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External Evaluation and Review Report

Learn Plus Limited

Date of report: 14 May 2021

About Learn Plus Limited

Learn Plus is an owner-operated private training establishment which offers tailored learning, mostly in adult education and business. Learners are employed and participate in training via blended learning options: online with downloadable/paper-based manuals and one-to-one/group Zoom or in-house workshops. Training is funded by learners or their employers.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	143 Saqa Way, Tutukaka
Code of Practice signatory:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: In 2020 Learn Plus had 447 part-time learners (30 equivalent full-time students). All learners study part-time, with all in either full or part-time employment. In 2020, 9 per cent of learners were Māori, and 9 per cent were Pasifika. ¹
Number of staff:	One full-time equivalent and two part-time The full-time executive director (learning and development specialist) facilitates learning for every student.
TEO profile:	See Learn Plus Ltd on the NZQA website.
Last EER outcome:	NZQA was Highly Confident in both the educational performance and capability in self-assessment of Learn Plus at the previous external evaluation and review (EER) in 2016.
Scope of this evaluation:	Suite of Business Programmes
MoE number:	7911
NZQA reference:	C23337
Dates of EER field work:	16 and 17 February 2021

¹ Learn Plus ethnicity information 16 Dec 2020

Summary of results

Learn Plus Limited delivers relevant programmes aligned to the expertise of the executive director, and employer and learner needs. High rates of achievement are sustained over time through effective and timely support. Quality academic processes ensure authentic achievement.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Achievement is consistently strong, and monitoring of achievement is systematic and robust. Data collation and analysis within the current context is persuasive.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Graduates gain skills and knowledge relevant to their role and workplace. These immediate and important outcomes are evident for all learners.
- Highly effective teaching of relevant and individualised programmes, where academic standards and integrity are maintained, ensures quality teaching and learning at Learn Plus.
- Learners receive comprehensive and prompt academic support which sustains them throughout their programme. Strategies to help learners engage with study and assessment result in almost all learners successfully achieving.
- Learn Plus has proactive leadership which effectively leads the PTE and supports the strong educational achievement of the learners.
- Knowledge and understanding in relation to NZQA compliance matters is highly effective for the size and context of the PTE. Associated processes and practices guide the PTE and ensure compliance accountabilities are mostly identified and managed.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Achievement has been consistently strong since the previous EER, with 99.9 per cent of learners achieving the course they enrolled in. Achievement data at Learn Plus is collated by exception. Therefore, non-achievement is well understood through systematic and comprehensive monitoring of progress.</p> <p>Most learners, approximately 80 per cent, study to gain individual unit standards; all, bar one learner, were successful from 2017-2020. During 2018-2020, of the remaining learners enrolled in qualifications, seven of 31 did not complete. The executive director facilitates learning for every student and understands the reasons for non-achievement for each individual.</p> <p>Māori and Pasifika data is aggregated with all learner data; the very high rate of achievement implies that Māori and Pasifika success is on par with all learners. Learn Plus has the capability to disaggregate data to further explore possible variances in achievement by programme and ethnicity. The PTE has recognised the need to progress to a more sophisticated system to improve data collation for analysis as anticipated growth of the PTE and programmes leading to qualifications occurs.</p> <p>Assessment and internal moderation practices are sound. Overall external moderation validates the assessments, and assessor judgements provide confidence in the educational results being achieved.</p>
Conclusion:	Achievement is consistently strong, and monitoring of achievement is systematic and robust. Data collation and analysis within the current context is persuasive.

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>All learners gain unit standards or a qualification to upskill and meet employer expectations. Learner surveys (91-98 per cent response rate³) indicate that the programme has helped them in their role at work. Additional feedback includes comments from some learners about the skills gained and how they are being used. This provides a useful source of data for review.</p> <p>Repeat client business is approximately 70 per cent year-on-year. Employer feedback several months after study (response rate 62-82 per cent⁴) notes that all learners improve their knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Important and practical outcomes are convincingly evidenced for most learners who undertake individual unit standards. As noted in the previous EER, for those few learners enrolled in programmes leading to qualifications, graduate and employer feedback on the extent to which graduate profile outcomes are met after completion will strengthen evidence for future consistency reviews.</p> <p>Learn Plus contributes its expertise to the tertiary sector regularly. One example is through participation on NZQA panels. Of note is that Learn Plus recently aided another PTE by rectifying a significant issue that resulted in learners achieving a level 5 business qualification, who otherwise would have been seriously and negatively impacted.</p>
Conclusion:	Learners gain skills and knowledge relevant to their role and workplace. These immediate and important outcomes are evident for all learners and their employers.

