

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Quality Plus Training Ltd

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 12 March 2014

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Purpose of this Report..... | 3 |
| Introduction | 3 |
| 1. TEO in context..... | 3 |
| 2. Scope of external evaluation and review | 4 |
| 3. Conduct of external evaluation and review | 5 |
| Summary of Results | 6 |
| Findings | 8 |
| Recommendations | 14 |
| Appendix | 15 |

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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: | Quality Plus Training Ltd |
| Type: | Private training establishment (PTE) |
| Location: | Lincoln Tai Tapu Road, Tai Tapu, Canterbury |
| Delivery sites: | Hired venues as required, in Christchurch and Wellington |
| First registered: | 25 May 2006 |
| Courses currently delivered: | Health Auditor Training course – five days (includes unit standard 8086) |
| Code of Practice signatory?: | No |
| Number of students: | Domestic: approximately 25 learners each year (learners are predominantly female, aged between 30 and 60 years, and approximately 10 per cent are Māori) |
| Number of staff: | Two part-time tutors |
| Scope of active accreditation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unit standard 8086 Demonstrate knowledge required for quality auditing (level 4)• Training scheme: Health Auditor Training (level 3) |
| Distinctive characteristics: | Quality Plus Training (QPT) offers short courses in audit training to the general public (health sector) based on unit standard 8086 and Health and Disability Service Standard NZS 8134:2008. The unit standard is required for certification as an |

auditor of Health and Disability Service Standards by the New Zealand Ministry of Health.

Recent significant changes: None

Previous quality assurance history: The previous external evaluation and review (EER) by NZQA in 2010 recorded the following statements:

- NZQA is Highly Confident in the educational performance of QPT
- NZQA is Highly Confident in the capability in self-assessment of QPT

QPT was exempt from NZQA external moderation in 2010, 2011 and 2013 due to good moderation results for unit standard 8086 in 2009 and 2012.

Other: The managing director of QPT also owns DAA Group Limited, which is a designated audit agency, accredited by the Ministry of Health to provide auditing services for the health sector under the Health and Disability Services (Safety) Act 2001.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER consisted of the following focus areas:

- Governance, management and strategy – which is a mandatory focus area
- Health Auditor Training – which is the only course currently offered.

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.

The organisation submitted comprehensive self-assessment material to inform the EER.

The evaluation team of two visited QPT's head office for one day. Interviews were conducted with the owner/managing director and tutor. Phone interviews were also conducted with six previous learners, some of whom are employed as auditors and others who are in quality management roles. Academic, planning and review documents were also sighted.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Quality Plus Training Ltd.**

The reasons for this judgement are as follows:

- Learners are acquiring highly relevant and useful skills and knowledge for employment in auditing and quality management roles, as well as developing the personal attributes required of an effective external auditor in the health sector.
- QPT reports excellent success rates for the last three years (91 per cent in 2011, 92 per cent in 2012 and 96 per cent in 2013). Learners are required to achieve 100 per cent in order to pass the final examination (to complete the unit standard 8086), and an increasing percentage of learners are achieving this on their first attempt (52 per cent in 2013 compared with 41 per cent in 2011).
- The training is highly valued by stakeholders, including learners. This is evidenced by steady demand for training and consistently positive feedback. Some learners enrol in order to become qualified to work as auditors in the New Zealand health sector. Others who are already in quality, audit or management roles in health organisations report the usefulness and value of their enhanced understanding of auditing and quality management generally, as well as the Health and Disability Service Standards NZS 8134:2008.
- QPT collects information which it uses to identify improvements in the contributing processes and teaching materials and activities that underpin consistently high levels of student satisfaction and strong educational performance.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Quality Plus Training Ltd.**

The reasons for this judgement are as follows:

- QPT has well-established self-assessment that is practical and effective. Although it is a very small provider, documentation and record-keeping reflect a well-organised and purposeful approach to collecting, analysing and using information to bring about improvements.
- Teaching and learning is supported by a structured programme and comprehensive course materials that are subject to both continuous improvement and annual review, based on learner progress and feedback and the tutors' reflections.
- QPT monitors the impact of changes on learner satisfaction and outcomes and reports that the latest changes to course content and organisation, in February 2013, resulted in positive feedback from learners and a better match with industry expectations.
- The two training staff have regular opportunities presented by their professional activities (as external auditors) to meet with stakeholders and to ensure that QPT training remains consistent with Ministry of Health requirements and changing industry practices.

