

QUALITY AUDIT REPORT

ABC Developmental Learning Centres (NZ) Limited trading as NZ College of Childhood Education

Audit Dates: 30 and 31 July 2008

Report Release Date: 11 September 2008

Provider ID: 7859

1 Objectives

The audit aimed to obtain reasonable assurance that ABC Developmental Learning Centres (NZ) Limited trading as the NZ College of Early Childhood Education (NZCECE) 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 NZCECE does not offer degree courses.

NZCECE offers courses to international students. This audit included an evaluation of NZCECE's compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (Code of Practice).

3 Responsibilities

ABC 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

NZCECE delivers early childhood courses. Courses are based on the learning requirements for the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 5), CACHE Diploma (UK), or the Diploma in Teaching (Early Childhood Education) (Level 7).

On campus students are able to study the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 5) and the CACHE Diploma (UK) while studying the Diploma in Teaching (Early Childhood Education) (Level 7). Distance learning students are able to study the Diploma in Teaching (Early Childhood Education) (Level 7).

This was a scheduled audit at Christchurch. NZCECE was registered in 2007 and this was the provider's first audit.

These findings will be used by NZQA's Quality Assurance Division in its decision on the registration and accreditation status of ABC Developmental Learning Centres (NZ) Limited and in the determination of required corrective actions, as it deems appropriate.

5 Summary

At this audit (2008), NZCECE met all requirements of QA Standard One.

Goals and objectives

NZCECE aims to provide quality training for nannies and early childhood educators. At the time of the audit the college was finalising its investment plan goals with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) for the next three years. Initially, the organisation will focus on improving the qualifications of early childhood educators so they can meet industry requirements for teacher registration as well as providing qualifications for students who wish to enter the Early Childhood teaching profession. The achievement of goals for 2008 will be measured through performance indicators to be agreed for 2008. The key performance indicators are likely to involve increasing the numbers of graduating students and student progression over three years, from the certificate through to the teaching diploma offered by NZCECE.

Governance and management

The organisation underwent a change of ownership at the end of 2007. The head office in Christchurch oversees all the responsibilities for the organisation,. ABC Developmental Learning Centres (NZ) Limited, trading as NZCECE, is a subsidiary of ABC Learning Centres Limited in Australia, and therefore reports overall outcomes to the parent company. The ABC Developmental Learning Centres (NZ) Limited's' finance division based in Auckland provides NZCECE with finance systems support.

NZCECE has reviewed and revised the previous quality management system and reviewed the policies and procedures to ensure they are up to date and reflect current practice.

NZCECE has acceptable financial practices and operates a trust to protect student fees for refunds and withdrawals.

Personnel

NZCECE has a team of skilled, qualified and experienced staff. Most tutors hold diploma, bachelor or postgraduate qualifications in early childhood education. Staff are also being offered opportunities to take on higher qualifications to assist them to undertake research, which is a requirement for teaching early childhood education at level 7.

Staff have the opportunity to discuss their performance with the management team through planned annual performance appraisals. Students commented that staff had sufficient skills to support them in achieving their goals.

Physical and learning resources

The organisation is situated on three levels of the building and contains a library, seven classrooms, offices for staff and kitchen facilities. The library contains resources for students to complete assignments and for course-related readings. Tutoring staff are responsible for ensuring that resources are up to date and available for each class.

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The organisation has a health and safety manual containing policies to protect students and staff. This includes procedures for identifying hazards, and incident and accident recording and reporting.

Learner information, entry and support

NZCECE has brochures with information on enrolment procedures and the courses available. NZCECE provides two opportunities in the first half of the year for students to enrol, or four enrolment dates if they elect to do distance learning. The pre-entry requirements for all courses are provided in the colleges' enrolment and pre-course information.

At enrolment, students receive a handbook with information about the organisation, fees, student support services, assessment requirements, study assistance and appeals and complaints processes. International students also receive information about accommodation and living in New Zealand.

Students' learning styles are assessed early on to match learning activities to their needs. The organisation provides assistance to students who require additional learning support. Tutors meet with the students weekly to discuss the course and any issues that students may have.

NZCECE met all requirements of the Code of Practice.

Development, delivery and review of programmes

The courses are developed using the philosophy of proactive learning, and are based on meeting the learners' needs and the aims of the organisation. The organisation has designed courses so that students may progress through the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education, and the CACHE early childhood diploma to complete the Diploma of Teaching (ECE), which is required for registration as an early childhood teacher.

The organisation encourages students to develop reflective learning practices through ongoing self-assessment and maintaining a portfolio of practicum experiences. Students may complete the course face-to-face or through distance learning.

The diploma course has been monitored as required by the NZ Teachers Council and NZQA. As a result, the organisation has reviewed the course to include recommendations from the monitor's report. In addition, student evaluations are collated throughout the course to provide information for the academic staff on the course structure and content for review. As well, the organisation is reviewing its courses to ensure that learning activities meet the learning outcomes, and that the course delivery is manageable for staff and students.

