

Managing National Assessment Report

Taipa Area School

September 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Taipa Area School:

- has addressed issues identified through NZQA's Managing National Assessment review and through the school's own internal review
- manages assessment practice for national qualifications
- manages internal and external moderation
- makes use of and manages assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

The summary section evaluates the school's overall effectiveness and provides a broad overview of the review's key findings for all readers. The remaining sections provide detail of these findings for school managers.

Why we review how schools are managing national assessment

The purpose of a Managing National Assessment review is:

- to confirm, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, that schools are meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* (CAAS) and its *Guidelines* (CAAS Guidelines) in order to maintain their consent to assess; and
- to help schools achieve valid, fair, accurate and consistent internal assessment according to the requirements of the *Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021* (Assessment Rules).

What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- requiring action from the school where an issue is identified that significantly impacts on the school meeting the requirements of their *Consent to Assess*
- agreeing action with the school where an issue has been identified that could become significant if not addressed
- making suggestions for the school to consider to enhance good assessment practice.

What this review includes

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of the school's internal assessment.
- A check on specific aspects of assessment systems on an annual basis.
- A check on the school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

How we conducted this review

The review includes examination of documentation from a range of sources and interviewing key stakeholders.

Prior to the visit the school provided the following documents:

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *Senior Subjects/ NCEA course outlines 2021*
- *Taipa Area School NCEA Teacher Guidelines 2021 (Teacher Handbook)*
- *Taipa Area School Student Assessment Handbook 2021 (Student Handbook)*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee/ Deputy Principal – Curriculum/ Assessment
- Leaders of learning for:
 - English and Social Sciences – Tai Kōrero
 - Mathematics and Science – Tai Tirohia
 - Technology and The Arts – Tai Auaha
- Teacher(s) of:
 - English
 - Science/ Chemistry
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Principal's Nominee and three other members of the Senior Leadership team at the end of the review visit to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies, next steps and to agree on any action required.

SUMMARY

Taipa Area School

29 September 2021

Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*. No significant issues with the school's management of national assessment were found. The school's own review mechanisms allow them to identify and respond to most issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

At NZQA's request in response to the restrictions of Covid-19 in 2020, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2019.

What the school is doing well

Taipa Area School vision of "To know who we are – To know what we are capable of- To know where we are going" provides the foundation on which teachers and leaders base their teaching and assessment programmes for students which reflect their goals and strategic priorities.

The school has provided students with a wide variety of course options including using external providers, multi-level and subject classes extending the vocational pathways programme and individualising assessment programmes to meet the needs, interests and career aspirations of their students.

Taipa Area School has made progress in embedding digital assessment for both internal and external assessments. This has been supported by developing their own digital practice exams.

The school's internal moderation systems are robust. They provide assurance that assessment outcomes are valid and at the expected standard. The use of the new digital cover sheet and the digital storage of student work has made the moderation process more streamlined. The Principal's Nominee has easy access to be able to regularly review the online documentation completed by teachers to ensure that results reported to NZQA have been through the complete process.

Students are well informed, mentored and supported by the school. They effectively track student achievement, identifying students at risk of not gaining a qualification. Students are mentored and receive careers advice from the Senior Academic Dean who supports them to set goals and work towards their chosen pathway.

The school uses a broad range of communication methods that allow staff and students to gain common understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

Reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement would assist to inform strategic goals and actions. Learning Areas would benefit from having a consistent process to analyse achievement data to support next steps and

to inform change to assessment plans to support student's engagement and success.

Some other steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are:

- develop a report for all Learning Areas to analyse their assessment data to support and inform change to support student achievement, engagement, and success.

Kay Wilson
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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

18 November 2021

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence for external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 29 June 2016 Managing National Assessment Report Taipa Area School has addressed the actions agreed in the previous review regarding internal moderation to ensure that the samples of student work is chosen purposefully to include work at grade boundaries and discussions around verification of grades are recorded. The internal moderation process is monitored by the Senior Leadership team to ensure all results have been quality assured before being reported to NZQA. A template for course outlines is used by all teachers ensuring comprehensive information is provide to all students. Student results are kept private at all times.

Response to external moderation outcomes Learning Areas all respond to external moderation but this is in an ad hoc way. Staff interviewed talked about discussions regarding the report and what next steps need to be taken prior to the standard being used again. All Learning Areas documented the discussion and had informal discussions with the Senior leader overseeing the learning area.

The Principal's Nominee will formalise a process for all Learning areas to follow to ensure consistency of practice.

Internal review

Evidence for the school using its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement in assessment practice and procedures, which are then actioned. (CAAS Guidelines 3iv)

With a new Principal and Principal's Nominee at the time of this review, Taipa Area School is now identifying future areas of review. They will initially use assessment data to gather information and assist them to plan next steps for the school.

Since the last review senior leaders have identified and implemented a range of initiatives which focused on improving student achievement and ensuring student needs were being meet. These include:

- using digital tools in all classrooms including a strong take up of digital internal and external assessments
- extending the vocational pathways programme to level 3
- review of the junior science programme to encourage greater participation for all students in STEM subjects
- review of the literacy achievement plan to improve literacy to ensure students are ready for the requirements in the senior school to achieve a NCEA qualification
- identifying students at risk of not achieving qualifications and providing targeted assessment opportunities to help them meet their needs.

