

2025 Pastoral Care Self-Review for Service Skills Centre

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Section 1: Introduction

This self-review assesses Service Skills Centre's 2025 pastoral care against the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021*. Our mission remains focused on fostering an inclusive, safe learning environment for second-chance learners, supported by high staff-to-student engagement, maintaining tutor-student ratios consistently under 1:10. Having successfully integrated the second site established in May 2024, the focus this year has shifted to consolidating standards across both locations and strategically innovating our support models to address holistic student development.

Section 2: Review Findings

In 2025, Service Skills Centre successfully maintained the foundational practices that drive student success while introducing a significant pilot initiative to enhance deep engagement and student pathways.

Enhanced Learning Environment and Consistent Practice

The welcoming, supportive environment is now fully established at both our primary and secondary sites, ensuring consistency in student experience across locations. Tutors continue to engage with students through regular, personalized check-ins, which student feedback confirms significantly contributes to their sense of belonging and motivation. Core pastoral practices, including early intervention and clear referral pathways, remain robust and effective. The ongoing use of "World at your Feet" (Dale Beaumont & Brent Williams) and the website www.justathought.co.nz in our induction programme provides direction for youth.

Staff Development

Following recommendations from the 2024 review, staff training has been ongoing at both sites, ensuring all tutors are aligned with the Centre's support model. All staff have in 2025 been able to attend a two day face to face workshop in "Mental Health First Aid". Further to this all staff have available to them the Suite of Warn International online training that they have completed and are able to repeat anytime. Lance Burdett from Warn International has worked with our organisation previously and is possibly the best NZ has to offer in advanced communication strategies, including de-escalation, personal safety, and coping skills programmes.

Youth Worker Engagement Pilot (October 2025)

In a strategic move to deepen pastoral support and proactively address engagement barriers, we employed a dedicated Youth Worker at our Salon site starting in October 2025. This role is designed to spend time working with students daily, going beyond traditional pastoral triage to focus on building connection, enhancing motivation, and exploring career aspirations. This proactive, sustained engagement model aims to build deeper rapport and support long-term success.

Resource Alignment

A tremendous amount of resources in 2025 were put into re design of all our assessments to provide consistency for our students with in-house assessment material (externally approved). Previous feedback has been strong to address the difference layouts across assessment material. We work across numerous industries and the material we were able to purchase were all designed differently, creating confusion for the student. Designing our own has provided material that allows the student to confidently understand the structure and layout of the assessments.

Critical Incidents - None

Section 3: Recommendations

As Service Skills Centre enters 2026, the primary focus must be on evaluating and leveraging the success of the new pilot program to inform future operational planning.

- **Pilot Program Review and Replication Strategy:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive review of the Youth Worker Pilot effectiveness at the salon site at the end of the year. This review must inform a clear strategy for how this sustained support model could be successfully **replicated or adapted** for the Tourism Site to ensure equal benefit for all learners.
- **Deepening Career Aspirations:** Integrate the Youth Worker's approach to career guidance into daily practice, leveraging their work to embed discussions around future pathways and motivation.
- **Sustaining Feedback Mechanisms:** allocate to specific staff members the process of structured student feedback loops being conducted termly to ensure student voices continue to regularly ensure drive responsive and timely refinements to our pastoral care provision.

Section 4: Conclusion

Service Skills Centre's commitment to learner wellbeing has matured in 2025. We have successfully consolidated our high standards across both centers, maintaining our unique, small-scale approach where high staff-to-student ratios foster safe and inclusive environments. The introduction of the Youth Worker Pilot marks a pivotal step in strategic innovation, demonstrating our responsiveness to the holistic needs of our learners. We are confident that the findings from the pilot review will provide a strong pathway for expanding our capacity to support motivation and career development, ultimately advancing our mission in 2026.