Assessment and moderation

Internally, staff check all assessments to ensure that activities are valid and that assessor decisions meet the national standard. NZCECE is meeting the requirements of moderation set by the New Zealand Teachers Council for the diploma course, as well as the national external moderation requirements for the New Zealand Certificate in Nanny Education (Level 5). The organisation is also compliant with the assessment standards for the UK Council for Awards for Children's Care and Education (CACHE) programme.

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A new policy for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) has been developed for students with previous qualifications in early childhood education who are seeking a qualification to help them to become a registered teacher. The policy also contains guidelines for overseas teachers seeking RPL as well as students who may already have achieved the learning standard contained in the qualifications offered by NZCECE.

Notification and reporting on learner achievement

Students receive regular feedback on their progress from tutors at weekly tutor group meetings. Qualifications are awarded to students at the end of each programme at a graduation ceremony. NZCECE also reports completion of CACHE qualification to CACHE UK. Final results are recorded electronically and are archived off site.

Achievement of goals and objectives

NZCECE has reviewed the organisation as a whole over the past six months. This has resulted in changes to its organisational structure, quality management system, course development and recognition of prior learning processes. Since the organisation was registered in 2007, it has partially reviewed results. Currently, the enrolment measures are monitored and these will be formalised once the organisation's investment plan has been agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

Closing statement

The organisation has robust policies and procedures in place. Staff are qualified and skilled in teaching and student support. The review processes in place will ensure that the new entity is able to conduct a smooth transition from the previous organisation. New performance indicators have yet to be developed for measuring performance but will be agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

These findings will be used by NZQA's Quality Assurance Division in its decision on the registration and accreditation status of ABC Developmental Learning Centres (NZ) Limited and in the determination of required corrective actions, as it deems appropriate.

6 Detailed findings

Numbering of detailed findings below follows that of QA Standard One.

1.1 Defining goals and objectives

QA Standard One requires that the provider has measurable goals and objectives for education and training.

There are two requirements for this element.

The provider has met both requirements. It has

- stated its education activities within a written statement of its goals and objectives, approved by the governing body
- applied performance indicators to measure the achievement of its goals and objectives.

1.2 Systems to achieve goals and objectives

QA Standard One requires that the provider puts into practice quality management systems to achieve its goals and objectives.

There are eight elements within 1.2, each with a set of requirements.

1.2.1 Governance and management

QA Standard One requires that the provider has adequate and appropriate governance and management to achieve its goals and objectives.

There are 11 requirements for this element.

The provider has met all applicable requirements. It has

Ownership and governance

- defined its ownership and governance structures
- managed in the best interests of the establishment and its kaupapa
- maintained its corporate status

Quality management systems

- applied a coherent set of policies and procedures (quality management system)
- defined organisational structures, roles, responsibilities, authorities, lines of reporting and accountability
- defined how it addresses the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
- notified NZQA of any significant changes

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Financial management

- used acceptable financial management practices and achieved acceptable financial performance
- operated trust accounts that comply with s236A of the Education Act 1989
- made arrangements to indemnify student fees or provided evidence of exemption.

The following requirement is not applicable:

Quality management systems

- applied the quality management system across all sites.

1.2.2 Personnel

QA Standard One requires that the provider recruits, manages and develops its people to achieve its goals and objectives.

There are four requirements for this element.

The provider has met all requirements. It has

- used appropriate recruitment and selection practices to make sure it has enough personnel with
 - teaching and subject knowledge
 - assessment and moderation expertise
 - educational management experience
 - quality management expertise
 - student support skills
 - financial and administration expertise
- provided fair conditions of employment
- appraised staff performance
- provided ongoing staff development.

1.2.3 Physical and learning resources

QA Standard One requires that the provider has adequate and appropriate physical and learning resources to achieve its goals and objectives.

There are four requirements for this element.

The provider has met all requirements. It has

- defined the quality and quantity of physical and learning resources
- made resources available to students before delivery of training

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- ensured the premises meet the requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 and the New Zealand Building Code as required by the Building Act 2004
- met appropriate levels of quality, health, safety and comfort for learners and staff at permanent and temporary teaching sites.

1.2.4 Learner information, entry and support

QA Standard One requires that the provider supplies adequate and appropriate information, entry and support services to learners.

There are six requirements for this element.

