

External Evaluation and Review Report

Sue's Unlimited Limited

Date of report: 1 October 2025

About Sue's Unlimited Limited

Sue's Unlimited Limited is a small online distance learning provider and the only organisation in New Zealand delivering a programme leading to the New Zealand Certificate in Medical Transcription and Editing (Level 4).

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Osprey Drive, Welcome Bay, Tauranga
Eligible to enrol international students:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: 13 full-time students enrolled at the time of the EER International: nil
Number of staff:	Three permanent part-time
TEO profile:	See Sue's Unlimited on the NZQA website.
Last EER outcome:	The 2021 external evaluation and review (EER) of Sue's Unlimited resulted in summative judgements of Highly Confident in educational performance and Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	The current EER looked at the following focus area: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Zealand Certificate in Medical Transcription and Editing (Level 4) (Programme ref: 121450/1)
MoE number:	7318
NZQA reference:	C61979
Dates of EER visit:	19 and 20 August 2025

Summary of results

Through high-quality education and training, Sue's Unlimited produces work-ready medical transcription graduates, delivering clear value to students, employers and the wider health sector.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Educational performance is positive, with around 70 per cent qualification completion across approximately 82 enrolments during the evaluation period. Student progress is closely monitored, and assessment decisions are supported by both internal and external moderation.
- Graduate outcomes show clear value for stakeholders. The programme aligns well with workforce needs, and graduates are sought after by employers for medical transcription or related roles. Regular systematic follow-up with graduates and employers should be strengthened to improve the reliability of outcomes data.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Sue's Unlimited is the qualification developer and New Zealand's sole provider of the programme leading to the New Zealand Certificate in Medical Transcription and Editing. The PTE therefore carries a unique responsibility for quality and outcomes, which the evidence shows it fulfils effectively.
- Programme quality is purposeful and contextualised to industry needs. Programme design and assessment reflect current practice, and ongoing review keeps materials up to date.
- Student support is appropriate, timely and informed by active engagement monitoring.
- Governance, leadership and compliance are sound. The PTE is stable and transparent, self-assessment is active, records and statutory obligations are up to date, and overall compliance is being effectively managed.

Key evaluation question findings¹

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Student achievement at Sue's Unlimited is strong. Qualification completions are high for an online context, with around 70 per cent of approximately 82 enrolments completing during the evaluation period.² Achievement is tracked using Student Data Return (SDR) data and learning management system (LMS) analytics, giving good visibility of progress and completions. Assessment is sequenced to build accuracy and speed to industry standards, and the overall pattern of results indicates that most students reach the required level by programme end.</p> <p>Student progress is closely monitored. Tutors review log-ins, activity and submissions weekly, provide timely formative feedback, and intervene early when engagement dips. Clear assessment briefs, exemplars and staged practice tasks help students to master the technical and language requirements before attempting summative assessments. These practices support steady progression across modules.</p> <p>Achievement judgements are well supported by quality assurance of assessments, giving confidence that reported results are valid and that graduates who complete have demonstrably met the intended outcomes.</p> <p>Achievement levels for priority students is a known area for improvement. While overall achievement is high, completions for Māori and Pasifika students are significantly lower (noting moderate enrolment numbers³). More systematic analysis of</p>

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

² The Tertiary Education Commission's most recent publicly reported completion rate for national level 4-7 non-degree qualifications was 60 per cent in 2022. Given the additional retention challenges typical of distance delivery, 70 per cent is a high rate.

³ For 2021-24, 11 Māori and three Pasifika students enrolled, making up 17 per cent of enrolments.

	<p>the drivers of withdrawal – and monitoring the impact of specific support actions – will be important to close these gaps.</p> <p>Self-assessment is active and mostly effective. Sue's Unlimited routinely interrogates SDR/LMS data, discusses trends during team meetings, and makes incremental adjustments to teaching materials and assessment windows.</p>
Conclusion:	Overall, students achieve well in an online modality. Results are credible, assessment is robust, and most students complete the programme to standard. Some equity gaps persist, and while self-assessment is good and improvement-oriented, more systematic analysis would further enhance decision-making.

