

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Advance Training Centres Limited
trading as Advance Training Centres

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 10 March 2015

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. Final Report

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:	Advance Training Centres Limited, trading as Advance Training Centres
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	17A William Pickering Drive, Rosedale, North Harbour, Auckland
Delivery sites:	Above, and at these branches: 171 Commerce Street, Kaitaia 58 Bank Street, Whangarei 7 Parenga Street, Dargaville 96 Rostrevor Road, Hamilton
First registered:	1 December 1992
Courses currently delivered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Certificate in Employment Skills (Level 1)• National Certificate in Cadet Forces (Level 2)• National Certificate in Computing (Level 2)• National Certificate in Business Administration and Computing (Level 3)• National Certificate in Business Administration (Level 4)

Number of students: Domestic: 381, 210 (55 per cent) of whom are Māori, and 33 (8 per cent) Pasifika

International: nil

Number of staff: 18 full-time equivalents

Scope of active accreditation: In addition to the above certificates, accreditation for:

- Certificate in Trade Skills Theory (Level 3)
- Military Prep School Programme (Level 2)
- Fast Track Computing Programme (Level 2)
- Introduction to English for ESOL Students (local course)
- Certificate for Professional Administrators (Level 1) (local course)
- Advance Training Centres Certificate in Administration and Computing (Level 3) (local course)

Consent to assess for domains in the following subfields: Business Administration and Computing, Computing and Information Technology, Engineering and Technology, Communication Skills, English, Science (Mathematics), Retail Distribution and Sales, and Service Sector Skills.

Consent to assess 55 unit standards relating to computing, communication skills, personal fitness and wellness, tramping, navigation and survival techniques, first aid, and basic knowledge and skills for the New Zealand Defence Force.

Distinctive characteristics: Advance Training Centres provides foundation skills training with a major focus on entry skills for the New Zealand Defence Force. The training is delivered under the Youth Guarantee programme.

Other programmes in business administration and computing provide training for people needing to upskill and re-enter the workforce. Advance Training Centres has collaborative arrangements with other regional tertiary education organisations that provide vocational pathways for the PTE's graduates.

Many of the programmes are delivered in regions of high youth unemployment with limited career opportunities in sectors other than land-based primary industries. They have been developed to meet the needs of young people, a high proportion of whom are Māori, with no or few formal qualifications. Students learn a range of life and vocational skills in a structured, supportive environment.

Advance Training Centres also delivers the Ministry of Social Development-funded Training For Work and Education for Child Youth and Family Support programmes.

The PTE delivers STAR programmes to 12 secondary schools as part of a North Shore consortium. Many students subsequently enrol in the PTE's Cadet Forces programme.

Recent significant changes:

A new general manager at the Albany head office with responsibility for the management of all branches was appointed in 2013, and changes have been made to the internal management of other branches. New tutors and an administrator have been appointed. The new head of department for the Youth Guarantee programme transferred from the Kaitia branch to head office to manage the programme at all branches.

Previous quality assurance history:

Advance Training Centres was last externally evaluated by NZQA in August 2010. NZQA was Highly Confident in the organisation's educational performance and Confident in its capability in self-assessment.

National external moderation requirements for assessments against literacy and numeracy standards were not met for 2012 and 2013, and for core health/first aid standards were not met in 2013. An action plan accepted by NZQA in January 2014 advised that Advance Training Centres now outsources the delivery and assessment of first aid standards to another organisation specialising in this training. Changes have been identified to address the requirements of the numeracy standards.

External moderation requirements of the industry training organisation, Skills Active, were not met in

2013. The assessment materials for an adventure-based learning standard, unit 467, have been revised and re-submitted to Skills Active.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the external evaluation and review (EER) covered the following focus areas.

