

Managing National Assessment Report

Otamatea High School
September 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Otamatea High School

13 September 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 2020.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

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

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Develop a school-wide process for monitoring and documenting that all school-based evidence for potential derived grades has been verified before being sent to NZQA.	Immediate
Review and amend the staff NCEA handbook to ensure it outlines the processes and procedures expected by all learning areas, including the latest information about NCEA.	Ready for the start of next 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:

- encouraging more staff to engage with NZQA's assessor support available through Pūtake
- reinforcing students' understanding and use of the processes outlined in the student handbook.



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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

15 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 26 October 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

Otamatea High School has addressed the two action items from their previous report. They are documenting and monitoring that the planned actions in response to feedback from external moderation have been completed. The Principal's Nominee has updated the student handbook, and this is available on the school website.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The school has sound processes for following up issues identified by external moderators. The Principal's Nominee discusses the reports with teachers where the report identifies any issues. Learning areas complete an action plan of the changes needed, and attest they have been made, before the standard is assessed again. The next step is for the school to consider how it will measure the effectiveness of these actions in addressing the issues identified through external moderation.

Teachers value the feedback they receive from external moderation and incorporate it into their course evaluations. They use the query and appeal processes available through the moderation tool and ask for standards to be added to the moderation plan the following year to check the actions taken have been effective in addressing the issues where assessor judgments were not consistent with the standard.

External moderation results affirm that many of the assessor judgements are at the national standard. Learning areas where judgements need to improve are making progress towards addressing these and becoming more proficient at recognising what is required for the standard by verifying grades awarded on more student samples, marking as a team and consulting subject associations. The Principal's Nominee agrees teachers could engage more with Pūtake, NZQA's assessor support tool, to further improve their understanding and ability to make judgements at grade boundaries.

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)

Otamatea High School has sound review processes, enabling them to plan for the future needs of the school and students.

Reviewing assessment practices The teachers are given the opportunity to share good assessment practice, and this has seen improved systems being implemented in learning areas, especially with the use and storage of digital assessments. The Principal's Nominee is proactive in checking assessment practices to ensure consistency and looking for ways these can be further improved.

Reviewing assessment in preparation for NCEA Change Programmes As the school grows, the Principal and senior leadership team are reviewing the NCEA programmes offered, especially in light of the changes to NCEA being implemented

in 2024. Alongside this has been a focus on reviewing and refreshing Year 9 and 10 programmes to ensure these enable a seamless transition through the school and mirror the changing assessment structure of NCEA from 2024. The school is planning to engage with the Literacy and Numeracy co-requisites next year but have yet to determine to what extent.

Improving academic achievement The school has been focussing on improving NCEA results and the number of endorsements gained by students. Teachers have looked at the design of courses, the contexts used and how to further engage students in their learning journey, keeping their goals and pathway aspirations at the forefront of any suggested changes. An example of this is having at least one external standard offered in each course so that course endorsement is a possibility for all students if they wish to pursue this. Achievement has been improving each year, however the impact of COVID-19 over the past couple of years has seen this stall.

To further support achievement and engagement, and improve student wellbeing and confidence in sitting NCEA exams, the school held a Study Skills Day in August this year. This included modules on time management, how to prepare for exams and manage stress. The school anticipates this will help improve academic performance and engagement with NCEA exams, which has been hindered by the disruption of the last couple of years. The students spoken to during this review found the day very beneficial and took away a number of strategies they can use in their preparation for the NCEA exams. The school plans to review what was offered to the students during this day and gather their feedback about what it could look like in the future.

Meeting the needs of Māori students The school is intending to focus on success for Māori as Māori next year to further support their achievement and pathway goals. This will involve analysing achievement data, consulting with the community and developing a strategic plan to meet this school wide goal. The Principal shared that this may see academies in Te Reo Māori and Kapa Haka being developed in the future.

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)

Using digital tools for assessment The school encourages teachers to use digital means to gather and assess evidence for achievement, a practice that will see them well prepared for the NCEA changes in 2024. This has been effective in helping teachers to monitor work in progress, give feedback and signal next steps to students, and to check the authenticity of the work produced. The Principal's Nominee has noticed the added advantage of the ease of submitting digital work for external moderation. Another benefit for students is that they have the confidence to engage with digital practice exams and digital exams, with school engagement increasing each year. The Principal's Nominee has identified that the next step is to develop a school wide system for storing work produced digitally to ensure it is easily accessible.

Tracking student progress to support them to reach their goals The school effectively uses data to track student progress and identify those who would benefit from further support. Iwi deans and Whānau teachers follow up with students at risk

of not getting a qualification, informing whānau and offering any support that may be needed for them to meet their goals.

Academic mentoring is a big part of this support, where small groups of students are mentored by the same teacher throughout their time at the school. This builds strong relationships between this teacher, the student and their whānau, that assists with discussing pathways and setting goals each year. Students are expected to work to the best of their ability and whānau are encouraged to support them to do this. Students are starting to take more ownership of tracking their own progress and sharing this with their whānau.

Documentation of the quality assurance of evidence gathering for derived grades The school needs to monitor and document the processes used for verifying (or justifying) the results from school based evidence for potential derived grades, before these are sent to NZQA. These steps will enable the Principal's Nominee to confirm that these processes are robust and meet NZQA requirements. Both the school and NZQA can then be confident these results are valid and reliable if they need to be used as derived grades should students' external assessment performance be impaired by circumstances beyond their control.

Supporting students to become familiar with the student handbook Otamatea High School could consider looking at ways students can be regularly informed of the key information about NCEA and the processes and procedures contained in the student handbook. This will keep this information fresh and relevant for all students doing NCEA assessments and ensure they get consistent, accurate information. At present they rely on information from each of their subject teachers and this may not consist of everything they need to know. The students spoken to were aware of a student handbook but not the content it contained and although it is available for students and whānau on the school website they had not accessed it there.

Reviewing the staff handbook The Principal's Nominee needs to review and update the procedures and processes outlined in the staff handbook. An updated staff handbook, accurately outlining the actual practices used, that teachers are familiar with and consistency using, will continue to ensure credible results are being reported to NZQA. The Principal's Nominee agreed that feedback from learning areas will help ensure the staff handbook meets their needs and that of NZQA.

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 Principal's Nominee keeps teachers informed about any changes to NCEA requirements through emails and at meetings. Learning areas spoken to during the review consistently follow the processes outlined on the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, sharing these with the Principal's Nominee when the internal moderation process has been completed. She documents this before sending results to NZQA.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Otamatea 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
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy and/or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Otamatea 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
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Otamatea 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.

Otamatea 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

Otamatea 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.

Otamatea 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.

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

Otamatea High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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.

Otamatea High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- 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 Otamatea 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 whānau.

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
- *Assessment Procedures – A Guide for Teachers 2017* (Staff Handbook)
- Assessment Procedures 2022 (Student Handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Assistant Principal – Student Achievement
- Heads of Department for:
 - Arts and Languages
 - English
 - Health and Physical Education
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Assistant Principal – Student 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.