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Sue's Unlimited delivers strong value to students. Graduates develop role-ready competencies in medical terminology, transcription accuracy, editorial judgement and productivity under time constraints. They also gain transferable capabilities such as digital fluency, attention to detail, client communication, confidentiality and remote-work self-management, which support employability within and beyond medical transcription. Reported outcomes indicate that many graduates transition to medical transcription roles, with others moving to adjacent administrative or documentation positions where their skills remain directly applicable.</p> <p>Employers report clear benefits. Sue's Unlimited graduates meet workplace expectations more quickly, require less onboarding, and reach service benchmarks sooner due to authentic practice built into the programme (e.g. progressively complex dictation, quality control and turnaround-time targets). Their familiarity with clinical-style conventions, privacy protocols and error-reduction practices reduces rework and risk, contributing to more reliable throughput in transcription services.</p>

	<p>The broader health sector also benefits through accurate, timely and consistent clinical records. Employers make repeat requests for Sue's Unlimited graduates, and state a preference for the full qualification over shorter training options. This suggest that the programme's depth better sustains quality and productivity in a setting where documentation errors can have real and significant downstream effects. This is increasingly critical as initial transcription is often produced by voice-recognition software, shifting the transcriber's role toward proofreading, editing and quality control.</p> <p>Current self-assessment evidence would be more robust with a systematised outcomes framework, such as embedded end-of-programme exit feedback, and scheduled graduate and employer follow-ups at set intervals (e.g. three, six, 12 months). Disaggregating outcomes for Māori and Pasifika graduates would also support targeted improvements and clearer judgements about value received.</p>
Conclusion:	The PTE delivers excellent value for students, employers and the wider health sector, with consistent evidence of work-readiness and industry relevance.

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Sue's Unlimited's programme is tightly aligned to the competencies required for medical transcription. The curriculum is coherently sequenced, from foundation knowledge (terminology, style, privacy) through to increasingly authentic transcription and editing tasks that build both accuracy and productivity. Learning activities use real-world audio of varying quality, accents and specialties to mirror workplace conditions and keep students engaged.</p> <p>Learning outcomes have a clear line of sight to role expectations, and the workload and assessments are</p>

	<p>calibrated to help students progress from accuracy to speed without compromising quality.</p> <p>Assessment is authentic and robust. A balanced mix of formative practice and summative checks tests transcription accuracy, editorial judgment, turnaround expectations and adherence to confidentiality and clinical-style conventions. Resubmission and reassessment processes are structured to uphold standards while giving students fair opportunities to demonstrate competence.</p> <p>While internal and external moderation has supported the validity of assessment decisions, this mainly relates to grade allocation. Therefore, NZQA encourages Sue's Unlimited to undertake a full-suite, pre-moderation of assessments after the upcoming qualification review.</p> <p>Currency and responsiveness are strengths. Stakeholder engagement is purposeful and responsive. Sue's Unlimited uses employer conversations and student feedback to inform updates to materials and assessment contexts. This includes updates to specialty vocabularies, style guides, regulatory requirements and common tooling (e.g. workflows involving speech recognition and template use).</p> <p>Self-assessment capability is embedded in everyday practice. Changes are documented, effects are reviewed, and successful practices are standardised. This improvement cycle has strengthened design, delivery and assessment integrity over time.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Programme design and delivery are highly fit for purpose, reflecting workplace requirements and supporting steady student progression online. Assessment is valid, reliable and current.</p>

