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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Psychosynthesis Training
Programmes Ltd trading as Institute of
Psychosynthesis NZ

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 16 January 2018

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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:	Psychosynthesis Training Programmes Ltd, trading as the Institute of Psychosynthesis NZ ('the Institute')
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	1 October 1996
Location:	130 Remuera Road, Newmarket, Auckland
Delivery sites:	As above
Courses currently delivered:	Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling (Level 7)
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 15 (eight equivalent full-time students in 2016) Māori two (13 per cent), Pākehā 13 (87 per cent)
Number of staff:	11 (1.2 full-time equivalents)
Scope of active accreditation:	Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling (Level 7)
Distinctive characteristics:	The Institute is a small PTE specialising in psychosynthesis counselling and psychotherapy training. The Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling offers students a mix of theoretical knowledge, experiential learning and supervised clinical practice. The students attend weekend block courses, receive individual supervision, participate in personal therapy and complete written

academic assignments. The programme has three tiers:

1. Tier One is an intensive introductory course (70 hours)
2. Tier Two is a part-time foundation course offered over 12 months (264 hours)
3. Tier Three is part-time course offered over 16 months (1,124 hours).

Individual students may exit after each tier. Tier One and Two offer individual personal development. Tier Three prepares the diploma graduates 'to work as effective and safe psychosynthesis counsellors'. The Institute receives no external funding support. Graduates of the above qualification can pathway to a Diploma in Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy. This is not a listed NZQA qualification. The qualification enables graduates to gain registration as a psychotherapist from the Psychotherapist Board of Aotearoa New Zealand and membership of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists.

Recent significant changes: The New Zealand Association of Counsellors (the key professional body for counsellors) announced that from the beginning of 2019 new members will require an undergraduate degree in counselling.¹ The Institute has decided not to revise its current diploma programme to meet this new industry requirement. The Institute has informed NZQA and other affected parties that it will cancel its registration from 31 December 2018, when the current Tier Three student cohort will complete their module. The last student intake took place in September 2015.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The lead evaluator reviewed a range of documents that the Institute had submitted, as well as NZQA-held data. A scoping meeting took place with the two directors at the registered head office. The sole NZQA-approved programme, the Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling (Level 7), was selected as the focus area.

¹ Currently a level 6 diploma is the membership requirement.

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.*

Before the site visit, the lead evaluator interviewed by phone: the external moderator; a clinical psychologist; two graduates of the Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling and one of whom is a current student of the Diploma in Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy. Two evaluators conducted the on-site visit over one day. Interviews were conducted with the two directors, two teachers and 11 Tier Three students. A range of documents were reviewed including: a self-assessment summary; a survey of 2014-2017 graduates; annual programme reviews; and sample evaluations of students' performance completed by the student, their supervisor and their therapist and reviewed by the directors.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>. 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 fraud²*
- *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.*

² 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.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance and **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of the **Institute of Psychosynthesis NZ**.

The Institute has clearly identified and is meeting the most important needs of its students and key stakeholders. The organisation is highly reflective, using consistent-quality self-assessment information to make robust decisions informed by evidence and values, to support excellent educational performance. The key points supporting these judgments are:

- Nearly all the enrolled students have completed the three tiers of the programme. Graduates develop the capability to work as 'effective and safe psychosynthesis counsellors' and become eligible for membership of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors.³ Nearly all the 2014-2017 graduates (22 out of 25) are working as counsellors. Client wellbeing benefits significantly from working with effective and safe counsellors. Through participating on the programme, the students' own personal development has been enhanced.
- The Institute delivers a well-rounded programme which matches the needs of its students and stakeholders. Capable teachers, with their own counselling practices, deliver a programme that is a blend of academic and reflective experiential learning, which effectively prepares the students for the demands of a modern counselling practice. The PTE comprehensively assesses the ability of the students to apply their learning with clients under professional supervision. The students are effectively 'held' by the wrap-around support from the directors, teachers, supervisors, therapists and their fellow students, enabling nearly all students to complete their studies. The organisation manages its compliance accountabilities well.
- The two directors ably lead the organisation, informed by a psychosynthesis world view and values. Clear and formal procedures support consistent, compliant and ethical performance. A core resource and foundation of the Institute is a highly reflective culture evident across all activities. Students are taught to regularly reflect on their personal experiences and progress, supported by ongoing feedback from the directors, teachers, supervisors, therapists and their fellow students. These stakeholders also provide continuing feedback on the effectiveness of the programme through formal and informal self-assessment processes including: student evaluations, robust peer moderation, professional development and the programme reviews. This reflective practice was well illustrated in considering the major implications of the new membership requirements of the New Zealand Association of

³ See TEO in context for further details.