1. Governance, management and strategy. This is a mandatory focus area.
2. Youth Guarantee programmes, including the National Certificates in Employment Skills, Cadet Forces and Computing. These are the main areas of delivery with a major focus on entry skills for the New Zealand Defence Force. The Employment Skills programme is delivered at all five branches, and Cadet Forces and Computing programmes at three of them. This focus area provides an opportunity to investigate how the training meets the needs of students across the whole organisation.
3. The Student Achievement Component-funded levels 3 and 4 Business Administration and Computing programmes cater for different learner groups and are only delivered in Whangarei. This focus area provides an opportunity to investigate how the training meets the needs of older students who may already have some work experience but need additional qualifications to enable them to compete in the labour market or gain entry to further education programmes.
4. Memoranda of understanding. Advance Training Centres has a number of formal and informal arrangements with regional providers to enable the centres' graduates to continue their education. This focus area provides an opportunity to investigate the effectiveness of these arrangements in providing positive outcomes for graduates.

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.

A team of two evaluators conducted the evaluation visit over three days at Advance Training Centres' head office and training branch in Albany, Auckland, and at the Whangarei branch.

Prior to the visit, a number of documents were reviewed: a self-assessment summary, assessment and internal moderation processes, course timetables, summary data on graduate destinations for one branch, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) investment plan, external moderation reports.

At the visit the following people were part of the evaluative conversations:

- The chief executive, general manager and head of department Youth Guarantee
- Tutors (Auckland and Whangarei)
- Students and graduates at the above branches
- Employers, recruitment agencies, parents, local agencies.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Advance Training Centres Limited**.

Advance Training Centres provides foundation skills training for young people, 45-50 per cent of whom are Māori. Many have no or few relevant qualifications for intended employment, such as for the New Zealand Defence Force or the local labour market.

Advance Training Centres works in partnership with the New Zealand Defence Force, government agencies, other regional providers and employers to provide targeted training that integrates academic learning with personal social and vocational development. The competence and improved confidence of graduates adds personal value to students' own lives and to the business of employers. Interviews with students, graduates, parents, local agencies and employers indicate high levels of satisfaction with the outcomes of the training.

A restructure in 2013 has resulted in improvements to operational procedures and communication across the five branches. However, although access is planned, regional branches do not yet have access to the centralised server for reporting and recording assessment results, and instead are using manual tracking systems. The dual manual-electronic reporting system is potentially unreliable and leads to delays in the recording of results, and implementation of the internal moderation processes.

Literacy and numeracy assistance is available for individual students, and tutors have developed effective supplementary teaching resources. However, an overall coherent strategy is needed to provide direction and include all levels of training, and staff and resource development.

Training is conducted by tutors with relevant qualifications and adult training experience. Students achieve well in learning environments that acknowledge individual learning challenges.

- Completions across all programmes have increased since 2012 and are consistently above the TEC sector median for course and qualification completions.
- Results for the Youth Guarantee programme show completion rates of between of 79 and 90 per cent across the three programmes, and between 73 and 98 per cent for students in the business programmes.
- The Youth Guarantee programme is designed to enable students to achieve four national certificates, including NCEA levels 1 and 2. This is highly valued by the students, representing for some their first formal

achievements, which lead to a range of further educational and employment opportunities.

Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Advance Training Centres Limited**.

Advance Training Centres' self-assessment is a mixture of formal and informal processes and is used effectively to inform improvements to programme delivery and assessment. This is evident from the frequent monitoring activities by management, and the head of department for the Youth Guarantee programme in particular. Tutors meet to monitor and discuss operational policies and student progress nationally and at branch level. This has resulted in improvements to learning resources to meet particular needs.

