



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

# External Evaluation and Review Report

Horizons Unlimited Limited

Date of report: 16 January 2024

# About Horizons Unlimited Limited

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*Horizons Unlimited delivers programmes that guide and support individuals and groups in outdoor emergency care and first aid and adventure-based learning. The latter are mainly delivered to secondary school students.*

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Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	211a Rocking Horse Rd, South Shore, Christchurch
Eligible to enrol intl students:	Yes
Number of students:	Domestic: 661 learners: 3.3 equivalent full-time students (EFTS)  No figures were provided for priority groups. No students have specifically identified as Māori or Pasifika.  International: six – all on work visas  Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Refresher: 107 students = approx. 1 EFTS  Outdoor First Aid: 76 students = approx. 0.75 EFTS  First Aid: 121 students = approx. 0.5 EFTS
Number of staff:	Two full-time staff. Other staff are casual and used when required.
TEO profile:	<a href="#">Horizons Unlimited</a>
Last EER outcome:	The previous external evaluation and review (EER) of Horizons Unlimited, held in April 2019, resulted in summative judgements of Confident in educational performance and Confident in capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	Outdoor Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Certificate (Training Scheme) (Level 3) (PHEC) with a quick overview of the courses offered at schools. The PHEC qualification is the New Zealand Standard Advanced

Wilderness First Aid programme for  
adventure industry professionals.

MoE number: 7626  
NZQA reference: C52526  
Dates of EER visit: 1-3 August 2023

# Summary of results

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*Horizons Unlimited is delivering contextualised, pre-hospital outdoor care and first aid training and is meeting the most important needs of key stakeholders. Horizons' training is fulfilling its core purpose and produces graduates who are well prepared for emergency care and first aid situations, which benefits them in their organisations and communities.*

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## **Confident in educational performance**

- The purpose and direction of the organisation is clear and strategically focussed. Horizons continuously reviews how its values are reflected in practice and management has a deliberate strategy of recruiting highly experienced instructors who display the same values as Horizons. The PTE professionally develops its staff to remain up to date with latest practice.

## **Confident in capability in self-assessment**

- Horizons has had strong and consistent high learner achievement with the PHEC training scheme over the last four years. Students gain relevant skills applicable in real-world contexts, with evidence heard of graduates using their specialist care and first aid skills in the community. Collation of disaggregated, longitudinal achievement and value related data will support current levels of review.
- Stakeholders value the outcomes of the training. Horizons is extremely well regarded in the outdoor adventure community and has an excellent reputation with schools, businesses, and community groups and is the preferred provider for many stakeholders. Stakeholders clearly endorse Horizons and provided an in-depth perspective into the quality, relevance, and impact of the training.
- Horizons is in regular contact with all stakeholders. This enables the PTE to keep current with changing needs, provide relevant programmes and skills, and meet a need for skilled staff to meet legislative requirements.

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- Student support is fit for purpose for this small provider delivering short-duration courses. A strength of the organisation is in providing an accessible, inclusive, contextual learning environment.
  - Horizons prepares the graduates well using practical assessments and engaging learning activities to achieve the relevant skills and knowledge. However, the PTE needs to introduce more robust internal practices, policies and procedures around learner assessment marking and feedback to strengthen this form of self-assessment.
  - Horizons is beginning to use data collection and self-assessment to inform change and improvements and is working to further systematise its processes for assembling and analysing feedback to note trends or anomalies.
  - Horizons manages most of its compliance accountabilities. The newly created calendar for due dates, and formalising current policies and procedures will strengthen areas needing attention.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students on the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care (PHEC) training scheme have consistently achieved outcomes of over 99 per cent for the last four years. As students who enrol require the PHEC certificate for their employment, they are highly motivated learners.. External workforce development council moderation was unable to validate achievement to incomplete evidence submissions.</p> <p>Horizons has not collected and analysed data for Māori and Pasifika students since the last EER due to the very small numbers attending and management knowing their achievement (there have been three learners who all achieved). Those students with learning difficulties are noted on enrolment (for support purposes) and all have also achieved. However, Horizons plans to begin longitudinal tracking of priority group learners' achievement to support self-assessment processes.</p> <p>Students become confident and skilled in their ability to perform in emergency situations in community, professional and/or personal life. Stakeholder feedback also shows that graduates achieve significant personal growth.</p> <p>Self-assessment is informal, with no overall data analysed to note trends or to benchmark with other, similar providers. Cohort-related data is captured in spreadsheets, with Horizons recently starting to track priority students. NZQA acknowledges that this procedure is fit for purpose, but extending this collation and analysis to understand the bigger picture of multiple student cohorts could support further review.</p>