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

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students are very well supported by Sue's Unlimited. Engagement is actively monitored through weekly checks of log-ins and submissions, with timely formative feedback and targeted follow-ups to sustain momentum. Small cohorts enable staff to understand individual learning styles and goals. Support is flexible and responsive to adult students who may be juggling work and family. Staff provide options such as switching to part-time study or extending study time where appropriate.</p> <p>Pre-study advice, induction and ongoing guidance are comprehensive and well suited to online and distance delivery. Expectations are clearly set through tuition and assessment agreements. Entry requirements (e.g. NCEA Level 2 or equivalent) are appropriate, with little evidence of unmet literacy or numeracy needs. This evaluation also observed effective disability-related support when required. As noted in 1.1, targeted support should be considered to lift the achievement levels of priority groups, and a recommendation has been made to this effect.</p> <p>The student handbook covers course structure, health and safety, forum use, equipment set-up, key policies, study tips and access to services. Students have access to online fora with their cohort, although this can be difficult when there are small numbers in the cohort. Digital spaces are deliberately moderated by Sue's Unlimited to keep them safe.</p> <p>Student voice is well implemented and used for continuous improvement. Students complete feedback at the end of each block (six in total, plus an end-of-programme evaluation), and responses are reviewed and acted on. Complaint pathways are clear, with processes outlined in the handbook. Together, these mechanisms ensure students can raise issues and see responses to any issues raised in practice.</p>
Conclusion:	Proactive monitoring, timely feedback, varied communication channels and a holistic wellbeing focus ensure that students

	are effectively supported and meaningfully involved in their learning.
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1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>As a single-focus provider, Sue's Unlimited's primary goal of developing work-ready medical transcriptionists for a defined labour market is stable and well understood. The operating model is sustainable; conservative planning and controlled growth ensure quality is not diluted by scale. The PTE leadership provides clear strategic direction.</p> <p>The sole owner retains overall responsibility for academic management and quality assurance, supported by a small, well-qualified and experienced team with long tenure. Staff are highly valued and well supported.</p> <p>Resources and capability are well aligned to online delivery. Staff workloads, professional development and academic leadership are deliberately student-centred. Stakeholder engagement is purposeful and directly informs management decisions.</p> <p>Quality assurance and self-assessment are embedded and disciplined. In a tight economic environment, budgeting is prudent, with expenditure targeted to student support, robustness of assessment and curriculum currency. Investment in digital infrastructure – including learning management system configuration, backup and contingency settings and clear communication protocols – supports continuity of learning and assessment. A range of enhancements and updates flowing from the PTE's active self-assessment was verified in this evaluation.</p>
Conclusion:	The PTE's management is highly effective in supporting educational achievement, with clear strategic intent, well-targeted resourcing, embedded self-assessment driving iterative improvement, and stakeholder input that meaningfully shapes delivery.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Sue's Unlimited manages its compliance obligations in a disciplined and effective way, proportionate to the PTE's size and scale. Roles and responsibilities are clearly assigned, with clear understanding of NZQA rules, the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021, and Tertiary Education Commission requirements and how they relate to operational procedures and records.</p> <p>A compliance calendar and meeting notes provide an auditable trail of decisions and follow-through. Evidence is readily retrievable, reflecting a well-organised approach to regulatory assurance.</p> <p>Academic compliance is strong. The programme is delivered as approved, with version control over curriculum and assessment materials, documented entry and progression rules, and clear policies for assessment conduct, extensions and appeals. Moderation is systematic and used to validate standards. The PTE's learning management system is reliable and accessible, and results management is accurate and timely, aligning with SDR reporting requirements. The authenticity of student assessment work is being managed well through close monitoring of educational performance for the small numbers enrolled.</p> <p>Pastoral care obligations are well implemented, and the Code self-review has been completed as required. Students receive clear information on rights, responsibilities and complaint pathways (including access to the Dispute Resolution Scheme). Regular student voice activities feed improvements, and the provider's self-review shows these Code practices are embedded rather than ad hoc.</p> <p>Risk, privacy and business continuity are actively managed. Data protection expectations are in place and records are orderly and retained appropriately.</p> <p>External accountability is taken seriously. Sue's Unlimited prepares thoroughly for audits and reviews, keeps statutory reporting up to date, and uses findings to refine practice.</p>

