

Managing National Assessment Report

Opononi Area School

June 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Opononi Area School

27 June 2023

Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is effectively meeting the requirements of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022.

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.

As a school with effective assessment systems and practices for national qualifications, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three to five years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2021.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Develop an embedded review process to conduct self-review of NCEA on an ongoing basis	Within 2 years
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Review the effectiveness of communication with students	Within a year

For consideration

To extend good practice in meeting student needs and supporting assessment practice, the school is encouraged to consider within the next year:

- consider extending further pathway opportunities to meet students' needs.

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1 September 2023

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External and internal review

External review

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

Action Items from 21 August 2019 Managing National Assessment Report The agreed action items in this report have been addressed by the school. The school now has a Student and a Staff Handbook that are updated annually. This helps support understanding and ensure consistent assessment practice. The Principal's Nominee now monitors and ensures all internally assessed entries have an appropriate grade reported against them or are withdrawn by 1 December if the student has not had an adequate assessment opportunity. Entries reflect students' intended assessment programme.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school has an effective follow up process when an issue is raised in a moderation report. This is with an email from the Principal's Nominee to the teacher and then a discussion. The teacher completes a Response to External Moderation Report to outline any actions they plan to address the concerns documented in the report. The Principal's Nominee monitors these actions to provide support where required, and to confirm completion.

The school's external moderation outcomes have improved over the previous three years with all issues identified and addressed. This reflects improving internal moderation processes and particularly the increased use of outside verifiers. Management supports staff to find and use verifiers with subject-specific knowledge.

Examination Centre Audit In 2022 a Quality Assurance check of the school's examination centre processes found no issues of concern.

Internal review

Evidence of 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)

The school has embarked on a comprehensive and wide-ranging review process to ensure that the needs of students will be met and to address historical low and declining student achievement in NCEA. The recent change in school leadership is providing an impetus for this review and the development of a Responsive Curriculum. The Ministry of Education is supporting the school to promote effective teaching programmes and assessment, and to understand the new standards and changes to the qualification.

This is a major undertaking. A future challenge for the school is to ensure that a thorough, ongoing, and embedded review process is developed to support the school's own capability to conduct self-review of NCEA programmes, the development of appropriate pathways and student attainment.

A number of initiatives have already been introduced as a result of review which have the potential to improve available pathways and outcomes for students. These include

- regular professional learning meetings led by a Student Assessment Function facilitator to support teachers to implement literacy reading and writing programmes
- integrating the learning context of the local history with the support of the Hokianga iwi and hapū
- more opportunities for students to participate in education outside the classroom including Waka Ama, Kapa Haka and work placements at Manea, the local tourist attraction
- subject-specific Professional Learning Development workshops available to staff to strengthen teachers' content knowledge and teaching practice. This will promote effective teaching and learning within the school
- the school now actively participating in the digital examinations and offering students and teachers good exposure to become familiar with the NZQA digital platform, and for the school to gain an understanding of student readiness for the literacy and numeracy assessments
- the Principal's Nominee now taking an active role in monitoring and tracking student achievement and, with the support of the Ministry of Education, teachers are analysing their NCEA data to inform practice. Implementation of a new spreadsheet template provides further insight into student grades. This data provides information for an inquiry into assessment practices.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)

Recent student NCEA attainment is a concern As mentioned in the review section of this report, the school has embarked on a wide-ranging review process and is being supported by the Ministry of Education to do so. In light of students' attainment in NCEA in recent years, this review is both necessary and appropriate.

A new tracking spreadsheet to monitor students' results and check that the Student Management System is correct has been introduced. This will alleviate any discrepancies when students need to be withdrawn from entries. A significant number of students have not been successful in external examinations. When students are entered, they should be better prepared for external assessment by their teachers. Teachers should know their students and what they are capable of achieving and make better judgements.

Review the effectiveness of communication with students The school must review the effectiveness of its communication with students about NCEA and the expected processes to ensure credible assessment.

The school publishes an NCEA student handbook in which current student assessment information is presented in a clear format and in Plain English, updated annually by the Principal's Nominee. However, the Principal's Nominee has identified poor communication with students and whānau as an issue and interviewed students were unsure of assessment dates and what is required to achieve a NCEA

qualification. This raises concerns about the effectiveness of current communications.

Students did acknowledge support and information provided by some staff and indicated that they would like more NCEA information provided.

Initiatives to extend pathways and outcomes for students Focus on students achieving goals and aspirations could be strengthened to provide students with a pathway to align with their employment or tertiary ambitions.

At the moment carpentry unit standards and weekly automotive work placement assessing MITO standards are offered to students. However, students are interested in more options. Providing courses to meet their interests and needs could provide students with a purpose to attend school regularly, and support improved achievement outcomes.

The school has appointed a new SENCO who will implement Special Assessment Condition where appropriate. The school is testing students accordingly and is now offering Reader/Writer/ Speech to Text entitlements. This approach will provide more opportunities to fair assessment by removing barriers to achievement for students.

Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)

The school has clearly defined moderation steps and has centralised a digital system. The Principal's Nominee has set clear expectations for teachers to complete each step in the internal moderation process. She monitors the completion of internal moderation documentation to ensure quality assurance has occurred. The monitoring process by the Principal's Nominee ensures that all internal results reported to NZQA have been verified as being at the standard.

Internal moderation cover sheets are stored digitally with student work, so they are visible to the Principal's Nominee and accessible for checking and external moderation.

Through discussions with teachers, it was evident that there is clear communication and understanding of the internal moderation process in single teacher departments. Subject teachers ensure that the process used for grade verification is appropriate for each standard and that verifiers are subject experts.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

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

- assessing students when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

Opononi Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence is collected for derived and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

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

- ensuring assessment tasks are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit for purpose
- using clarification documents, exemplars, verification notes and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgements
- using subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategic selection of a sufficient sample of student work
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes

- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

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

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

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

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Opononi Area School reports accurate achievement data by:

- ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner so that NZQA holds up-to-date data
- checking Key Indicators and NZQA reports to identify and resolve any errors
- conducting student and teacher checks of entries and results at key times during the year
- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their families about assessment

Opononi Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year

- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success.

Opononi Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students.

Appendix 2: Overview

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Opononi 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.

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 effectively meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022* (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 *NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards, and Candidates 2023*.

What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- identifying the effectiveness of the school's review processes, assessment practice and quality assurance
- 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's consideration 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 five 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
- *Teacher Handbook, Managing National Assessment, Opononi Area School, 2023* (Staff Handbook)
- *Student Handbook, National Qualifications, Opononi Area School, 2023* (Student Handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee and teacher of Visual Arts
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - English / Media Studies
 - Health
 - Mathematics
 - Science
- two students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and Principal's Nominee 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.