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

Conclusion:	Students achieve well, increase their wellbeing and acquire useful skills and knowledge to fulfil an important role in the community. Some further analysis of data would assist in noting trends (for example, resits) between cohorts and enable benchmarking with similar providers. More robust policy and procedure with internal and external moderation of assessment is needed.
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## 1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>There is clear and comprehensive evidence that Horizons is meeting the most important needs of key stakeholders. Horizons is clear about the outcomes most valued by stakeholders and has various informal approaches and techniques of knowing to what extent it is meeting those outcomes. This is confirmed by the stakeholders and graduates.</p> <p>The PTE works to ensure strong, ongoing engagement with stakeholders within local and rural communities. Horizons keeps in close contact with the sector and specific client organisations throughout the year. Stakeholders appreciate the contextualised PHEC course offered.</p> <p>Horizons has many long-term clients and is the preferred provider for some large outdoor and adventure organisations and industry providers. A significant number of employers (Outward Bound, Antarctica NZ, Christchurch Adventure Park) use the training offered on a regular basis for their in-house first aid/emergency care training. Most re-book each year, providing evidence of the value of the training and the approach used. Some graduates go on to further study in outdoor education or as a first responder.</p> <p>Horizons has consulted iwi to ensure cultural inclusion in the learning environment. Horizons staff have received training from local iwi to support delivery to Māori using local histories. A tutor can speak te reo Māori, providing full engagement with this integrated approach.</p>

	Stakeholders offer regular, positive feedback. Horizons has ongoing client relationships to enable regular anecdotal review. However, there is no formalised collection or collation of stakeholder feedback and no real formal or precise tracking of graduates. Such feedback could be used to improve input into delivery. Course satisfaction feedback is collected at the end of the course and, although not collated, it is read and noted.
Conclusion:	Horizons is meeting the most important needs of learners, industry, stakeholders and the communities they serve. Understanding the context and environment is noted as key to the value of the training, including ensuring cultural inclusion. Capturing and analysing responses from graduates and employers regarding the skills and knowledge gained from the training would further strengthen the training.

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

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Horizons delivers a training programme contextualised not only to the outdoors but also to the requirements of each stakeholder's working environment. Feedback shows that the needs of the students are recognised and catered for within a purposefully lengthy programme. Horizons uses this feedback alongside regular industry contact, learner feedback, tutor feedback, assessment outcomes and moderation reports to support continuous programme review and change to delivery and materials. The changes made, however, are not formally collated. A more systematic approach to programme review could ensure the organisation is ready for future growth.</p> <p>The learning activities used give opportunities for experience to be shared, and for discussions, group work and a variety of practical projects and scenarios. This provides inclusive and accessible learning opportunities. The tutors have extensive experience in pre-hospital care in the outdoors. This provides real-world knowledge which</p>

	<p>supports effective application of skills and knowledge in the workplace. Stakeholder feedback attests to the level of expertise in delivery, with the hands-on and interactive instruction using real-life examples.</p> <p>Horizons' tutors regularly meet to ensure alignment with the PTE's 'way of working', to discuss context and verify the consistency of training. Consistency of delivery and assessments is helped by having two tutors per course, peer teaching and observing with feedback. Changes and updates to teaching resources are introduced at these meetings. Horizons is migrating systems and tutor information to an online/app-based platform. This is improving communication effectiveness and staff engagement.</p> <p>Assessments are ongoing over the two days of the training and are scenario-based with a required practical demonstration. Horizons' management ratifies and checks each assessment as it is submitted after marking however, more detailed internal post- assessment moderation of assessment material and feedback was not evidenced. A recent external post-moderation by the workforce development council notes a number of requirements that will support Horizon in ensuring their assessment is valid and consistent. A new method for collecting practical evidence and feedback is a work in progress.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Contextualised delivery of the programmes meets the needs of learners and stakeholders and delivers skilled graduates able to perform specialised skills in their workplace or communities. Although Horizons does not undertake formal programme review, the PTE collects feedback from trainees and staff to ensure it can meet any emerging and signalled needs. More comprehensive moderation practice will assure the validity and consistency of assessment.</p>

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

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Horizons has a commitment to providing an inclusive learning environment. Students are effectively supported and involved in their learning. Horizons aims to ensure all students can participate through a variety of engaging theory and practical learning activities. One-to-one support is given for those who require learning assistance, or for those who may have physical difficulties in performing the skills required.</p> <p>Course information, manual and pre-course work is sent to students on enrolment with a pre-course questionnaire which sets aims and a focus for each student. This is an opportunity for students to disclose learning differences and disability or wellbeing needs. The tutors use this information to provide appropriate support during the training. Prompt, real-time feedback after each activity supports all student progressions and achievement.</p> <p>Horizons takes a careful approach to learning support and will assign more than one tutor to the training to enable tutors to focus on and support students in need.</p> <p>The PTE does not review its support data, which reduces opportunities for improvement.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Horizons has effective contributing processes to minimise barriers to learning, with systems in place and informed staff to support learners and engage them in their learning. Self-review using feedback data around support will strengthen and ensure consistency of learner support.</p>

