

Managing National Assessment Report

Tikipunga High School

September 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Tikipunga High 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 2019* (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
- *2019 Tikipunga High School Senior Studies Guide* (Student Handbook)
- *Tikipunga High School NZQA Assessment Guide* (Staff Handbook)
- course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Achievement
- Leaders of Learning for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education
 - Science
 - Technology
 - Visual Arts
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principal – Achievement 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.

Background

The 2016 Managing National Assessment review identified two significant issues. At that time, not all departments were meeting NZQA's expectations for internal moderation and the school's monitoring of practice was inadequate. A return visit in 2017 identified that a clear process had been developed and the Principal's Nominee was monitoring that paperwork was completed. However, the evidence at that time indicated that teachers were still not fully engaged with a robust process.

The Managing National Assessment review carried out in 2018 required the school to follow up the external findings and develop its self-review practice. The issue particularly was the need to develop more effective internal moderation practice. It was noted at that review that while Leaders of Learning understood expectations, the poor outcomes from external moderation at that time did not provide assurance that processes in all departments were robust.

Since the last review, there have been two changes of Principal's Nominee, the current appointee took over very shortly before the current review and, with the

support of the Deputy Principal – Achievement, is working to ensure that good practice becomes embedded. There have also been a number of changes in Leaders of Learning.

SUMMARY

Tikipunga High School

18 September 2019

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 is developing the review mechanisms that will allow them to respond to most identified issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within two years. However, NZQA will monitor the school's quality assurance processes, actions and outcomes to ensure that the improvements introduced have been embedded and are effective.

What the school is doing well

Tikipunga High School provides opportunities for students to individualise their learning programmes aiming to meet student aspirations. There are a range of pathways available including academies in Māori Performing Arts and Tourism, Trade and Automotive, and Services.

The Deputy Principal – Achievement and the Principal's Nominee are committed to establishing systems that will support credible assessment. This includes developing a more effective response to external moderation outcomes and checking that systems for managing assessment are consistent. More robust internal moderation practice is becoming embedded.

The school's current self-review around assessment and quality assurance is mostly a response to issues identified externally. However, it is making improvements and working to ensure that the Leaders of Learning take responsibility for the practice in their learning area.

The school is working to further improve how it tracks student attainment and its use of achievement data and feedback from students and teachers to help identify areas for further development.

Data is well managed by the Principal's Nominee to ensure timely and accurate reporting to NZQA. Similarly, she works collaboratively with teachers, students and families to ensure they understand NCEA and assessment practice.

Areas for improvement

Student achievement at Tikipunga High School is lower than in similar schools. While a contributing factor is the number of students with high special needs that the school supports, attainment at all levels of NCEA has dropped in the last two years. The school agrees that this should be an area for review.

The schools identified focus area is to improve student achievement. The senior leaders know that that they need to plan for improvement, follow through and evaluate outcomes to inform the next steps. Effective change will involve all staff.

To ensure that students have accurate information about their assessment programme, course outlines should be reviewed to include whether some standards are optional and if an individual programme may be negotiated. As well, students should be reminded about the information in the student handbook so that they get consistent messages.

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

Agreed action

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are to:

- develop a systematic rather than reactive programme of self-review
- review the effectiveness of the processes used to track individual progress
- evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken to address low achievement
- review the course outlines to ensure they accurately reflect the planned assessment programme.

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21 November 2019

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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 7 June 2018 Managing National Assessment Report The 2018 report identified significant issues that the school was required to address. This visit confirms that while there are further improvements to be made, the school has made progress in addressing the issues. The school was required to:

- follow-up external review recommendations and findings (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

and

- use its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement and then action (CAAS Guidelines 3iv).

At this review it was evident that the school's processes are becoming more effective and the significant issues have been resolved.