There are several areas where further analysis of data might generate useful information for improvement, but these gaps are not significant given the very small size of the organisation, which ensures that the tutors have personal knowledge of all learners and clients. The evaluators are highly confident that QPT has the capability to deliver on its plans for ongoing improvement and sustained high levels of educational performance.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do learners 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 **Good**.

QPT can demonstrate very high levels of learner achievement in the Health Auditor Training course over a number of years. In 2013, 96 per cent of learners successfully completed the course, which involves successfully completing all course work and passing an examination. Fifty-two per cent achieved 100 per cent in the final examination (required to achieve a pass) on their first attempt (see Table 1).

| Table 1: Learner achievement rates, 2011-2013 | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | 2011 22 learners | 2012 26 learners | 2013 27 learners |
| Successful in final examination at first attempt | 9 (41%) | 12 (46%) | 14 (52%) |
| Successful course completion | 20 (91%) | 24 (92%) | 26 (96%) |

Recognising that the achievement of 100 per cent in the final examination is a significant hurdle for many learners, the tutors advise on exam techniques and offer additional sessions to review the unit standard and allow opportunities for further discussion. In addition, QPT has recently begun to systematically analyse learner success in all questions within the final exam to identify areas for further focus and clarification. However, QPT believes that the current first-attempt success rate reflects the realities of auditing work, such as time pressure, as well as the personal capabilities and professional backgrounds of the candidates.

Learner progress is very closely monitored throughout the short course through classroom activities and prompt marking of daily homework. Assessment records (of role-plays, workshops and class presentations) also provide evidence of learners receiving feedback on their progress in developing the interpersonal and communication skills required of auditors. Interviews with course participants confirmed that this aspect of the learning was prioritised throughout the course by the tutors who also modelled good practice in giving constructive feedback.

QPT reports that approximately 10 per cent of the learners are Māori (30 per cent in 2013) and that their overall success rates are similar (although it is not clear how

¹ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

their first-attempt pass rate for the exam compares). However, this data is not currently formally collected or analysed.

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

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 generally enrol for the Health Auditor Training course with QPT either to qualify as an auditor of health and disability services or to increase their knowledge of auditing and quality management generally, for the purposes of their current role as a health professional or manager. QPT staff have been involved in health sector auditing and training for many years and have an excellent understanding of the expectations of learners and employers and are very successful in delivering valued outcomes. This was confirmed by written and verbal stakeholder feedback.

Completion of unit standard 8086 is the minimum requirement for certification by the Ministry of Health as an auditor of health and disability service standards, and participants who wished to do so have successfully achieved employment with a designated audit agency. Evidence is available that the course is well aligned with international standards and current practice, and participants acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills which they can apply to the real world.

Other participants reported the usefulness and relevance of the course for their job. Examples of enhanced skills and knowledge include the ability to conduct internal audits or support colleagues to prepare for external audits of their organisation. All participants valued the comprehensive knowledge of the health and disability standards gained through the course and the understanding of audit processes and quality management generally.

QPT tutors gather industry feedback in the course of routine contact as part of their audit work or by drawing on established networks and participation in national quality organisations and standard-setting agencies. The high levels of satisfaction among stakeholders suggests that this informal approach is effective in ensuring the course remains current and relevant. A more systematic approach to tracking medium-term outcomes for learners could provide additional evidence of valued outcomes and useful information for further refinement of the course, although the evaluators noted that the tutors maintain contact with many previous learners through their audit work.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other 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**.

Learners on the Health Auditor Training course benefit from small classes (six to 10 participants) and a high level of individual attention which ensures their learning needs are understood and met. This includes regular feedback on progress and additional one-to-one sessions when required. QPT's effectiveness in accommodating different learning styles and meeting learner needs is confirmed by the consistently high levels of student satisfaction (95 per cent or higher).

The course is intense, incorporating a significant amount of theory and reference material, as well as providing opportunities for learners to apply knowledge through classroom exercises and homework. Practical skills are developed through activities such as role-plays, workshops and presentations. Discussions and case studies draw on the learners' own experiences and work environments. Feedback confirmed that the course design is very effective in maintaining learner interest and motivation. In addition, the course reflects the realities of auditing work, particularly in terms of workload and time pressures.