Self-assessment practices would benefit from further aggregation and analysis and development as organisation-wide strategies. These include:

- Analyses of stakeholder needs and of different learner groups across the five branches. Staff are actively involved with stakeholders and a lot of information is held informally. The 2010 EER report similarly recommended a more manageable system for ensuring accurate and efficient needs assessment and understanding of the added value of training to learners and their communities.
- Analysis of student achievement based on funding streams provides useful information at the programme level, but limits self-assessment of separate unit standard, individual qualification and course achievement across all branches, and across different learner groups.
- Graduate destination data is available but not always collated and analysed to provide an understanding of regional trends that might have an impact on decisions about training provision, and inform improvements to programme delivery.
- Although literacy and numeracy assistance is available, an organisational strategy is needed that enables the PTE to evaluate the effectiveness of the different forms of assistance in achieving improved learning outcomes.
- Internal moderation is effective in validating assessments, but the processes need refinement at branch level to ensure timely feedback to tutors and students.

Advance Training Centres has made progress in implementing its moderation action plan agreed with NZQA. However, the effectiveness of the plan cannot be fully confirmed until the 2014 national external moderation results are advised.

Findings1

1.1 How well do learners achieve?

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

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

Student achievement across Advance Training Centres' five branches is high. The high completion and retention rates are indicators of Advance Training Centres' success in re-engaging youth in education, resulting in positive outcomes. Feedback from students, graduates and employers about the training outcomes is consistently positive. This was verified by the evaluators in interviews with stakeholders.

Māori students represent 46 per cent of the total trainee population across the five branches, well above the 29 per cent average for tertiary education organisations in general. Their achievement rates are consistently at or higher than those for the total student population.

The number of trainees in all courses has increased from 322 in 2013 to 381 as at November 2014. Data supplied by the PTE shows an increase in overall course and qualification completion across the five branches in 2013-2014 and follows a change in funding policy and outcome measurement in 2012. The improvement in educational outcomes since then is supported by the TEC Educational Performance Indicator data.

Table 1 shows the qualification outcomes for 2011-2013 for all levels, with all results above the TEC sector median.

Table 1. TEC Educational Performance Indicator data, 2011-2013				
Year	TEC median: course completion	Advance Training Centres	TEC median: qualification completion	Advance Training Centres
2011	72%	85%	61%	100%
2012	68%	59%	92%	57%
2013	76%	81%	67%	79%

The PTE tracks student progress for each branch based on the funding streams, such as Youth Guarantee or Student Achievement Component, and for Māori and

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

Pasifika students. Table 2 compares the results for 2013 and 2014 (semester one). It shows the upward trend in student numbers and successful completions in 2014.

Table 2. Enrolments and completions for all programmes, 2013-2014						
	Enrolments			Qualification completions, semester one, averaged across all branches		
2014	Total trainees	Māori	Pasifika	Total trainees	Māori	Pasifika
Youth Guarantee NCES*	140	84	12	79%	-	-
Cadet Forces	112	51	18	83%	84%	36%
NCC** L2 (YG + SAC funded)	104	64	3	91%	92%	98%
BAC*** L3-4 (SAC funded)	25	11	0	73%	80%	0
	381	210	33			
2013				Qualification completions		
Youth Guarantee NCES	120	54	20	65%	55%	72%
Cadet Forces	112	51	20	70%	63%	59%
NCC L2 (YG + SAC funded)	66	32	4	81%	76%	82%
BAC L3-4 (SAC funded)	24	9	0	88%	75%	0
	322	146	44			
* National Certificate in Employment Skills						
** National Certificate in Computing						
*** National Certificate in Business Administration and Computing						

Nearly all students are enrolled at the foundation levels 1 and 2. Youth Guarantee students are mainly school leavers, who enrol initially for the National Certificate in Employment Skills and in three branches progress to the National Certificate in Cadet Forces. The 110-credit, year-long programme enables students to meet the formal qualification and fitness requirements for entry to the New Zealand Defence Force. NCEA 1 and 2 are embedded in the foundation qualifications and consequently students graduate with four qualifications. Some continue their studies at the Vanguard Military Charter School to gain the NCEA achievement standards in maths, English and science needed for entry to trade and specialist skill training in the New Zealand Defence Force. The qualifications represent considerable achievement for the target group with no or few prior formal qualifications, and provide entry for graduates to a range of vocational pathways or employment.