The provider has met all applicable requirements. It has

Learner information

- provided information covering
 - recruitment and enrolment
 - publicity material
 - descriptions of courses and qualifications
 - entry and selection criteria
 - induction
 - pastoral care, welfare and student support services
 - rules and regulations
 - withdrawal and refunds
 - disciplinary procedures
 - complaint procedures
 - reassessment procedures
 - procedures for appeals of academic results
 - recognition of prior learning or current competency
 - total costs for enrolment and pursuing a proposed course of study
 - student fee indemnification arrangements
 - health and safety requirements

At enrolment

- made sure learners fully understand what is required from them in their proposed course of study
- identified learners' specific learning needs and planned how to address those needs to ensure they have reasonable chance of success

Ongoing support

- dealt with learners fairly and equitably

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- provided access to guidance, support systems and welfare services. The provider has made sure it
 - protected learners and the public from any physical, cultural, psychological, moral or emotional harm that may result from the teaching programmes or related activities
 - responded appropriately to identified skill gaps or lack of learner achievement
 - provided support and guidance appropriate to the method of delivery for each course of study so learners can plan their learning programme to achieve their learning goals
 - informed learners of guidance, support, welfare services, and health and safety procedures

International students

- complied with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

1.2.5 Development, delivery and review of programmes

QA Standard One requires that the provider adequately and appropriately designs, develops, delivers and reviews its education and training programmes consistent with its goals and objectives.

There are eight requirements for this element.

The provider has met all applicable requirements. It has

Development

- designed, developed and approved programmes that
 - are based on the needs of learners and other stakeholders
 - incorporate requirements of any funding or standard-setting bodies
 - specify the learning outcomes and expected standards of achievement
 - ensure the learning outcomes are achievable within the timeframe of the programme
 - have appropriate content, teaching and learning strategies, resources and assessment activities
 - integrate any off-site practical or workplace components

Delivery

- delivered courses in ways that meet the needs of the learner

Review

- systematically monitored and evaluated all courses and used the results to improve learning outcomes and achievement
- monitored learner and stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of education and training provided.

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The following requirements are not applicable:

Delivery

- specified the standard of delivery and support for any education and training delivered on its behalf
- ensured that it meets the information requirements outlined in QA Standard One when offering New Zealand qualifications overseas

Review

- regularly monitored and evaluated education delivered on its behalf by other providers
- kept qualifications and programme content current with latest industry or unit standards.

1.2.6 Assessment and moderation

QA Standard One requires that the provider has adequate and appropriate systems of assessment and moderation for assessing learners against the expected outcomes of programmes.

There are seven requirements for this element.

The provider has met all applicable requirements. It has

- ensured assessment
 - processes and decisions are open, systematic and consistent
 - methods are appropriate, fair, manageable and integrated with work or learning
 - evidence is valid, authentic and sufficient
- internally moderated its assessment materials and judgements
- complied with external moderation requirements of NZQA and national standard-setting agencies
- made sure learner work is adequately stored to meet moderation requirements, reassessments and learner appeals
- made sure learners are informed of the procedures for reassessments and appeals of assessment results
- applied fair and consistent processes for credit transfer, recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency.

The following requirement is not applicable:

- made sure learners are assessed against only those unit standards or qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for which the provider has accreditation.

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1.2.7 Notification and reporting on learner achievement

QA Standard One requires that the provider adequately and appropriately reports on learner achievement.

There are four requirements for this element.

The provider has met all applicable requirements. It has

- systematically recorded learner achievement
- reported regularly to learners on their progress and achievement
- maintained a reliable system for archiving information on final learner achievements.

The following requirement is not applicable:

- transferred learner achievement of credits for unit standards to NZQA Record of Learning database
 - accurately
 - on a regular basis
 - as soon as practicable after credit has been awarded, and
 - only in relation to the scope of accreditation granted.

1.2.8 Research

QA Standard One requires that, where degree programmes are offered, the provider has adequate and appropriate means of research to achieve its goals and objectives.

This element was excluded because NZCECE does not offer degree programmes.

1.3 Achievement of goals and objectives

QA Standard One requires that the provider is achieving its goals and objectives, and can assure that it will continue to do so.

There are four requirements for this element.

The provider has met all requirements. It has

- applied suitable performance indicators to measure and monitor the achievements of goals and objectives
- used the results of its performance measurement to update its goals, objectives and performance indicators
- regularly collected feedback from learners, clients, funders and other stakeholders to confirm its effectiveness as a training provider and to further improve its education and training

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- used review and evaluation processes that either
 - confirm that policies and processes as set out in the quality management system are current, are being applied consistently and are effective in achieving desired outcomes, or
 - identify areas for ongoing improvement, which are then actioned.

Recommendations

In addition to the findings in the audit report, the following recommendations were made. Recommendations are not compulsory but the auditor believes their implementation will improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by your organisation.

- *Document policies and procedures for managing learning resources, storage of student assessments for appeals, and archiving students' final results.*

This may assist in determining whether current practices are adequate, appropriate and are being carried out, for example the management of any assessment appeals from distance learners.

- *Map the links in the quality system to the relevant manuals, documents, and forms.*

This will enable tracking of document links to policies and assist the review of the quality management systems.

- *Develop more detailed criteria for assessment guidelines for all assessments to ensure internal moderation processes are objective, transparent and consistent, particularly at stage 3.*

Note: most assessment criteria for stages 1 and 2 have been developed and recorded.

- *Expand the instructions on the internal moderation checklist to clarify what is to be checked for pre- and post-assessment moderation.*