The school has acted to address the other actions agreed after the 2018 review. These are discussed in this report

Response to external moderation outcomes The outcomes of the 2019 external moderation round show that based on the reports available at the time of this review, the school's quality assurance processes are still delivering variable assessment. However, there is a marked improvement when compared with the previous year. External moderation gives an indication of the effectiveness of the school's own quality assurance, so this provides evidence that teachers are more engaged with robust internal moderation practice. The school submitted all work for the standards on the 2019 external moderation plan; failure to do this was an issue identified in the 2018 review.

The school is developing a more effective process to follow up issues raised in external moderation reports. The Deputy Principal – Achievement is checking all reports and, where the moderators note inconsistencies in assessor judgements, will work with the Leader of Learning to plan for improvement. The actions to address the issues are being recorded on a newly developed response sheet; its completion will be monitored by the Deputy Principal. The school agrees that the effectiveness of the actions will be evaluated and, as part of the robust follow-up process, discussions and outcomes recorded to provide evidence of completion for the school's managers.

External review of special assessment conditions provisions In May 2019 NZQA carried out a review of how the school manages the needs of students eligible to use special assessment conditions (SAC) for assessment. The review concluded that it is evident that the concerns raised in the last Managing National Assessment review about SAC applications are being addressed. A number of students have been identified, applications have been submitted and approved by NZQA. Identification of students is starting while they are in Years 7 – 10. The Special Needs Coordinator has a good overall understanding of SAC requirements and senior leaders are confident that she will manage the process throughout the year.

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)

Tikipunga High School's self-review is currently reactive rather than systematic. As experience and capacity increases, it is expected that this will develop. Effective internal review involves senior leadership, Leaders of Learning and classroom teachers.

In response to external review, the school has planned a new structure for its senior management team. The Deputy Principal – Achievement will be the line manager for all Leaders of Learning to ensure consistency and promote achievement. This is expected to enable more effective identification and resolution of issues related to assessment and the quality assurance of grades submitted to NZQA.

The Deputy Principal – Achievement and Principal's Nominee identified that Leaders of Learning did not take meaningful responsibility for managing external moderation or the accuracy of mark books. This meant that some leaders were not fully invested as they did not have to take responsibility for errors or omissions.

Leaders of Learning are being supported by participating in professional learning around leadership and are becoming more accountable for ensuring that their practice is effective.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice. Senior management undertakes to:

- develop a proactive rather than reactive programme of self-review.

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 2019 5.5)

Tikipunga High School is developing effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- having a range of pathways available including Gateway and three Academies: Māori Performing Arts and Tourism, Trade and Automotive, and Services
- providing differentiated assessment within courses by developing individual programmes to meet students' aspirations and intended pathways
- developing individual education plans for students who may take longer to achieve a qualification
- assessing when ready where manageable
- engaging with online external examinations and having students practice for these using Google Classroom.

Tikipunga High School is developing effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment
- providing appropriate resubmission conditions
- managing authenticity by knowing the students well and checking work in progress; this was noted as an area of concern in the previous report
- investigating appeals of assessment decisions
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is valid by using commercially produced resources and requiring the same quality assurance processes as for internal assessment to be applied
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Review tracking process Individual progress towards qualifications is tracked to identify where appropriate support is needed. Some Leaders of Learning commented that the expectation for all students to achieve four credits in every course each term can cause a tension for standards where a portfolio of evidence is gathered over time. For these standards, understanding or proficiency develops over the year, and the final submission should be a student's best work. Where a summative judgement is not possible, these teachers could provide an indicative grade to enable appropriate interventions.

Equity including Māori and Pasifika engagement and success in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects The school's management team has noted the low participation and achievement in STEM subjects for both Māori and Pasifika students as well as students of other ethnicities. The Leaders of Learning for Mathematics and Science are aiming to address this. Careers New Zealand recommends that students should study English, Mathematics and at least one Science subject, particularly if they don't have a specific career in mind.

For consideration

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

- reviewing the expectation that all students will achieve four credits in each subject each term to manage the tension where a portfolio of evidence is collected.

