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External Evaluation and Review Report

Ventia NZ Operations Limited

Date of report: 30 January 2023

About Ventia NZ Operations Limited

Ventia NZ Operations Limited (Ventia Training) is a private training provider within an organisation of the same name, with a focus on developing its own employees. Ventia Training delivers a training scheme and select unit standards related to essential infrastructure services.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	8 Hereford St, Freemans Bay, Newmarket, Auckland
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 123 students are undertaking the training scheme ¹ , out of a total of 150-280 students; this includes those working on discrete unit standards outside the scope of the training scheme.
Number of staff:	Three full-time equivalents, six part-time staff
TEO profile:	Ventia NZ Operations In 2020, the organisation underwent a change of ownership from Broadspectrum (New Zealand) Limited to Ventia NZ Operations Limited. Several key leadership roles have been retained.
Last EER outcome:	At the previous EER, conducted on 27 and 28 November 2018, NZQA was Highly Confident in Broadspectrum's educational performance and Confident in the PTE's capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	Training Scheme – Safe Operation of Elevating Work Platforms [116946]
MoE number:	8476
NZQA reference:	C50986
Dates of EER virtual enquiry:	15 and 16 November 2022

¹¹ As at 15 September 2022

Summary of results

Ventia Training delivers high-value short courses which contribute to the safe delivery of essential infrastructure services throughout New Zealand. Since the last EER, new ownership and governance have met and responded to some gaps and put in place strategies to lift and further develop educational performance.

There is evidence of a move towards more reflective and evaluative self-assessment methodologies underpinned by accurate and robust data. While improvements are highly positive, they have not yet demonstrated ongoing, exceptional educational performance.

Confident in educational performance

- Pass rates are high. Students' acquisition of skills and knowledge is of high value to Ventia, customers and the students.
- Course content is relevant and the usefulness of training delivery is endorsed by the students. The embedded training model supports the acquisition of theory that underpins the safe application of skills in working with elevated work platforms.
- Variability in moderation outcomes has led to a greater focus on supporting and guiding trainers/assessors. Upskilling of staff in general and effective needs analysis are positive outcomes of the transition to Ventia NZ Operations, and are currently being embedded across the training organisation.

Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Data analysis has improved since the last EER. There is some measurement of cohort-driven performance results that are being extended to cover Māori and Pasifika cohorts and students with specific learning needs. This recording of data is very recent and is yet to be analysed for any useful conclusions to be drawn.
- Self-assessment is mostly effective and provides useful insights into performance. There is evidence of improved processes as a result of self-review.

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- Governance and leadership are highly effective and there is strong alignment with the tertiary evaluation indicators and with the wider organisational strategy.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Almost all students are successful in their training and achieve the necessary unit standards to fulfil industry employment requirements. This is in line with other providers of short course/training schemes with an associated compliance requirement. Students generally have preparatory knowledge of the on-job requirements, and all are employees of Ventia.</p> <p>Ventia Training uses the recording and tracking of safety incidents as a performance indicator. This and other relevant performance data – for example, reasons for withdrawal or non-completion – are recorded and tracked on dashboards. Management and governance oversee the data monthly and respond accordingly. Currently, the reporting of incidents is on the rise. However, Ventia Training said this is a common feature of improved awareness around managing health and safety in the workplace, and they are expecting the incidence to decline. The number of students undertaking the training scheme is also declining, due in part to staff having already achieved the required competencies.</p> <p>Data analysis is sound. Staff provided convincing commentary that supports confidence in their understanding of data and commitment to self-assessment. Data is collected and presented at the individual and cohort levels. Ventia Training is currently tracking ethnicity at the commencement of training as this is not done by the company on employment. Correspondingly, there is some variability in the ethnicity data. In addition, there is some inconsistency in the historic reporting of performance data to governance. New systems and staff are now managing reporting well.</p> <p>External moderation results were conducted by Connexis and latterly, Waihanga Ara Rau (the Workforce Development Council for construction and infrastructure). They identified</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.

	some gaps in assessment design and delivery. This is further explained in 1.3. These moderation outcomes reduce the strength of this key evaluation question. Nonetheless, the improved oversight by key staff on human resources and investment in another staff member to support quality assurance processes are positive steps taken by Ventia Training.
Conclusion:	<p>Pass rates are high. While moderation results have flagged some issues, the highly positive employment-related outcomes indicated by stakeholders supports a strong rating for this key evaluation question.</p> <p>Improvements in self-assessment are evident. However, many of the initiatives are recent and are yet to yield results that are informing improvements.</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 training at Ventia Training is of high value. It supports the successful and safe delivery of high-risk and strategically important contracts. An educated, knowledgeable and skilled workforce who have gained unit standards and recognised qualifications gives Ventia Training a competitive edge in the market and is considered essential to successful contract bids.</p> <p>Ventia Training stakeholders are confident that the PTE employs staff who have the requisite work task competencies to meet their contractual requirements. While the training is specialised to Ventia NZ Operations, and often not widely commercially available, the skills and attributes gained by their students are very transportable and valued by other employers.</p> <p>Students interviewed attested to the rigour of the training process and compared Ventia Training favourably with other options. Survey data also indicates high levels of satisfaction with the training received. Ventia Training recently started gathering data after the training on students' gains in confidence. The PTE intends to undertake further longitudinal studies using known methodologies for evaluating and assessing</p>

