



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
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Report of External Evaluation and Review

Sue's Unlimited Limited
trading as Sue's Computer Training Co

Highly Confident in educational performance

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 24 January 2017

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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:	Sue's Unlimited Limited trading as Sue's Computer Training Company
Type:	Private training establishment (PTE)
First registered:	14 February 2000
Location:	112 Osprey Drive, Welcome Bay, Tauranga
Delivery site:	Not applicable – online delivery
Courses currently delivered:	Certificate in Medical Transcription (Level 4)
Code of Practice signatory:	Not applicable
Number of students:	Domestic: 12 students 2015: Māori, one; Filipino, two; Chinese, one; Australian, one; New Zealand European, seven
Number of staff:	One full-time and two part-time staff members
Scope of active accreditation:	One approved programme: Certificate in Medical Transcription (Level 4)
Distinctive characteristics:	The Certificate in Medical Transcription is a niche local qualification delivered fully by online learning through a New Zealand-owned, web-based programme developed by an American company. New Zealand components have been added to the course content. The programme is delivered solely to domestic

students, attracting a number of learners who have previously worked in the medical or transcription/secretarial professions and have sought a career change, or others who want the flexibility to work either in a hospital situation or from their homes.

The programme can be completed full-time in 42 weeks or, where personal circumstances dictate, on a part-time basis.

- Recent significant changes: The PTE reports no changes to staff since the last external evaluation and review (EER). As a result of the NZQA Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ) discussions, the New Zealand Certificate in Medical Transcription and Editing (Level 4) qualification was approved and listed in late 2015. The PTE expects to lodge an application later this month for approval to deliver this qualification in 2017.
- Previous quality assurance history: The previous EER was conducted in October 2012. NZQA was confident in both the educational performance and capability in self-assessment of the PTE.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The scope of the EER included the Certificate in Medical Transcription (Level 4), which is the sole programme delivered by the organisation.

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 EER was conducted by two evaluators over a day and a half at the organisation's head office in Tauranga. The evaluation team reviewed a range of documentation and interviewed the managing director and administrator. Telephone discussions were conducted with the (United States-based) trainer and

external stakeholders, including representatives of the advisory group, current students, graduates and employers of graduates.

Summary of Results

Statements of confidence on educational performance and capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance and **Highly Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Sue's Unlimited Limited trading as Sue's Computer Training Co.**

The following reasons contribute to this confidence:

- Sue's Computer Training Co (Sue's) is meeting the most important needs of its learners and stakeholders in providing this niche qualification. The PTE is achieving very good results, averaging 87 per cent course completions over the last three years. Māori students, although small in number, have achieved comparably to non-Māori.
- The PTE has robust moderation processes which provide it with assurance that the assessments are fair, consistent and validate the reported achievements.
- The company has excellent employment outcomes. Of the respondents to the PTE's graduate survey, 81 per cent have secured employment as medical transcriptionists with a further 8 per cent working in related fields.
- Graduates value the training as it enables them to meet the requirements for employment as medical transcriptionists, and they can immediately apply their knowledge and skills in the field. This value was also attested to by employers of the graduates.
- The trainer is a well-qualified and experienced educator who is responsive to student and client feedback, continually seeking to improve her facilitation of the course. She continues to contract her services in the industry as a medical transcriptionist on a part-time basis, keeping her practice and knowledge current.
- The course is well resourced. Comprehensive information is provided prior to the course so that students are fully aware of the requirements of online study. In addition to the teaching and study materials provided during the course, the organisation also adds forum documentation to further clarify and enhance learning based on student feedback and discussion, providing learners with every opportunity to succeed.
- As the sole deliverer of this qualification in New Zealand, the PTE has developed very strong relationships in the medical transcription industry, as evidenced by its stewardship of successful TRoQ discussions which resulted in the level 4 New Zealand Certificate in Medical Transcription and Editing (Level 4) qualification being approved and listed in late 2015.

- Sue's provided numerous examples demonstrating that self-assessment is ongoing, authentic and robust and has led to worthwhile improvements. All policies and practices are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure consistency. A willingness to seek, collate and respond to feedback from everyone the PTE engages with has strengthened practice.
- The company has a robust risk management plan which is fit for purpose for the size of the organisation. This plan and continuous internal reviews provide assurance that the PTE is aware of its compliance obligations and proactively seeks to mitigate any risks. The organisation is small (one full-time and two part-time staff with a maximum of 14 students), and the contingency plan to replace any staff member is clearly designed to cover all roles so students are not unduly affected.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do students 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 **Excellent**.