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 2019 6.4b)

Tikipunga High School is developing effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists within the school and external colleagues to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- documenting the completion of the steps on a cover sheet or in a digital file
- monitoring that the process is completed for all standards.

Tikipunga High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- encouraging teachers to submit work digitally for external moderation, with 70 percent submitted digitally in 2019
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Monitoring assures the school's management team that expectations are being followed Evidence was sighted in all Learning Areas visited of Internal Moderation Cover Sheets recording the completion of each step of the quality assurance process, including notes of discussions around grade judgements. Many teachers file the cover sheets digitally so they can be easily monitored by the Principal's Nominee. Some departments have developed their own version of a cover sheet to better meet their needs. These are good practices that can be shared to lead to further improvement.

Focus on improving consistency of assessor judgments Learning Areas currently assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries when verifying assessor judgements. However, many of those interviewed verify more samples of student work than this, explaining that classes are small, so all grades are reviewed.

The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on grade verification. Concentrating on work at grade boundaries, engaging in a focused professional dialogue with the verifier and triangulating the decisions against benchmark samples and external moderation reports will provide a robust decision-making framework. Noting the outcomes of the dialogue helps inform future assessor judgements. The number of pieces of student work verified should be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

For consideration

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

- providing further guidance to Leaders of Learning about effective internal moderation practice.

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)

Tikipunga High School is developing effective use of assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- analysing achievement to evaluate the quality of the teaching programmes
- annually reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement.

Tikipunga High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- submitting data files regularly to NZQA
- monitoring external entries to minimise late entries in externally assessed standards
- checking that mark books are up to date and accurate
- providing a portal into the school's student management system so that students can track their own progress and check the accuracy of the data.

Tracking student achievement The school has noted that achievement at all levels of NCEA is lower than in similar schools. As well, there has been a drop in overall attainment over the last two years along with a corresponding drop in the percentage of students meeting the NCEA literacy and numeracy requirement. Some of the difference is achievement of students in the attached unit, Te Putahitanga, who are not aiming to complete a qualification.

As part of the analysis of outcomes, an in-depth examination of the reasons for the level of attainment should be undertaken, along with an evaluation of the effectiveness of any interventions. This would inform review and develop priorities for further actions. This could be part of teachers' inquiry with outcomes shared with colleagues.

It is suggested that the school reviews the effectiveness of the processes used to track individual progress during the year. Currently, the Data Manager analyses data across the year levels using milestones, checkpoints, and termly "Traffic Lights" to identify students at risk of not achieving a qualification with the aim of providing appropriate support. Leaders of Learning, classroom teachers and whānau teachers should be involved in developing the next steps that will support student achievement.

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:

- review the effectiveness of the processes used to track individual progress
- evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken to address low achievement.

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))

Tikipunga High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to teachers.

Tikipunga High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing opportunities for teachers to discuss assessment practice including a weekly hui to ensure that Leaders of Learning understand expectations
- providing students with the information they need to understand how to achieve a qualification.

Review course outlines Providing accurate information about the planned assessment in each course helps students to plan their programme. The course outlines at Tikipunga High School don't make it clear that some standards are optional or that an individualised programme may be negotiated to meet student interest and aspirations. Some outlines include dates for milestones or interim completion dates which would be more useful if they were in sequential order. The school has agreed to review the outlines to ensure they meet student needs.

Review of communication underway Schools are expected to provide students with information about key assessment expectations and requirements. Having this as a handbook (physical or digital) helps to maintain a consistent message. The students interviewed at Tikipunga High School could not recall having seen the *2019 Tikipunga High School Senior Studies Guide*. However, they knew about key expectations and how to achieve a qualification with their main source of information being their teachers.

The school has identified communication as an area for improvement and it is suggested that reviewing how the handbook is socialised be part of this review.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- review the course outlines to ensure they accurately reflect the planned assessment programme.

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:

- making sure that students are aware of the different ways that key assessment information is available.