Table 2 shows the completions for students in the computing and business administration courses who need upskilling for work or further study. Many are older than the Youth Guarantee students, already have some work experience, and may be career changers or returning to the workforce. The skills gained enable them to progress to other education with Advance Training Centres' guidance and through formal or informal memoranda of understanding with other regional providers.

Although not collated or analysed at a national level, successful outcomes can be seen for both student groups by Advance Training Centres' graduate destination data maintained at branch level and by feedback from graduates and employers. Advance Training Centres reports that about 50-60 students annually enter a branch of the New Zealand Defence Force.

Strong internal moderation supports the assessment results.

Advance Training Centres has a centralised student management system. Access to this for all the branches that continue to use a manual results tracking system is planned for the future. This will improve the reliability and speed of reporting assessment results and provide access for branch tutors to student records.

The monitoring focus on results for students within funding streams for management purposes limits Advance Training Centres' self-assessment of student performance across all unit standards, individual qualifications and courses for all learner groups. Nevertheless, tutors and management use existing data to monitor individual student achievement. Tutors and the head of department have a clear understanding of gaps in student progress and work to manage these through individual support and guidance.

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 **Good**.

The outcomes of Advance Training Centres' programmes are of high value to all stakeholders. This was evident from interviews with students, graduates, parents, employers and recruitment agencies. The skills gained enable graduates to achieve their work and study goals, and the work-readiness and reliability of graduates in employment gives them a competitive advantage in the labour market.

Government agencies and the community value Advance Training Centres' student-centred approach to youth training, and the PTE is approached by the Ministry of Social Development, Child Youth and Family and WINZ to provide targeted courses. Organisations such as Workbridge say they value the training, which has led to qualifications and sustainable employment for their clients.

The positive outcomes for Youth Guarantee students from gaining what may be their first formal qualifications are of considerable value to them. The achievement of four recognised qualifications in a year opens up a range of further education and employment opportunities. Preparation for entry to the New Zealand Defence Force at different levels would not otherwise have been possible without the qualifications. Students also spoke of the value to them of being able to achieve and even enjoy subjects they had found difficult at school, such as maths.

Training in the Youth Guarantee programme is transformational personally as well as vocationally. Students spoke of having a different 'mind-set', positive attitudes to learning, and improved emotional and physical fitness, and attributed this to the structure and discipline of the training, the mentoring support and constant feedback from the tutors, and high expectations for success.

Business students commented on the relevance of updated computing skills and administration techniques to their job search, or to gaining entry to higher-level qualifications either at Advance Training Centres or another regional provider. Advance Training Centres' graduate destination data shows that many achieve their goals.

There is also considerable value to whānau and local communities from the students' success in employment, and changed attitudes towards education and training. Graduates are recognised on Advance Training Centres' honours board, and graduation ceremonies that include whānau and communities promote the value of the training.

Advance Training Centres has extensive links into the communities it serves, and their understanding of the value of the training to all stakeholders is based on close relationships with the New Zealand Defence Force, local employers and providers, and ongoing contact with graduates. The information gained from these contacts is used by Advance Training Centres to develop and structure the training to improve the value to stakeholders, particularly students. As noted, self-assessment would be improved by the collation and recording of stakeholder feedback and would enable Advance Training Centres to identify the value added to different learner groups by the various courses.

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 **Good**.

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

Advance Training Centres is focused on matching the needs of particular groups of students and their communities to the needs of other stakeholders in the labour market and regional communities through the training it delivers and its strong support for individual achievement.

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Advance Training Centres has a long-term relationship with the New Zealand Defence Forces. The PTE's knowledge of the entry requirements is used to design training that meets recruitment demands. As well as fitness and other basic training, students are provided with additional tuition to meet the different entry requirements of the New Zealand Defence Forces including 'practice runs' that prepare them for the actual recruitment process. Students who qualify for the New Zealand Defence Force some months before the next intake are able to continue their study for more NCEA subjects and maintain their fitness through Advance Training Centres' programmes.