³ Learn Plus Satisfaction Survey 16 Dec 20

⁴ Learn Plus Satisfaction Survey 16 Dec 20

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:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Programme design is highly relevant and adapted to meet the needs of learners and employers. A needs analysis for every learner ensures learning goals are well understood. The inclusion of the learner context and role in design and assessment ensures learners can apply their skills and knowledge as they study.</p> <p>Delivery has changed over the past four years from predominantly face-to-face to workshops (65 per cent 2017, 0 per cent 2020⁵) to online and Skype/Zoom. Consistent rates of achievement and high levels of learner and employer satisfaction validate the effective transition in mode of delivery.</p> <p>Integrated assessment and expertise are employed to support learner progress and engagement. Assessments are relevant to the learner context, role and workplace. The executive director reviews and responds to individual feedback received through engagement during study and from surveys after completion. Improvements are made quickly, as needed.</p> <p>Academic processes are robust and monitored, including internal and external moderation. Continuous engagement and communication with the learner and employer and end-of-course surveys provide opportunities for review and have resulted in ongoing minor improvements.</p>
Conclusion:	Highly effective teaching of relevant and individualised programmes, where academic standards and integrity are maintained, ensures quality teaching and learning by Learn Plus.

⁵Learn Plus Satisfaction Survey 16Dec20

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Learn Plus's own pastoral care document guides a process that authentically supports learners. Each learner's study journey is developed to reflect and respond to their needs. Processes are flexible, monitored and altered, such as extending the date for completion, based on emerging learner needs.</p> <p>Learner progress, quality of assessment and engagement online are closely monitored and recorded for review and action by Learn Plus. Progress is reported regularly to learners and as appropriate to employers. Feedback and contact with learners is both prompt and useful. Learn Plus recognises the need for employer engagement and works hard to engage the employer in the learning journey to increase support for the learner and the likelihood of success.</p> <p>Learn Plus's focus is on developing learners' capability to use effective strategies that support effective approaches to study and assessment, affording learners important study skills useful beyond the current programme of study.</p>
Conclusion:	Learners receive comprehensive and prompt academic support which sustains them throughout their programme, with almost all successfully achieving.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Sustainability and succession planning at Learn Plus has motivated very recent changes in ownership and governance. The executive director has recognised the need to enhance organisational systems and processes to accommodate anticipated growth resulting from the addition of business programmes. The changes will also reduce the reliance on the executive director and enable a reduction in work commitment over time. This is a sensible and timely strategy. The changes, including director responsibilities, strategic planning,</p>

	<p>identification of and implementing improved processes—such as outcomes data analysis—are a work in progress.</p> <p>The organisational purpose and direction –to provide quality education– remains unchanged. Learn Plus is learner centred, and effective relationships with all stakeholders ensures their needs are met.</p> <p>The executive director has systematic oversight of the quality of educational provision. The new general manager’s professional development is well planned to provide support and guidance for the new role. A network of advisors is used for matters pertaining to adult education. The executive director gained a Master’s qualification in business (2020) to support educational achievement in this programme area.</p>
Conclusion:	Learn Plus has proactive leadership which effectively leads the PTE and supports the strong educational achievement of the learners. To enable growth and succession, a new governance and management structure is in place. Several activities are a work in progress.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Compliance accountabilities are managed by the executive director through monitoring and engagement with the tertiary education sector including NZQA. Learn Plus has systems to monitor obligations and requirements to ensure these are fully met. An attempt to mistakenly enrol an international student when not a signatory to the Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice has been addressed.</p> <p>Academic processes including reporting credits to NZQA and delivery of current programmes as approved. Notifications of change in ownership and organisational structure are attested to and provided to NZQA in a timely manner.</p> <p>In advance of NZQA’s release of the interim code for the pastoral care of domestic tertiary students, Learn Plus developed its own pastoral care code which is relevant for the</p>

	size and context of the PTE. Importantly, the code identifies relevant support for online and other distance learning.
Conclusion:	Knowledge and understanding in relation to NZQA compliance matters is highly effective for the size and context of the PTE. Associated processes and practices guide the PTE and ensure compliance accountabilities are mostly identified and managed.

Focus areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Suite of Business Programmes

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Recent, but well-established programmes are providing Learn Plus with an increase in learners enrolling in an entire programme leading to a qualification.</p> <p>Programmes are highly relevant to the learner and workplace; learners are comprehensively supported. Achievement rates in programmes for 2018-2020 are reported as seven of 31 not completing. Non-achievement is linked directly to the client preparation and support of learners, which Learn Plus is attempting to address through the provision of an information pack with information on how clients can support learners.</p> <p>These programmes will benefit from increased outcomes data analysis, and review of graduate and employer feedback on the extent to which graduate profile outcomes are met, including short-to-medium-term outcomes over time.</p>

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 Learn Plus Limited:

- As the PTE grows, look to disaggregate high-level achievement data for Māori and Pasifika learners for further analysis and review.
- Collect data specific to each programme leading to a qualification to strengthen evidence to assure that graduate outcomes are being consistently met.

Requirements

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 fraud⁶*
- *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.*

⁶ 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 452(1)(t) of the Education Act 1989 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

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.

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.

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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