Course materials are comprehensive. Pre-course reading, which includes a copy of the Health and Disability Service Standards NZS 8134:2008, establishes a good foundation for the course, and all participants receive a workbook and assessment and unit standard guidelines. The course structure and materials are regularly reviewed in response to learner feedback and changes in industry practice. Learner evaluations and tutorial course assessments are completed after each course delivery, and minor changes are made as required. An annual course review draws on all feedback captured during the year, as well as achievement and outcomes data. Changes arising from the course review in February 2013 included shifting historical and contextual material from the first day and including it in the pre-course reading, and incorporating a session on report writing. QPT reports that these changes have been effective in increasing learner engagement and satisfaction, and reflect the emphasis on reporting in health sector auditing.

The evaluators noted that cultural aspects are embedded into the standards, and that the case studies incorporate Māori health contexts. All participants are encouraged to draw on their own experience in class discussions and activities, which also provides opportunities for relevant cultural input.

1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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**.

QPT is providing a very effective learning environment which ensures consistently high levels of learner achievement and satisfaction. The tutors are practising auditors and experienced educators who regularly reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching. Key processes that contribute to teaching effectiveness include written self-assessments after each delivery, which are discussed and either result in immediate improvements or contribute to course reviews. While the tutors co-teach for larger groups, formal observations are also scheduled annually, as are performance appraisals. Regular professional development activities are useful for providing new ideas for course delivery and content, as well as for maintaining currency with changing industry practice.

Teaching and assessment are supported by comprehensive materials, including a teacher workbook, marking schedules and model answers for the final examination. Homework is marked immediately and feedback provided to learners, individually and as a group. All exams are double marked, and any discrepancies are resolved through discussion. This transparent and robust approach to assessment and internal moderation ensures consistency and underpins excellent learner achievement.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

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 nature of the guidance and support provided by QPT reflects the characteristics of the participants who are generally independent learners with health-related qualifications and professional experience. Course information and interviews with prospective students set out the selection criteria – which match the unit standard requirements – and also clearly describe the course structure and content, workload and time commitment. In addition, information and advice is provided to prospective learners on career pathways. Participants are also invited to notify tutors of any special learning needs, and they receive a student handbook which contains administrative and course information. These processes, together with the dispatch of pre-course reading one month before the course start date, ensure that learners are very well informed and prepared for the course.

QPT collects information on the educational and professional background of each participant, as well as their objectives in undertaking the course which enables tutors to use relevant examples in discussions. Additional one-to-one sessions are offered to those learners who are less familiar with the health and disability service

standards or experience difficulty with the content or practical activities. A special effort is made to ensure all learners are as well prepared and confident as possible for the final examination.

QPT invites regular learner feedback, and is very responsive to suggestions for changes and improvements. The collation of course materials and activity sheets into a single bound volume has been well received, and enables learners to build up a comprehensive resource that reflects the complete unit standard and is a useful reference tool for the workplace. While a small group provides many opportunities for individual attention, during 2013 QPT identified that six is a minimum number of participants for ensuring a good level of input and discussion, and the most effective learning experience. This factor is now incorporated into operational planning.

1.6 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**.

QPT has well-established management, academic and administrative processes for supporting learner achievement, which are practical and effective and reflect the organisation's size and the nature of the training provided. These processes, together with regular review activities, generate useful and valid data and qualitative information which is used to identify improvements. This is particularly evident in relation to learner feedback. The post-course evaluation form is a very effective mechanism for gathering learner perspectives and ideas for improvement. The form does not contain a numerical component, but the qualitative comments are sufficient for a judgement to be made as to learner satisfaction. All examples sighted were extremely positive and constructive.

An annual review cycle supplements the regular post-course reviews, and regular discussions ensure that actions are followed up and outcomes are reviewed. In February 2013 the course as a whole was reviewed and several changes were made to content and structure, which have been found to be effective. Other changes were made in response to administrative and scheduling issues during 2013. An improvement plan documents changes and timelines, and management objectives include targets for learner achievement and student satisfaction.

QPT management and staff demonstrate a good understanding of evaluation and a practical commitment to improvement which underpins consistently strong educational performance over many years.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management and strategy

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

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

2.2 Focus area: Health Auditor Training (level 4)

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

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

Recommendation

NZQA recommends that QPT establish processes for collecting and analysing data on the participation and educational performance of Māori and Pasifika learners.

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/>.