The foundation learning in the Youth Guarantee programme meets the needs of young people for structure and skills. This was evident from interviews with current students and graduates who said the discipline and content of the training met their needs for re-engagement with education and achievement of their work and study goals.

Those students who do not enter the New Zealand Defence Force nevertheless have achieved four qualifications on which to base other training or employment. Graduate destination reports on outcomes at the branches visited showed that graduates were employed in administrative, reception, customer service and retail positions, or had progressed to higher-level study.

The learning needs of students are assessed at enrolment. Students undertake an Advance Training Centres entry test for assessment of basic maths and English proficiency and are also assessed using the TEC progression tool. Learning progressions are monitored by individual tutors, but no overall data was available to show actual student progressions. Literacy and numeracy assistance is provided by tutors who have developed supplementary resources for teaching maths and reading. Individual goals are agreed with staff and reviewed regularly, keeping students on track to achieve their goals.

Training and assessment materials are mostly externally sourced, and updates are purchased as required. However, at one branch the computing course materials and assessments did not match the latest software version on their computers. Tutors have taken the initiative to update the resources, but generally need to rely on the purchased materials.

Relationships with regional providers and with the New Zealand Defence Forces help ensure that students' needs for vocational pathways from the foundation courses are met, and that in general students maintain their involvement in education and training on graduation. Advance Training Centres undertakes end-of-year school visits, and collaborates with other community and education organisations in order to understand how best to meet the needs of current and future students. However, while there is a good understanding of overall needs, there is no organisational strategy for collating and analysing the extensive data collected through informal sources that could provide Advance Training Centres with a more in-depth understanding of how well needs are met, and that would lead to meaningful improvements to course structures and delivery.

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1.4 How effective is the teaching?

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

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

Advance Training Centres' tutors and staff are dedicated to assisting students to achieve qualification and personal programme outcomes. The effectiveness of tutor practice can be seen by their development of supplementary maths and reading material as a response to the needs of particular student groups they had identified. Other tutor initiatives, such as updating or modifying course and assessment materials to match students' learning needs, also showed an understanding of good teaching practice. This contributes to the high rates of retention and completions.

Tutors of the Cadet Forces programme have teaching qualifications and are experienced in all of the physical and military components of the programme. Some, including the head of department, have served in the New Zealand Defence Force and are therefore able to deliver credible and relevant training.

Tutors of other programmes also have the personal and professional qualities and experience for assisting students to reach their goals. Some are former students of Advance Training Centres, have prior experience in youth training, and understand the learning challenges faced by their students. This was confirmed through interviews with the students and graduates.

Over 60 per cent of Advance Training Centres' tutors are Māori, and there is a natural integration of tikanga in the learning culture and training delivery of the organisation. Advance Training Centres is very effective in training Māori students. Figures for 2013-2014 set out in Table 2 show that completion rates for Māori students are either at or just below the Advance Training Centres average in 2013 and are tracking above in 2014. The culture of high expectation and achievement, integration of cultural activities, whānau environment, importance of teams and groups and having Māori tutors as role models all contribute to this effectiveness.

Tutors are well supported with professional development, including staff training days and training in assessment and adult education and training practice.

The class sizes are small, enabling one-to-one tutoring to take place, and the teaching focus is on making sure that students understand. This, and the non-judgemental approach to learning is appreciated by the students who attribute their success to being able to work at their own pace and style, as well as to the constant feedback and encouragement from tutors. The collective expertise of tutors and their collaboration at branch level means that they are able to deliver training to groups with diverse and special needs, such as people with disabilities or with personal challenges.

