stakeholders, who work with English Language Partners to support former refugees and migrants to learn English for effective settlement in New Zealand.

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:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learning activities are relevant in engaging former refugee and migrants. Ongoing reflection on student needs informs support systems and modification of teaching and learning activities. The recent introduction of new technological support and online assessments has increased engagement and confidence among learners.</p> <p>Programmes are embedded within communities with a highly relevant programme design and modes of delivery for learners and community stakeholders. Internal moderation is also embedded across local centres, although staff understanding of the value of moderation for the improvement of assessment practices could be strengthened to ensure consistency nationally.</p> <p>English Language Partners maintains a culture of feedback across centres and at national level which informs programme design and development. Stakeholders are part of curriculum design, with use of community knowledge and feedback informing inputs and improvements.</p> <p>Systematic programme design systems and processes are occurring reliably across most programmes. The PTE understands how to use its processes well and national office provides support for implementation, which is embedded in some cases.</p> <p>Tutors understand the needs of their students well and are conscious of minimising barriers to learning and facilitating learning pathways. Development of literacy profiles for learners ensures student goals are being met and supported. English Language Partners has developed its own literacy assessment (Literacy Profiles) for students in the ESOL literacy programme as a tailored assessment tool.</p> <p>Learning environments are planned and structured for the benefit and needs of students; assessment of outcomes is also appropriate for the students. Most teaching staff undergo</p>

	<p>observations and use the evaluative self-assessment indicators as a developmental process and management tool for input into performance review. While these expected processes of academic leadership are apparent, there remain some inconsistencies across teaching practice and professional development.</p> <p>Student surveys confirm high student satisfaction. However, the methodology of design and collation of survey data needs improvement to ensure effective use.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Programme design and delivery are well matched to the needs of students and key stakeholders. Community partners are involved with the design and delivery in relevant areas. Assessment is appropriate for the context and language level of the students. While a good number of processes and academic activities are consistent and occurring systematically, including programme review and moderation, there is room for improvement.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>English Language Partners provides excellent support to students to engage in English practice to support their goals for settling into New Zealand life.</p> <p>Dedicated and competent staff support students both pastorally and academically with consideration of student wellbeing embedded in teaching practice across programmes. The value of outcomes (see 1.2) reflects the overall support provided to students and their ability to succeed and develop confidence in speaking English.</p> <p>English Language Partners maintains strong linkages and engagement with the community to work together to further support former refugees and migrants in the classroom, in the home, and in community contexts.</p> <p>The tutors have created safe and inclusive learning environments for former refugees and migrants to learn and proactively minimise barriers to learning. Learning goals are well</p>

	<p>understood by students across all the programmes evaluated.</p> <p>Tutors and other staff know their students very well and are able to meet their needs through appropriate relationship building.</p> <p>Ongoing reflection on student needs by centre staff and national office inform support systems and activities.</p>
Conclusion:	English Language Partners provides a supportive context, staff and clear learning goals which foster effective participation in social and community networks. Effective self-assessment practice enhances student support systems.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Since the last EER in 2015, English Language Partners has continually developed its operational environment. The organisational structure has recently amalgamated, with the national office in Wellington as the managing entity.</p> <p>English Language Partners operates an innovative and sustainable business model and responds to and anticipates change appropriately in the sector. Many developments have been implemented since the last EER. These include a new student management system and organisational strategies, including an information and communications technology strategy, a new business continuity plan, introduction of online assessments, and quality standard reviews.</p> <p>National office has clear oversight of achievement and strategies and maintains a monthly data tracking record system. Ongoing monitoring of centre performance and distribution of information occurs regularly.</p> <p>Governance and management key personnel have strong community and stakeholder relationships which support the success of the organisation and outcomes for students. While the committed governance body provides clear direction for organisational strategies, newly developed frameworks such as data analysis, the outcomes model and the teaching strategy are apparent but not necessarily used in practice across all local</p>

	centres. Staff are highly valued and respected, with a wellbeing strategy in place to support staff who drive the organisational purpose with clear passion. Sufficiently allocated resources support teaching and learning. English Language Partners has the capacity to introduce new programmes as required by demand.
Conclusion:	English Language Partners' organisational purpose is clear, with recently reviewed organisational statements. Local centres are running smoothly in the post-amalgamation environment. However, there remain some inconsistencies across teaching practice, and professional development self-assessment activities have not been fully filtered across all centres.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	English Language Partners has robust internal processes to monitor and manage important compliance responsibilities including NZQA rules and Tertiary Education Commission requirements. National office understands its compliance responsibilities and regularly reviews changes affecting the organisation. Governance reports regularly reflect developments in self-assessment practice and compliance activities. No significant legal or ethical issues were identified during the EER.
Conclusion:	English Language Partners has sufficient processes in place to effectively manage important compliance accountabilities.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: NZCEL level 1 and level 2

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students in NZCEL level 1 and level 2 are performing very well overall, with 90 and 93 per cent respectively completing in 2018 – the same rate as in previous years at the Porirua centre. Enrolments have been consistently increasing each year due to demand.</p> <p>At a national level, 84 per cent of NZCEL level 1 students completed in 2018 and 85 per cent completed level 2. Eighty-three per cent of NZCEL level 1 students who completed the programme also completed the qualification, with 92 per cent completing the qualification at level 2. Learning activities are generally relevant, with some room to improve. Strengthening of internal moderation could provide teaching and learning opportunities for staff.</p> <p>At the centres offering NZCEL, culturally relevant learning support is provided.</p>

2.2 Focus area: ESOL Literacy Programme

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Using the outcomes framework, achievement is measured by incremental progress in English language acquisition and development, growth in confidence, and the ability to settle into life in New Zealand.</p> <p>Students at the Auckland South centre are achieving very well in this regard. Incremental progress is appropriately monitored and tracked.</p> <p>The managers of the ESOL literacy programme at Auckland South are involved in all aspects of student progress. The</p>

	national outcomes model and teaching strategy are deeply ingrained within the programme.
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2.3 Focus area: Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring and ESOL Home Tutoring Programme

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The certificate is relevant and useful to students, and meets the needs of trainee tutors. The home tutor programme is specifically tailored for its context and purpose and is of benefit to home-based students.</p> <p>Students receiving home tutoring are achieving gains in English language acquisition. In 2018, 96 per cent of students receiving home tutoring reported that their English had improved, consistent with achievement data in previous years.</p> <p>While the certificate is not compulsory, with only 42 per cent of trainee tutors completing it in 2018³, trainee tutors value the experience and recognition of further training.</p> <p>While outcomes are strong, self-assessment processes seen in other focus areas such as the outcomes model and teaching strategy are not yet as evident or embedded within the certificate programme.</p>

³ Outcomes were 61 per cent in 2017 and 65 per cent in 2016.

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 English Language Partners Trust New Zealand:

- Consider tracking, collecting and analysing outcomes for the graduates in the Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring programme.
- Consider embedding systematic processes in the Certificate in ESOL Home Tutoring programme that will confirm the consistency of the programme and ensure oversight of the practicum component.
- Consider strengthening internal moderation to provide teaching and learning opportunities for staff of NZCEL levels 1 and 2.
- Consider strengthening inconsistencies in teaching observation practice across all centres.
- Consider ways to better collect and collate achievement and outcomes data to ensure it is linked to strategies and understood both nationally and locally at all centres.

Requirements

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

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

Appendix

Conduct of external evaluation and review

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

Disclaimer

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

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

- *Identify organisational fraud⁴*
- *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.*

⁴ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission 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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