Assessment processes are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they reflect current practice and any changes to NCEA rules. The latest changes to the rules about resubmission and Course Endorsement for Achieved have been communicated to staff and students.

For consideration

To extend good practice in external review and self-review of assessment, the school is encouraged to consider:

- develop a consistent process for all Learning Areas to follow with regards to their response to External Moderation.

How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

Evidence for assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

Taipa Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- working with students to develop individualised assessment programmes to meet the student's needs, interests and future pathways
- identifying and supporting students at risk of not achieving or meeting the literacy or literacy requirements of NCEA and University Entrance
- using school-based evidence to support applications for students who are eligible for special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support
- extending the practice of using evidence to assess more than one standard and one subject
- assessing students when they are ready through flexible timeframes as appropriate ready.

Taipa Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring consistent, school-wide assessment practice on missed and late work, extensions, appeals, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is authentic and standard specific
- using a range of strategies to assist students to present authentic work
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* in issuing of student results and using students work as exemplars.

Supporting student needs by offering a variety of courses Taipa Area School offers a range of courses to engage students and support their desired pathways. Courses are offered through Te Aho o Te Kura if the school is unable to provide the subject to be taught at the school. Teachers are willing to teach multi-level, sometimes multi subject classes to ensure students have the best opportunity to meet their needs and future pathways.

The school is able to extend its capacity to provide a range of vocational pathways through Gateway, STAR and the use of external providers. They have extended their Level 2 vocational pathways programme, Trades Academy to Level 3. This programme includes a ready to work programme and assessments, careers support and work experience. Students interviewed felt that this enabled the less academic students a focussed pathway and transition to future vocations. This has also led to the retention of students in the senior school.

No action required

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Evidence for internal and external moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 6.4b)

Taipa Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- using suitable qualified subject specialists both within and outside the school to verify a strategic purposefully selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- documenting on the newly developed digital internal moderation cover sheet
- monitoring throughout the year by Leaders of Learning and Senior leaders that all standards have been internally moderated.

Taipa Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- digitally submitting student work
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Developing consistent practice for external moderation The school is encouraged to use the same processes for moderating both Industry Training Organisation and NZQA administered standards. This will provide confidence to senior leadership that quality assurance is consistent for all standards.

Evaluating the response to external moderation It is recommended that Senior Leaders monitor the outcomes of the action plans developed to address concerns with external moderation. This will ensure change is supported in subjects with ongoing patterns of concern. Currently Leaders of Learning and teachers detail the next steps to resolve issues. Evaluation of the effectiveness of these responses will confirm improvements, identify the need for further investigation or professional development for teachers.

Reduce workload by strategically selecting the sample of student work for grade verification The school could provide staff with further guidance on strategically selecting the sample of student work for verification of the grades awarded. Using strategic selection, the sample size should be sufficient to assure confidence in the assessor's judgements. Factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed can be considered to determine the appropriate sample size.

Currently, all teachers assure the quality of grades awarded by verifying assessor judgements including at the grade boundary. However, staff interviewed for the review routinely verified additional work either randomly or to a set amount. Strategic

selection optimises the quantity of the feedback without compromising quality, and potentially reduces workload.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- following the same processes for monitoring external moderation for Industry Training Organisation standards as that used for NZQA standards
- evaluating the outcomes of actions taken to address issues in external moderation
- providing teachers with guidance about the strategic selection of samples for grade verification as part of the internal moderation process.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence for data management and use supporting student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Taipa Area School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- Senior Academic Dean mentors students to assist them to meet the requirements of their qualification goals
- tracking student progress to identify and support students at risk of not gaining a qualification
- identifying students in year 9 and 10 who may require literacy support to access Level 6 of the curriculum when in Year 11.

Taipa Area School reports accurate achievement data by:

- reporting results to NZQA on a regular and timely basis
- ensuring all students attest that their entries and results have been entered correctly
- ensuring that all internal entries have results or are withdrawn as appropriate by the published due date
- actively encouraging students to use their NZQA learner login to check reported results for accuracy and prepare for digital assessments.

Using Data to analyse achievement goals and plans The analysis of achievement data allows the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees the opportunity to gain in depth knowledge of each learning area. It also provides data to inform changes to their learning and assessment programmes. Learning Areas have not analysed their achievement data to report to the Board of Trustees or the Principal informing them of student achievement, review of student engagement and success. Good practice could include a comprehensive analysis of achievement data for each standard and course enabling Leaders of Learning and Senior Leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of their courses, assessment practice and effect changes to future course content and design where required.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- develop a report for all Learning Areas to analyse their assessment data to support and inform change to support student achievement, engagement and success.

How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?

Evidence for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Taipa Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive comprehensive subject information with outlines for all courses they may wish to undertake using a common template
- communicating assessment policy and procedure through assemblies, whanau times and using a variety of digital media
- supporting teachers new to the school with an induction programme and on-going Leader of learning support.

Taipa Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- presenting NCEA information to student groups and NZQA information evenings
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- ensuring students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

Updating of documentation recommended Suggestions were made during the review on ways to improve both the staff and the student handbooks so these are fit for purpose and current by:

- adding Course Endorsement at Achieved
- updating information on resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- removing obsolete information about fees and financial assistance
- removing information from the student handbook and editing to produce a more accessible user-friendly product

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- updating the staff and students handbooks.