Tutors support their teaching practice with the integration of remedial reading into the learning resources, group sessions and individual tuition. Students are also encouraged to use online remedial resources. While tutors noted the real improvements in reading and maths ability and how this supported other learning, there are no overall reports on progression. An organisational strategy is needed for this area in order to assess the effectiveness of these strategies.

All courses are delivered at the same time across all branches. This facilitates the overall reporting and monitoring of unit standard and course completions, and means that consistency of assessment can be assured through internal moderation processes. The system involving postal moderation between branches and a chief moderator slows the reporting of results, however. Online access for results reporting and monitoring is needed to support teaching practice. This was highlighted by tutors at the Whangarei branch.

Moderation reports available to the evaluators and discussion with tutors showed that moderation supports good teaching practice.

As noted, external moderation has been strengthened. There was evidence, for example, that the action plan agreed for literacy and numeracy-related standards is being implemented, but the success of the plan cannot be fully verified until the results of the 2014 national moderation with NZQA.

Tutors say they are valued and have benefited from the recent more visible management support. They are also able to work collaboratively and receive good feedback from informal appraisal processes. Student monthly evaluations provide Advance Training Centres with feedback on teaching and assessment. Reports are available to management, but self-assessment of teaching practice is still largely informal. The many strategies currently used to evaluate teaching effectiveness, such as moderation, individual tutor self-assessment and monitoring by the heads of department and general manager, need consolidating into an overall process that can be used for formal appraisal and self-assessment.

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 **Good**.

Advance Training Centres' students value the family atmosphere demonstrated in the two branches visited. The learning environments are warm and accepting. Tutors and management clearly see the potential in their students, and their guidance and support leads to good achievement, as outlined in Findings 1.1.

Youth Guarantee students with low or no formal qualifications are well supported in ways that enable them to achieve academically and personally. The integration of

literacy and numeracy upskilling, targeted learning resources and tutorial support into a highly structured training programme contributes to achievement.

Small group teaching and literacy and numeracy assistance support learning and individual achievement. Students have good information about the training and the requirements of the unit standards, and are well informed of their progress. Class homerooms have a whiteboard which clearly shows the stage or assessment that students are competent in and what they still have to achieve. Students said they found this tracking system very useful. Student evaluations show that students enjoyed the course, and rated the content, assessment and their progress as being 'excellent' or 'good'. Students are also given career guidance by tutors or local recruitment personnel, and are helped with the preparation of CVs and with job interview techniques and presentation.

Cadet Forces students appreciate the military-style training delivery, discipline and mock assessments which are directly relevant to achieving their goal of entry to the New Zealand Defence Force. Many of them spoke of the confidence gained from the personal support of tutors.

Counselling sessions are offered to students to help them deal with emotional or family issues. A counsellor is available at one branch weekly. Other health and social service agencies are available to provide assistance.

Physical safety is also managed through safety training as part of the Cadet Forces programme.

Students interviewed said they were clear about how they could seek support. In most cases the tutors were the first to be approached, and students were confident that they were always getting good advice on learning or their careers.

Self-assessment is based on a number of informal sources and student evaluations and shows that Advance Training Centres is effective in developing appropriate responses to students' need for guidance and support, and in monitoring how well needs are met. The close relationships that tutors have with their students and the feedback from students, graduates and employers suggests that the support is built into the training and daily interactions and is therefore effective. Currently there are no formal systems for evaluating how well the various services support and guide students. Given the large number of students across the five branches and the differing needs for support in each, an organisation-wide analysis is needed to support the informal sources of information.

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

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

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

Advance Training Centres has a clear direction to provide training for youth and to support regional communities in areas of high youth unemployment through foundation programmes such as Youth Guarantee. A major focus for the last 14 years has been to provide a clear and direct pathway into the New Zealand Defence Force for students who otherwise lack direction or the qualifications needed for entry.

Governance and management is a small group consisting of the director, general manager, and head of department. They support educational achievement and other positive outcomes through effective, well-planned training that meets the needs of and is valued by students and other stakeholders. This was evident from the interviews with students, graduates and employers.