Sue's continues to meet the most important needs of its students and stakeholders. Since the previous EER, the PTE has consistently improved achievement, meeting or exceeding its commitments to the Tertiary Education Commission, averaging 87 per cent course completions over the last three years. For the same period, the PTE averaged 79 per cent qualification completions. These are excellent results as the student numbers are small (maximum 14 per intake) and any withdrawals or non-completions have a substantial impact on completion outcomes. Māori student numbers are small, but they achieve comparably. Pasifika enrolments continue to challenge the PTE and efforts are continuing to attract and retain these students.

From the student evaluations and interviews, students reported a rise in self-confidence as their skills and knowledge grew throughout the programme. The students continuously build their skills in transcription while learning and using extensive medical terminology. By the end of their studies, students were confident to apply their skills in the workplace. Graduates aim to achieve a speed typing score of 70 words per minute and 98 per cent accuracy in transcriptions, which are the baseline requirements of employers.

The organisation has well-established processes to collate and analyse achievement data and does so by cohort, ethnicity, age group and gender. The analysis extends to withdrawals, and the PTE can clearly show that where students do not complete it is for personal circumstances beyond the organisation's ability to intervene. The PTE is reflective, monitoring student progress so it can intervene if students require additional support. This monitoring of individual online engagement (inactivity beyond a 72-hour period alerts the PTE), triggers contact by the managing director, trainer or administrator to discuss any issues or concerns that may be affecting study and assignment completion. Staff report that this email or phone contact is appreciated by the students and is regular enough so they do not get too far behind in their studies. The ongoing positive achievement outcomes attest to the value of this monitoring and support.

¹ 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?

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 qualification is highly valued by students and employers. Sue's is the only organisation offering a qualification in medical transcription in New Zealand, and research presented by the PTE shows an ongoing shortage of transcriptionists. Employment is available in district health boards and within the private medical sector and is generally offered on a contract basis.

The company has excellent employment outcomes, as noted from the respondents to the PTE's graduate survey, of whom 81 per cent have secured employment as medical transcriptionists, with a further 8 per cent working in a related field. The training can lead to flexible employment which can also be done in the home, a key factor for many graduates who prefer to work from home, fitting employment around their personal circumstances.

Graduates interviewed acknowledged the value of the training as it enables them to meet the requirements for medical transcriptionists, and they can immediately apply their knowledge and skills in the field. This value was also attested to by employers of the graduates. Employers appreciate that graduates have the required skills to begin employment, and they then continue to work with graduates to customise their transcribing skills to suit the employer's particular needs. While the PTE regularly seeks feedback from employers about the work-readiness of graduates, and knows the immediate destination of all graduates, feedback from graduates has been more informal. The PTE could consider adding this enquiry when it contacts graduates to check destinations following graduation.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant 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**.

The programme is delivered totally online. The flexibility of this design and delivery style matches the needs of the students. Many are restricted in their study options through personal circumstances including family commitments, already being in employment, looking at a career change, and living in a rural location, all of which

restrict attendance at face-to-face, full-time study. The graduates are able to continue this flexibility working from home.

The introductory block of the course helps familiarise students with online study as well as grammar requirements, which aids transcription accuracy, an outcome of the programme. The second and consecutive blocks develop transcription skills further and build medical terminology.

A well-qualified, experienced tutor in the medical transcription field facilitates the teaching. This tutor is based in the United States and teaches the online courses remotely. The hours in which she teaches the programme works well across time zones, meaning that students get timely response to their support queries. She continues to contract for services in the medical transcription industry, so keeping current and relevant. The tutor, along with the managing director and administrator, work collaboratively to closely monitor student progress, providing encouragement, acknowledgment and support.

Student evaluations follow each teaching block. However, the PTE notes the importance of informal feedback throughout study – which provides information relevant to the individual – and through the online forums, which benefits all students. Industry feedback is provided through the advisory group which includes district health boards, private medical practitioners and transcription contractor employers. The advisory group is actively involved in the annual evaluation of the programme and extended this activity for the last two years to include the NZQA TRoQ process.

