

Managing National Assessment Report

Dargaville High School

August 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Dargaville High School

30 August 2022

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 2021*.

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 this action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Develop a school-wide process for monitoring and documenting that all external grades sent to NZQA have been quality assured.	Immediate.

For consideration

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

- ensuring staff are aware that special assessment conditions are to be used for all NCEA assessments, both internal and external
- reviewing the verifiers used by learning areas for internal moderation.



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7 November 2022

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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 11 April 2018 Managing National Assessment Report

Dargaville High School has addressed the action item identified in their last Managing National Assessment review. The school is now monitoring external moderation recommendations and findings and ensuring these are addressed in a timely manner.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes Overall, the external moderation outcome history shows that the assessment judgements of most teachers are consistent with the standard. Learning areas where there are ongoing concerns are being supported to address any issues identified in the external moderation feedback. This support may include accessing NZQA's assessor support available through Pūtake and contacting their subject associations for guidance.

Teachers view external moderation as a valuable tool, analysing reports and using the feedback to inform and improve assessment practice.

The Principal's Nominee follows up on every moderation report with the learning areas concerned, requiring an action plan outlining how they plan to rectify the issues to be completed. The next step is to put in place a check that the actions taken have effectively addressed the issues identified, especially for the learning areas receiving 'Not Yet Consistent' outcomes over consecutive years. This will confirm if the form of support has been appropriate or indicate if further support is still required.

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)

Dargaville High School has an ongoing programme of review, focusing on processes to improve achievement outcomes and engagement of all students. The school's leadership encourages teachers to take ownership of assessment practices and to develop their capability in these areas.

Using data and equity of access to inform pathway planning The school effectively uses an external data analysis tool to provide information to compare the school's achievement data nationally and at a decile, gender and ethnicity level. This supports learning areas to confidently look at their own achievement data.

Teachers identify their strengths and weaknesses in meeting student needs. This has helped the school plan the courses and standards offered to ensure they align with student pathway aspirations.

The Assistant Principal has been assigned the role of curriculum development, where any proposed new courses are managed by him. He ensures any proposed changes will keep pathways open, are equitable for all students and help students gain literacy and numeracy at Level 1. This has resulted in the school having a number of

successful Academies, such as Building, Hospitality and Police. These have been well-received by students and been instrumental in engaging students who may have left school with no qualifications.

Supporting Māori learners to achieve The school has reviewed ways to support Māori students to have success as Māori with Nga Uri a Tane started in 2020 for this purpose. This is a multi-levelled, full time learning programme that seeks to deliver an integrated curriculum through a Maori lens and world view. The focus is to use Māori contexts for teaching and learning, including the literacy standards needed for NCEA qualifications. Students do some classes with the rest of the school, such as Mathematics, Physical Education and their option classes.

As a result, students and whānau report they feel better connected with their culture and supported to have success in their preferred pathways.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of 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)

Effective communication ensuring consistent assessment practice Teachers and students are confident in their understanding of school and NZQA assessment policy and procedures which supports school-wide practices. The Principal's Nominee's leadership has been instrumental in ensuring teachers are consistently applying the guidelines outlined in the teacher handbook.

Students have clear guidance on what is expected of them in a student handbook. This is shared with students and parents electronically, with assessment information reinforced with students in assemblies. The students spoken to during the review understood how to maintain the authenticity of their work, appeal a grade and request an extension to a due date.

The Principal's Nominee supports learning areas to further develop their processes and systems, such as storing assessment work digitally, which has resulted in an increase in the number of digital submissions for external moderation. She regularly keeps teachers updated on any changes to NCEA requirements, such as the recent change to the sample of student work required by NZQA to be sent for external moderation, which teachers are familiar with.

Supporting students entitled to special assessment conditions The school has good systems for identifying students eligible for special assessment conditions from Year 9, trailing different assessment support and gathering school-based evidence to support these applications over this time. Teachers are informed of what the entitlements are for each student by email at the start of the year and through the school's student management system. To further support these students, teachers could be reminded these entitlements should be made available for both internal and external assessments. This will ensure students are fully supported for all NCEA assessments.

Verifying results sent to NZQA for external standards The school needs to develop a process to ensure results from external standards have been verified or justified before the file is sent to NZQA. This will help ensure both the school and NZQA can be confident they are valid and reliable if they are needed to be used as

derived grades should students' external assessment performance be impaired by circumstances beyond their control. The Principal's Nominee needs to document and monitor the quality assurance that occurs to confirm that this process is robust and meets NZQA requirements.

Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

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

The school's internal moderation practices and procedures are embedded in learning areas and monitored by the Principal's Nominee. Teachers complete an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, attesting that all required steps in the internal moderation process have been completed, including documentation of verifiers discussions about work at grade boundaries. The Principal's Nominee reconciles this documentation with each learning area and reports results to NZQA when she is assured that this process has been fully completed.

Learning areas may like to consider reviewing the verifiers used for internal moderation where external moderation outcomes are 'Not Yet Consistent' and 'Not Consistent' for consecutive years. It can be inferred that these verifiers are also not consistently assessing to the standard. Changing verifiers may help to better inform assessor judgements by giving meaningful guidance at grade boundaries, resulting in improved external moderation outcomes.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

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

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on student interests, needs, abilities and aspirations
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers to offer courses the school is unable to offer
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- 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
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Dargaville High 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

Dargaville High 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.

Dargaville High 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

Dargaville High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Dargaville High 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
- seeking NZQA approval through a subcontracting agreement to engage with a non-consented provider to deliver specific standards.

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

Dargaville High 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.

Dargaville High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

Appendix 2: Overview

What this report is about

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

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 2021* (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 2022* (Assessment Rules).

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
- Dargaville High School Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy
- *NZQA/NCEA Assessment Good Practice Guide for 2022* (Staff Handbook)
- *Student Handbook 2022, National Certificate of Educational Achievement*, (Student Handbook)
- *Dargaville High School Senior School Subject Option Handbook 2022*.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
 - Careers, Gateways and Academies
 - English
 - Junior Mathematics
 - Science
 - Visual Arts and Art History
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - Commerce and Accounting
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Deputy 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.