Recent changes to government funding and contracted outcomes have resulted in modifications to training provision, income and reporting. The changes have been well managed by Advance Training Centres.

Management holds regular meetings and reviews student data relating to completions and retention based on the funding streams and contracted targets. Advance Training Centres has an investment plan and meets all the requirements of its funding partners. They have engaged with the TRoQ (Targeted Review of Qualifications) process for the review of the Cadet Forces qualifications.

In addition to the long-standing relationship with the New Zealand Defence Force, Advance Training Centres manages partnerships with regional providers and recruitment agencies to streamline graduates' progress to employment or further education and training. Formal memoranda of understanding are reviewed annually. Regular conversations with other providers provide Advance Training Centres with a good understanding of the usefulness of collaborative arrangements. As noted, this would be enhanced by the collation and analysis of existing data on graduate destinations.

Recent restructuring has led to the appointment of a new general manager and new head of department for the Youth Guarantee programme. All staff at Advance Training Centres' head office and Albany training branch are new. As a consequence, the management of the organisation is in a transitional phase as new roles and responsibilities are integrated into the wider organisation. This process includes a review of administrative and management needs at branch level. As noted in this report, processes for managing the reporting and monitoring of student results and records at a distance are needed and may include the planned electronic access to the student management system to branches.

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Staff recruitment is effective. Recent appointments have been made of tutors with qualifications and experience well suited to their positions. The appointment of a head of department for the Youth Guarantee programme with responsibility for all branches has had a positive effect on the programme and the management of tutors. There is now greater consistency in the delivery of the programme, and staff value the direction and support they receive. Recruitment of a head of department for computing and business administration is under consideration.

The improvements resulting from changes to management were clear to the evaluators based on interviews with staff. Communication between branches and head office has improved, and the more visible management style based on frequent visits to branches was regarded by staff as being very supportive. There is more sharing of information, and the organisation-wide staff meetings are effective in communicating policies and helping staff understand the funding constraints that can impact on enrolments. These activities are supported by the revision of the Advance Training Centres staff operating manual which is now 'readable and useful' according to staff, and clarifies their responsibilities. Overall, this has led to greater staff satisfaction.

As noted throughout this report, there is a need to consolidate or extend various practices that may exist at one branch, or for one programme, and those initiated by tutors, for the benefit of the organisation as a whole. These practices include an overall strategy for literacy and numeracy assistance; processes for ensuring that learning materials match the available resources; tutor appraisal; and improving the leadership of the business programme.

Whole-organisation strategies for self-assessment are needed that integrate current diffuse practices and provide a more coherent understanding of performance. These include better analysis of student achievement data in addition to that based on funding streams, a strategy for managing the extensive stakeholder feedback that could add to Advance Training Centres' understanding of needs and added value, and collation and analysis of student and graduate feedback for a better understanding of how well students learn.

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 **Good**.

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

2.2 Focus area: Youth Guarantee programmes

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

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

Tutors and management have a very good understanding of the needs of the target groups in this programme based on a 14-year relationship with the New Zealand Defence Force. The need by young people for structure, skills, and personal and learning support leads to positive outcomes in terms of recruitment to the New Zealand Defence Force and other forms of employment or training.

2.3 Focus area: Student Achievement Component funded programmes – Computing, Business Administration

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

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

2.4 Focus area: Memoranda of understanding – other providers

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

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

Recommendations

NZQA recommends that Advance Training Centres:

- Develop systems for self-assessment of student performance across all unit standards, individual qualifications and courses for all learner groups.
- Develop an organisational strategy for literacy and numeracy assistance.
- Develop organisational strategies for the collation and analysis of stakeholder feedback to identify the needs of and value added to different learner groups by the various courses.
- Collate and analyse graduate destination data that supports current informal knowledge and branch reports of successful outcomes.

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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