Counsellors which come into force in 2019. After consultation, the directors made the considered decision in January 2017 to request the cancellation of NZQA registration and close the Institute at the end of 2018.

Findings⁴

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**.

The Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling is delivered in three tiers. Students enrol in Tier One and Two for personal development, where they acquire foundational knowledge, which some build on in Tier Three, to gain the full qualification. The overall educational achievement of the students is exemplary for 2013-2017.

Table 1. Tier module completion rate of the Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling for 2013-2017

Year	Completion/enrolment		
	Tier One	Tier Two	Tier Three
2013			13/20 (65%)
2014	38/38 (100%)	23/27 (85%)	
2015	36/36 (100%)	30/30 (100%)	16/17 (94%)
2016 ⁵	-	-	(20 enrolled/still in progress)
2017 ⁵	-	-	

Source: Institute of Psychosynthesis data

Nearly all students meet the educational requirements to complete the three individual modules. The completions of the Tier Three module have increased. These generally high completion rates are a continuation of a similar pattern noted in the last EER report for 2010-2013. The students are gaining meaningful psychological knowledge and skills and developing appropriate attitudes and professional values. The Institute has an in-depth understanding of the achievement of the individual students and each small cohort. This achievement information is actively monitored and effectively used to support individuals to progress in their studies. Assessment and moderation practices are robust and relevant to the context of this counselling programme. The evaluators are therefore confident in the reliability of the educational results being achieved.

⁴ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

⁵ There have been no new enrolments since the beginning of 2016 as the Institute will close at the end of 2018 (See TEO in Context). Only Tier Three is yet to complete.

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**.

The students and key stakeholders have gained outcomes of high value. The primary outcome is that the graduates are 'able to work as effective and safe psychosynthesis counsellors'.⁶ There is a range of convincing evidence that this outcome is being consistently achieved. The education results, based on sound assessment, confirm the professional capability the graduates have developed. Detailed feedback gathered from all recent graduates eloquently describes how the training has enabled them to work effectively and safely with their counselling clients. Industry stakeholders agree that the graduates work effectively and safely as counsellors as a result of the robust training they have received. Gaining the diploma enables graduates to become members of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, providing them with industry recognition which can be vital for gaining work or operating a counselling practice.⁷ Finally, of the 25 graduates for the period 2014-2017, 22 (88 per cent) are currently working as counsellors with clients. Counselling clients are primary stakeholders, and having effective and safe counsellors supports their wellbeing.⁸

Other important outcomes are that all the students interviewed and graduates who gave feedback found the programme had significantly supported their own personal development. As part of their studies, students provide counselling services under strict supervision. Nine graduates since 2012 have gone on to complete the Institute's Diploma in Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy⁹, further enhancing their professional capability. The contribution of both directors to psychotherapy training has been formally recognised with their receiving a Distinguished Service Award from the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists. The Institute has formally created knowledge through some of its teachers publishing in relevant journals.

⁶ This is the formal graduate profile of the Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling (Level 7).

⁷ From the beginning of 2019, applicants seeking to be a member of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors will require an undergraduate degree in counselling. The current students of the Institute who graduate in 2018 will be eligible for membership.

⁸ The Institute is clear that it is not ethically appropriate to seek feedback from these clients.

⁹ This is not an NZQA-approved qualification but has industry recognition (see TEO in context).

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 **Excellent**.

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

The Institute delivers a well-rounded programme which matches well the needs of its students and stakeholders. The part-time block course structure suits students who are in work and not living in Auckland. Respected and capable trainers, who have a counselling qualification and significant clinical practice experience, deliver the programme. The directors are formally trained teachers, while others have participated in a two-year apprenticeship, where they have observed and then worked under the mentorship of more experienced colleagues. The programme is academically robust, with students acquiring theoretical knowledge that they apply in their supervised professional practice. The assessment practices are sound, with the peer moderation approach supporting robust discussion about the assessments being reviewed. Students that were interviewed were clear about what was expected, had received detailed feedback on their assignments, and most had been required to resubmit an assignment to meet the academic standards.

Experiential learning is a core component of the programme. All students are required to participate in personal therapy and group supervision sessions. They must also undertake 200 hours of clinical practice under formal supervision. Students, graduates, industry stakeholders and teachers are all clear that a blend of academic learning and reflective experiential learning is essential to effectively prepare the students for the demands of a modern counselling practice. Some graduates and stakeholders had knowledge or experience of similar training and viewed this programme as superior or at least equal to those other programmes.