	<p>performance. The knowledge and application of evaluative methodologies to guide self-assessment is a strong feature of the organisation.</p> <p>Ventia Training continues to be well informed and connected to key stakeholders.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Training is highly relevant to the industries that Ventia Training works within. Students gain required work task competencies to retain employment and meet contractual obligations. Students value the safe learning environment. Self-assessment of value is effective and is being further enhanced with the use of evaluation methodologies.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>There is a strategic, well thought-out process of programme and training provision which responds to organisational need and is relevant to the sector. There is also evidence that Ventia Training considers and responds to its stakeholders during programme review. For example, industry feedback determined the removal of one elective unit standard from the training scheme and the retention of another due to a perceived increase in contract compliance training.</p> <p>Training is based on unit standards, a credentialling approach that is highly valued by the industry and provides students with transportable skills when moving employers. The course structure ensures a balance of practical observations underpinned by theory, reducing the potential for unsafe practice. Training plans and version-controlled assessments are held in a shared digital platform.</p> <p>All training is supervised, and the role of the trainer/assessor is to observe and provide feedback on the students' ability to perform tasks aligned to specific performance criteria. Students interviewed said the feedback is clear and useful. There are opportunities to re-sit assessments should the student be</p>

	<p>deemed not yet competent. This process is well overseen by Ventia Training.</p> <p>The appointment and oversight of trainers and assessors is well managed. All trainers/assessors must meet an organisation verification and approval standard, which answers industry and sector requirements.</p> <p>There has been some inconsistency in assessment practice identified by Waihanga Ara Rau since the last EER, including using expired assessment versions, needing more evidence to support assessment decisions, and more clarity around identifying re-assessment opportunities. Ventia Training responded swiftly to these gaps in performance by providing targeted professional development to trainers/assessors and improving the collection of evidence, as represented in the moderation improvement plan and the continuous improvement plan. Ventia Training is now looking to internally review the latest round of moderated work to evaluate the effectiveness of improvements.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Training design and delivery is effective in meeting stakeholder needs. Resources are relevant, useful and engage learners, and there is a focus on delivering training in a safe way that benefits all stakeholders. There is a clear process of programme review, which extends to supporting and improving trainer and assessor best practice.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Ventia Training is undertaking an organisation-wide training needs analysis, with the emphasis on providing what is wanted and needed.</p> <p>Barriers to participation are reduced through on-job learning and use of familiar work sites. The lower employment participation rates for Māori, Pasifika and women are an industry-wide issue. Ventia Training staff are contributing to an organisation-wide response to this issue. Strategies are being developed for focused recruitment to increase employment of these cohorts.</p>

Final

	<p>Students appreciated the accessibility of the training – which is done on site – and the benefit of having recognised staff to train them and support their learning. Feedback on trainer/assessors is gathered and aggregated at the completion of each training course. The numbers of students engaging in the survey have increased since the introduction of a digital methodology. However, there is an opportunity for Ventia Training to disaggregate the data further – this will allow them to track programme-specific information more clearly. Students interviewed were positive about the clarity of feedback they received from the trainers, particularly around the practical on-job training. Students also said they felt safe during training, and that Ventia Training had systems and resources that protected them from accidents that may occur in a high-risk workplace.</p> <p>The student handbook provides clarity around competency training and assessment requirements. This key document is currently under review after the recent Code of Practice self-review suggested areas for improvement. This includes identifying and supporting students with special needs or disabilities. Currently, Ventia Training relies on students either self-identifying special learning needs such as literacy and numeracy support, or on trainer assessors picking up on any learning deficit.</p> <p>Trainers share different approaches to learning and strategies to support these students at their monthly meetings. Ventia Training is putting in place improved processes to identify and support these students; this includes a literacy and numeracy test on application. Also under consideration is enabling students access to wellbeing support and capturing student feedback more effectively.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Students are well supported and guided through their learning journey. Some good initiatives have been implemented since the last EER, some quite recently. The impact and effectiveness of these initiatives is yet to be seen and responded to.</p>

