QUALITY AUDIT SUMMARY

on

Fonterra Research Centre Limited

Audit Date: 26 March 2009
Web Report Date: 7 July 2009
Provider ID: 9920
1 Objectives

The audit aimed to obtain reasonable assurance that Fonterra Research Centre Limited (FRC) is a sound and stable provider, has effective quality management systems in place, and is substantially achieving its goals and objectives as required by Quality Assurance Standard for Private Training Establishments, Government Training Establishments and Wānanga (QA Standard One).

The results of this audit will contribute to the decisions made by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) to confirm ongoing registration and accreditation, and the length of time until the next audit.

An audit is a snapshot of the organisation’s performance at a particular time. As such, it is not a guarantee of ongoing compliance and effectiveness. An audit is based on sampling and instances of non-compliance may remain undetected.

2 Scope

The audit covered all elements of QA Standard One except 1.2.8 Research. Research was excluded because FRC does not offer degree courses.

3 Responsibilities

FRC is responsible for meeting all requirements of QA Standard One by ensuring the quality of its management systems and the achievement of its goals and objectives.

Under the Education Act 1989, NZQA is responsible for registering private training establishments and granting accreditation to organisations offering approved courses.

4 Background

FRC established the PTE to assist in providing research and development resources for Fonterra Cooperative Group Limited (Fonterra). FRC is primarily a research and development centre, the training is focussed on providing skills courses in new technology and processes for manufacturing workers.

This was a scheduled audit at Palmerston North.

FRC was previously audited in 2007 and did not meet eight requirements of QA Standard One. The requirements not met related to the elements: goals and objectives, governance and management, assessment and moderation, and achievement of goals and objectives.

5 Summary

At this audit (2009), FRC did not meet eight requirements of QA Standard One.

The eight requirements not met related to the elements: governance and management; learner information, entry and support; assessment and moderation; and achievement of goals and objectives.
The requirements not met at the previous audit have been addressed, apart from one requirement relating to assessment and moderation.

**Goals and objectives**

The organisation aims to improve the skills and knowledge of Fonterra staff employed in manufacturing plants. The achievement of this is measured using participant numbers, course outcomes and participant satisfaction.

**Governance and management**

FRC staff report to the Fonterra board of directors. The human resources and industry training manager is responsible for organising training, assisted by Fonterra training coordinators in the workplace.

At this audit FRC did not provide evidence of acceptable financial management practices within the required timeframe and to show that it is managing the establishment in the best interests of its kaupapa. However, the Private Training Establishment Attestation (Form A) and the Chartered Accountant Professional Attestation (Form B) were provided prior to the audit.

The organisation’s quality management system requires further details to be coherent and sufficient to ensure that processes are consistently carried out. FRC is exempt from having arrangements to indemnify student fees as courses are funded by Fonterra.

**Personnel**

FRC selects Fonterra employees with the relevant subject knowledge and expertise to carry out training and assessment in their specialist fields. Staff are required to have teaching and assessment expertise and/or qualifications. Staff performance appraisals are conducted annually, as well as throughout the year, as part of the Fonterra staff performance appraisal system. Individual training needs are identified as part of this system and annual professional development plans are implemented.

**Physical and learning resources**

Courses are run at Fonterra production plants or in temporary locations. FRC has access to its own pilot plant to enable training to be carried out at its site in Palmerston North. All premises are checked for suitability for training and to ensure that equipment is available prior to the course. Participants and course tutors are advised of site-specific health and safety requirements which must be adhered to as appropriate when training is being carried out.

**Learner information, entry and support**

Workplace training coordinators identify employee training requirements and book them onto a course with FRC. FRC then sends each participant a folder with information on the course requirements, including timeframes. Participants are also asked to complete pre-course work to introduce them to the topic they will be studying and to assess current knowledge. Tutors are available to provide additional learning support to help participants meet the course requirements if required.
Development, delivery and review of programmes

Each tutor develops teaching and assessment materials to train staff in the latest technology and processes in their specialist field. Courses are delivered once or twice a year, depending on need, and may be between one day and up to ten days in duration. Participants are required to complete homework as part of the course. Feedback from participants on various courses stated that they found that there was a lot of information to get through in the time provided, but overall they were satisfied with the programme. The tutors developed the unit standards to meet industry needs in conjunction with the New Zealand Industry Training Organisation (NZITO) and review them regularly to ensure that they are current.

Assessment and moderation

FRC has not participated in the NZITO external moderation system since 2006. Tutors check all assessment decisions to ensure they are consistent with the marking schedule for each unit standard. Tutors also develop assessment materials to meet unit standard requirements. However, the organisation was unable to provide evidence that it was meeting NZITO internal moderation requirements, as is required when reporting unit standard credits to NZITO. There was also insufficient evidence that FRC had an assessment appeal process in place.

Notification and reporting on learner achievement

At the end of each course the tutor completes a course report which includes participants’ attendance and whether they met the unit standard requirements. This information is sent to NZITO, which reports the unit standard credits to NZQA. Participants receive a certificate from NZITO to say they have completed the course successfully. All assessment records are archived for five years.

Achievement of goals and objectives

Results from the review of the organisation’s performance show that it is exceeding its objectives for course capacity and outcomes for participants. The organisation refined its goals in 2008 and these are regularly reviewed at staff meetings. However, FRC has not extended its review of its performance to include formal feedback from all stakeholders. The organisation has reviewed its quality management system to ensure it is up to date, and although it requires more detail it has improved since the previous audit.

Closing statement

At this audit FRC demonstrated that it provides relevant, effective skills training courses for Fonterra staff. Tutors are highly specialised in their fields of expertise and are adept at developing suitable training materials. However, closer attention needs to be paid to the organisation’s policies and procedures and relationship with NZITO to ensure it is providing robust, quality systems to manage its training.