Students are required to comprehensively demonstrate their applied competency. Periodically, each student formally self-evaluates their progress; their therapist, supervisor and teachers also provide written feedback on their performance and the directors review this information face to face with each student. A clear, ethically based and formal holistic judgment is made about whether the student is competent to progress to the next stage of learning and work effectively and safely with clients. Issues that need to be addressed are identified in these reviews, although ongoing observation, reflection and feedback to the students are also an integral part of programme delivery. Teachers, students and supervisors reflecting on their experience is an embedded part of the organisation's practice which supports ongoing improvements. The programme is formally reviewed and content periodically revised. This was recently done, for example, to address emerging social issues that may present with clients, such as queer identity or the use of social media. Teachers are required to participate in relevant professional

development, observation is an integral part of co-teaching and co-facilitating, and all teachers are under professional supervision.

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 **Excellent**.

The Institute effectively supports its students to develop personally and professionally, and nearly all complete their studies. Participating in a programme of this kind poses some inherent personal and emotional risks. The students interviewed are clear that they have 'been well held' throughout the programme, that is, an emotional/psychological safety net is provided that supports their personal development and academic learning. Pastoral care is a core part of the identity of the Institute and integrated into programme delivery. Students learn about caring for the self and appropriately supporting their peers. The teachers are relational and empathetic, drawing on their own clinical experience and informed by clear professional ethical codes. The students are also supported through personal therapy and professional supervision. This is a resilient wrap-around support network.

Many of these pastoral processes have a formalised structure, including the periodic student evaluations where the needs of individual students are reviewed. The evaluators noted various cases where the Institute has been flexible in responding to the circumstances of individual students, while maintaining academic standards. The key signs of the support being effective are the high completion rates, the significant personal development and learning that has taken place, and the students' and graduates' high regard for the teachers and the quality of the support they have received. The process of closing the Institute is being well managed, ensuring current students have not been disadvantaged and are able to complete their studies.

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

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

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

The key purpose of the Institute as a registered private training establishment is to support the development and learning of its students, so those who enrol on the Tier Three module can 'integrate a psychosynthesis framework and methodology' into 'their professional practice' and 'work as effective and safe psychosynthesis

counsellors'. There is convincing evidence identified through this EER (as for the last EER report covering the period 2010-2013) that the leadership has been effective in achieving this organisational objective.

A range of activities and processes, many already noted in this report, have contributed to the Institute's high performance. The able leadership of the two directors has been a key contributor, informed by a psychosynthesis world view and its associated values. Academic standards and reflective experiential learning have been core principles on which a well-rounded and effective training programme has been developed. Supporting and enhancing student wellbeing has also been central to the educational approach adopted. Clear and formal procedures have supported consistent, compliant and ethical performance. The directors have attracted, retained and supported capable teachers who have significantly contributed to this goal. Another key resource of the Institute is a highly reflective culture evident across all activities. Students have been supported and taught active and regular reflection on personal experiences to improve their personal wellbeing and professional capability. The Institute personnel have modelled this approach by authentically and robustly reflecting on the performance of students, teachers and the leadership, informed by the core values and vision of the Institute. This reflective practice was well illustrated in the thorough approach taken to assessing the implications of the new membership requirements of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors which come into force in 2019.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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**.

The Institute has strong commitment to and awareness of acting ethically in all areas, including meeting its key compliance accountabilities. The organisation has clear roles and responsibilities and well-established and formalised processes and procedures in place to ensure compliance. An example is maintaining the privacy of the sensitive information that the Institute holds about its students. Similarly, there are clear behavioural codes of conduct which are actively monitored, and modelling compliant professional practice to the students.

NZQA records for the past seven years show the Institute has not had:

- any risk issues associated with the organisation
- any significant lapses in submitting its annual declarations and attestations to NZQA.

The Institute is aware of and has effectively managed the scheduling and delivery of the required number of hours of its sole NZQA-approved programme, the Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling. There are sound assessment and

moderation practices in place. Capable teaching staff have been engaged. The sampling undertaken during this EER enquiry has identified no important programme compliance gaps.

The Institute has proactively responded to the New Zealand Institute of Counsellors changing its membership criteria. The Institute has considered carefully the NZQA compliance implications of its plan to close and has given NZQA extended notice of its plan to cancel its registration. The directors have informed the evaluators that the Institute has not and is not facing any significant ethical and legal issues. The evaluators have concluded that the Institute has managed well its important compliance accountabilities.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counselling (Level 7)

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

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

Recommendations

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

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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