## 1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The organisation has a clear purpose and direction. After Covid-19, Horizons had to focus on clearing a backlog of work. In 2023, a growth strategy was put in place and future plans are under consideration. This is informed by the large amount of ongoing and productive contact with client, industry and educational bodies.</p> <p>The PTE has close relationships with industry and is well respected by the wider community. This supports informed resource management and development. Horizons identified the need for a digital management system of data (rather than the previous paper-based methods). This has supported better communication with staff and students and given better access to data since the last EER. Collated use of this data is a work in progress. A more systematised use of data could support effective change and improvement.</p> <p>Appropriately qualified, experienced and committed staff are carefully chosen to ensure they have good fit with the values of the organisation. An open communication style and a reflective culture is evident with the management and staff. Horizons supports and values its staff, with various examples given of the personal wellbeing support provided by management. All staff have adult teaching qualifications. New tutors are comprehensively inducted, and extensive resourcing supports a pathway to further qualifications and career progression. Tutors are contributing to genuine improvements and change during discussions or meetings. This is noted and used in self-assessment.</p> <p>Resources are well managed, carefully checked and updated, with plenty available for each learner.</p>
Conclusion:	Horizons has a clear strategic vision, is well managed and offers programmes that are fit for purpose and meet the needs of all stakeholders. Data is collected but its availability for analysis is limited. Further systematised data collection will assist with overall understanding of

	achievement and outcomes and may support planned growth.
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## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Horizons has some understanding of its compliance accountabilities and manages them effectively to ensure obligations are met. Manual record-keeping means that accountabilities are not automated and gaps can occur. A newly created compliance calendar will provide regular checks on compliance activities around NZQA regulations and internal compliance. Staff are aware of their part in meeting compliance expectations. No legal or ethical issues had been reported to NZQA at the time of the EER.</p> <p>Meeting health and safety requirements is paramount for this type of training. This is recognised by Adventure Mark<sup>2</sup> certification and being listed on WorkSafe’s register of adventure activity operators.</p> <p>Memorandums of understanding with secondary schools define the expectations of each party around safety. The overall expectations for each party around reporting results needs to be fully outlined.</p> <p>Horizons is meeting its obligations with respect to the Code of Practice. A gap analysis was completed with a number of actions indicated to complete. Measurement of progress against these identified gaps had not yet been planned.</p> <p>The contract for services with tutors is supported by the staff handbook which contains policies and procedures. All staff are police vetted to meet the requirements of the Children’s Act 2014. Horizons needs to establish routine monitoring of existing and newly contracted tutors. This is to ensure they hold equivalent knowledge and skills or</p>

<sup>2</sup> AdventureMark™ is a JAS-ANZ accredited and WorkSafe NZ-approved certification body for its Blue AdventureMark™ Certification under the New Zealand Adventure Activities Certification Scheme.

	<p>qualifications to meet consent and moderation requirements.</p> <p>Late reporting of unit standards results has occurred, but this should improve as Horizons works to address the reasons that have caused delays in reporting credits.</p> <p>Policies and processes are in place for assessment and moderation. However, these need to be updated to ensure valid and consistent assessment via internal pre- and post-moderation to meet external requirements around marking, evidence collection and learner feedback. Regular review of these would ensure Horizons remains able to meet changes within the outdoor education, emergency care and tertiary education sectors.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Horizons has some understanding of its compliance accountabilities and attempts to manage them. The PTE needs to improve management of its compliance accountabilities to address areas where gaps are occurring.</p>

## 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 Horizons Unlimited Limited:

- Develop a formalised standardised, systematic annual review process that uses external stakeholder feedback, learner feedback, achievement and valued outcomes and moderation reports, to support and evidence self-assessment decisions made.
- Ensure processes around tutors continue to meet the relevant consent and moderation requirements for staff selection and development.
- Update processes for internal post-assessment moderation of assessments to validate fair and consistent assessment practices to support external moderation requirements.

## 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.*

NZQA requires Horizons Unlimited Limited to:

Ensure credits for students are reported to NZQA within three months following assessment, as per [Part 2 – Maintaining consent and approval Section 13\(1\)\(b\) of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2021](#). Policies and procedures on credit reporting must be amended, and relevant staff must be advised, to comply with said Rules.

# Appendix

## 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 fraud<sup>3</sup>*
- *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.*

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<sup>3</sup> 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 2021, 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 including ITOs but excluding universities, and*
- *maintaining training scheme approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

*The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2021, the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules 2021 and the Training Scheme Rules 2021 respectively.*

*In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2021 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, training schemes 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 2021. 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](http://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/>.*

NZQA

Ph 0800 697 296

E [qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qaadmin@nzqa.govt.nz)

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)