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

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Ventia NZ Operations is led by an astute and experienced governance and management team who capably align the purpose of training with organisational values. One of these values is, 'Putting safety and wellbeing above all else'. Ensuring this value is upheld requires staff to be competent and well trained by a pool of highly experienced, knowledgeable leaders. Ventia NZ Operations has invested heavily in leadership training since the last EER, one of the many significant changes to training operations since acquiring Broadspectrum.</p> <p>Ventia has a clear system of human resources performance management, with core measures and objectives identified and a development plan attached. New Zealand training leaders are being upskilled and supported by corporate managers and there has been recent further investment in administrative staffing to support the training leader. An example of improved leadership proficiency is the training leader's development of reporting dashboards. This fit-for-purpose initiative is soon to be rolled out to other parts of the organisation.</p> <p>The leadership of the trainers and assessors and the consistency of their practice has been one of the biggest leadership challenges to date. However, the EER team saw evidence of effective and managed change held in dashboards and improvement plans. Trainers/assessors are reviewed annually. There was evidence of leadership discussions and decisions over any decline in assessing performance, with professional development opportunities to support improved practice.</p> <p>In response to a recommendation of the last EER, there has been a focus on improving the quality of data and reporting, now aided by a comprehensive learning management system. Ventia Training has clear aggregated and disaggregated performance data available in real time, which is reviewed monthly by governance. Developments and new initiatives are supported through data analysis and are needs-based. Relevant stakeholders contribute to and inform decisions, for example the</p>

	<p>training scheme programme review. A comprehensive meeting schedule involves all staff and is well evidenced.</p> <p>After the takeover by Ventia NZ Operations, some changes in staff and the operating model have resulted in some transitional problems, such as inconsistency in data sets reported to governance and some variable communication with key regulators – NZQA and the Workforce Development Council (WDC). Contacts and regular communication have recently been re-established with some positive outcomes and clarity around next steps, such as establishing micro-credentials and retiring unit standards that have not been used.</p>
Conclusion:	Ventia NZ Operations’ governance and management are forward looking and reflective, using self-assessment activities to support their educational purpose. Some processes and policies are only recently implemented. As a result, the outcomes are less evident.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Ventia Training guides operations against 16 standards and policies, stored and shared with all staff on a document control system. The policies are regularly reviewed as part of the total quality management plan, which is Ventia’s methodology for monitoring training activities to ensure compliance accountabilities are met, reviewed and improved.</p> <p>Non-compliances or areas for improvement are recorded and reported monthly to governance. Staff accountability and timelines are closely monitored, with follow-up actions in place. Meeting and management documents sampled by the EER team showed an effective structure of managing compliance accountability in place.</p> <p>Ventia Training must meet all industry requirements included in ISO certification. Industry compliance with health and safety legislation is a key focus for Ventia Training and is overseen by a dedicated team. Staff capability, accountability and benchmarks around trainer assessor qualifications are essential</p>

	<p>to maintaining compliance with national industry standards. All trainers and assessors must be authorised as per a trainer and assessor verification process.</p> <p>Compliance with some NZQA and WDC accountabilities has been historically variable in performance. There have been some ongoing issues with managing a timely and accurate submission of assessment plans to NZQA for moderation, along with some unsatisfactory moderation results. There has also been some repeated late reporting of unit standard credits to NZQA. These problems now appear to have been resolved, and systems to support further performance are now in place. However, evidence of their effectiveness is yet to be seen.</p> <p>NZQA’s monitoring of Ventia’s review process for the training scheme, undertaken in October 2021, concluded that Ventia Training had effective systems of review, including improved reporting and improved data synthesis. The EER team concluded that this positive result mitigates some of the earlier performance issues.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Ventia Training has sound systems in place to manage compliance accountabilities. Capability has improved since the last EER, and there is a commitment by the corporate company to develop staff further. Earlier gaps in managing key areas of accountability have been resolved, leading to some confidence in improved outcomes.</p>

Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Safe Operation of Elevating Work Platform – Training Scheme [116946]

Performance:	Good
Self-assessment:	Good

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 Ventia NZ Operations Limited:

- Continue to assess and evaluate the outcomes of the professional development of trainers. Use this self-evaluation to guide and support training delivery.
- Consider developing the scope of learner voice input at cohort level; for example, by training course and ethnicity.

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.

NZQA requires that Ventia NZ Operations Limited:

Ensure credits for students are reported to NZQA within three months following assessment, as per [Part 2 – Maintaining consent and approval Section 13\(1\)\(b\) of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2021](#). Policies and procedures on credit reporting must be amended, and relevant staff must be advised, to comply with said Rules.

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 fraud³*
- *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.*

³ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016, which are made by NZQA under section 253(1)(pa) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister authorised as responsible for Part 20 of the Education Act.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- *maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- *maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2018, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2011 and the Training Scheme Rules 2012 respectively. These rules were also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Rules 2018 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration. The Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2018 are also made by NZQA under section 253 of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, training schemes and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2016. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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Final