Conclusion:	Sue's Unlimited manages its compliance accountabilities effectively through a well-embedded culture of compliance and strong, systematic controls.
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Focus areas

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

2.1 New Zealand Certificate in Medical Transcription and Editing (Level 4) (Programme ref: 121450/1)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Good

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

NZQA recommends that Sues Unlimited Limited:

- Develop and implement a plan to increase Māori and Pasifika retention and completions. Consider using disaggregated data that triggers early alerts, culturally responsive supports and mentoring, and targeted professional development.
- Implement a systematised graduate engagement and outcomes framework, including an end-of-programme exit survey and scheduled follow-ups.
- Following the upcoming qualification review, pre-moderate the entire assessment suite (tasks, marking guides, exemplars) before first delivery to confirm alignment with updated outcomes and to ensure validity, reliability and consistency.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

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

Appendix 1

Table 1. Sue's Unlimited qualification completion 2021-24⁴

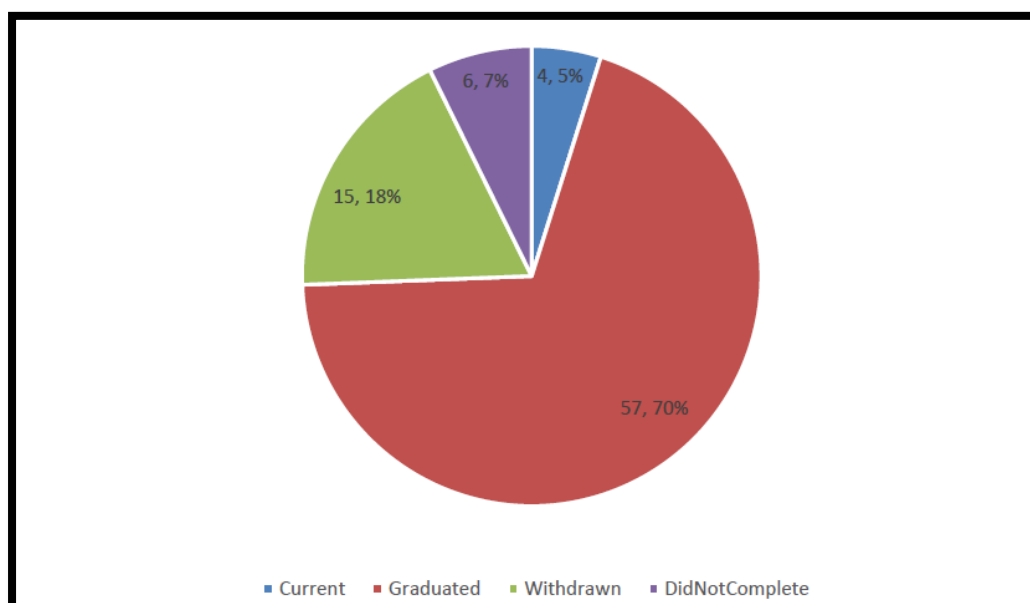


Table 2. Enrolment demographics 2021-24⁵

		Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24
Gender	Male	1	1	1	1
	Female	38	33	31	23
	Total	39	34	32	24
Age	<18	1	1	1	
	19-24	1			1
	25+	37	33	31	23
	Total	39	34	32	24
Ethnicity	NZ European / Pakeha	26	20	21	18
	NZ Maori	5	4	4	2
	Pacific Peoples	0	3	1	0
	Asian	5	4	4	2
	Other Ethnicity	2	2	2	2
	Not Stated	1	1	0	0
	Total	39	34	32	24

⁴ Data provided by Sue's Unlimited Limited.

⁵ Counts are based on the number of students active in December of each year. Students whose study spanned more than one year are counted in each relevant December, so the summed annual totals exceed the 82 unique enrolments over the period.

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- Identify organisational fraud⁶*
- Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

⁶ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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