Management, teaching, support and administrative staff have been constant since the last EER, and students and graduates confirm their satisfaction with all staff as responsive, encouraging and stern when warranted, and they appreciate the care taken to promote successful achievement.

Course-related costs include equipment necessary for the programme such as a headset and foot pedal to manage the audio tapes that are being transcribed. The added benefit of this is that on graduation the graduates have the equipment required for self-employment.

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

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

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

The students access comprehensive pre-enrolment information including a very useful document, 'Are you ready for online study?' which they use as a self-review to determine whether they are a match for online study. The information and questions in this document include an assessment of learning style, computer competency, online equipment, internet skills and recommended study hours.

The organisation has found through its self-assessment that students can over-estimate the time they are able to allocate for study each week. The PTE now provides a study timetable with hours allocated for each week's work so students can better monitor that they are applying sufficient study time to better assure success.

Closely linked to this initiative, the student is monitored for individual online engagement (inactivity beyond a 72-hour period alerts the PTE). This triggers contact by the managing director or administrator to discuss any issues or concerns that may be affecting study and assignment completion.

Online forums provide additional study guide notes added to clarify or enhance study materials following student feedback. The forums assist students with their learning and students interviewed found them to be very useful. The PTE is keen to add explanatory video clips, but this is proving cost prohibitive and alternative software is being explored.

The students communicate through online discussions with the tutor, administrator or managing director as required. These discussions are shared with all staff so all are aware of any issues that may affect student progress. The students comment that staff are responsive and provide quick turnaround to queries and prompt informative feedback on assessments. The course evaluations are generally very positive. However, staff find that the informal email interactions with students provide more in-depth feedback, and if any issues arise they are dealt with promptly.

Students' support requirements are identified at enrolment and through tutor observation, and appropriate support is put in place. Where students might be lagging behind proposed progress indicators, the staff will use individual learning contracts to get the student back on track to better assure success.

1.5 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**.

There was clear evidence of strategic planning and direction through Sue's investment plan with the Tertiary Education Commission, based on ongoing industry and programme needs analysis and review.

The sole owner/managing director uses staff and the advisory group to provide a range of expertise (marketing, needs analysis, industry input, practical application, internal audit) to assist with governance and management responsibilities, and this has worked well. The managing director works closely with the licensor to provide assurance that the programme hours and outcomes align with those approved by NZQA.

Throughout 2014-2015 the managing director, along with representatives of her advisory group, participated in the TRoQ discussions with the outcome that the new New Zealand Certificate in Medical Transcription and Editing (Level 4) was approved and listed in October 2015. The organisation was heartened to learn from these discussions that the current programme is closely aligned to the new qualification. The PTE expects to submit an application this month for approval and accreditation to deliver this programme in 2017.

The programme is well resourced as the equipment that students require for study and employment is acquired on the programme. The tutor, who has been with the programme for the past five years, keeps current through ongoing part-time employment as a medical transcriptionist. The managing director conducts annual appraisals which include self-reviews by staff, external moderation, achievement results, employer feedback and evaluations by students. Professional development opportunities follow these discussions and are implemented. This process has worked well for the PTE, and staff have been stable for more than seven years.

The PTE showed evidence of ongoing and authentic self-assessment fit for purpose for the size of the organisation and the number of students. It has policies and procedures to underpin practice, and a number of these are reviewed each month or as required.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

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**.

Sue's has detailed a well-developed quality management system and processes, and these are applied regularly, effectively and consistently. All staff work collaboratively to ensure that through these processes the PTE is managing its compliance accountabilities effectively and is likely to identify any areas of non-compliance should they occur.

Where required, the managing director refers to the organisation's advisory group to provide additional advice or expertise in legal or ethical matters.

The use of the PTE's compliance checklist is fit for purpose and includes all of the most important compliance requirements pertaining to the PTE. There was clear evidence of internal reviews of all operational aspects and educational performance, which provides the PTE with assurance that it continues to meet its compliance obligations.

The organisation offers one programme only and is fully aware of the legislative requirements pertaining to the delivery and support of this programme, including that the hours of delivery are consistent with the programme approved by NZQA.

Focus Areas

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

2.1 Focus area: Certificate in Medical Transcription (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**.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review.

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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