

Managing National Assessment Report

Waitakere College

April 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Waitakere College

9 April 2024

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 2023.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

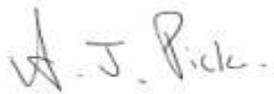
The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Ensure there is more robust, evaluative follow up for standards that are repeatedly Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent	Ongoing and before each of the standards are offered again

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 all teachers can and do access assessor support available through NZQA's learning management system, Pūtake.



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6 June 2024

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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 4 September 2018 Managing National Assessment Report

The school had no action items to resolve from the 2018 MNA review but responded effectively to NZQA's suggestion to improve storage protocols for the growing number of digital materials.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes Waitakere College has comprehensive procedures in place to respond to external moderation outcomes. The school has a mainly sound record of agreement between assessor and moderator judgements and submits all material requested to NZQA for external moderation. The Principal's Nominee maintains a database monitoring outcomes for external moderation reports that return as Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent. However, in several subject areas more robust follow-up evaluation needs to occur where results have repeatedly been Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent. A Principal's Nominee's summary evaluation of the effectiveness of actions implemented will provide next steps to resolve patterns of inconsistency and ensure senior management is confident in the grades reported in those areas. This may include an evaluation of the effectiveness of changes made to assessment materials, or the effectiveness of strengthened critiquing and verification processes, for example, where there has been a change of verifier, to one with more recent, successful experience assessing the standard.

The school's broader response to external moderation positions it well to make these changes as there are many examples of best practice in departments. Teachers respond to external moderation findings by considering grade boundary decisions, revisiting clarifications documents and adjusting assessment materials before the standard is offered again. Changes needed are addressed in departments in a timely manner. Line managers evaluate and note the effectiveness of changes made. Where appropriate, the school supports professional development, or a change of verifier especially for teachers new to NCEA.

As a next step the school needs to encourage better use of NZQA's learning management system, Pūtake, especially in single teacher departments or those areas where use of Pūtake is not already embedded. The adoption of this system and processes allow for improved understanding of assessing a standard.

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)

School leadership and strategic planning supports equitable access to assessment and initiatives to meet students' needs in this school's culturally diverse community. The school's leadership supports inclusive assessment pedagogy. Students are individually tracked to ensure their pathways are meaningful and meet their aspirations and assessment needs.

In 2023, the school successfully delivered the NCEA Co-requisite Common Assessment Activities, at scale, for Year 10 and 11 students who were ready to be

assessed. The Principal's Nominee commented on the need to be responsive to logistics and resourcing management during delivery, especially at a time of roll growth. Close collaboration with the Kahui Ako o te Waitākere at junior level, coupled with Progressive Achievement Tests and Write Now diagnostics have effectively supported identification of student readiness to be assessed. These foundations ensure specific pathways are identified to build each student's foundational literacy and prepare them for the assessments.

The sixty three percent of students who are accessing digital examinations are well-prepared through practice assessments, and use of their logins. The school uses the analogy of a check-in procedure to develop student ownership. Teachers effectively engage students to access their Learner Logins in English, Mathematics and Commerce classes where they are also given practice assessments. Students interviewed could describe using their learner login to check results, access digital examinations, and articulate their understanding of how to apply for reviews or reconsiderations. Students commented that their school provides for their preferred approach to examinations and recognises their success.

Evidence of the effectiveness of the school's leadership is reflected in consistent levels of student achievement. In addition, a culture of reflection has identified barriers to the aspirations for Māori tane, including providing engaging contexts, next steps for access and establishing the relevance of qualifications to career Pathways. This is discussed further in the section on use of data to support assessment practice.

Use of data and targeted support for identified priority students The school uses a predictive data system alongside its Student Management System to add value by tracking student progress at both a granular and cohort level. The system identifies students who may need Individualised Educational Programmes and ensures they are delivered a range of solutions to meet their needs. In addition, the school uses NZQA statistical reports. For example, the use of NZQA and school data reports, such as Science, Technology, Arts, Engineering and Mathematics (STEAM) data, has allowed the school to identify that building relational pedagogy and effective local contexts supports the success of Māori tane in STEAM. Support processes include adding the introduction of Mana Advocates as academic mentors, holiday programmes, tutorials, homework centres, shared success stories and open access to aspirational standards. A Talanoa Pasifika is also provided. Students spoke highly of these interventions to support their progress and affirm their academic aspirations.

The school continues to offer NCEA at all three levels. This has been widely canvassed within the school community and is a response to student and whānau voice that values qualifications at all levels.

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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)

Students access a range of assessment pathways Waitakere College offers a broad range of vocational, academic and culturally responsive assessment contexts to best meet student needs and aspirations. The school's Health Science Academy, run in conjunction with Counties/Manukau DHB, targets preparing students for careers in Health and offers the flexibility to build into academic pathways as needed. Student voice is gathered and used to support the provision of courses that best support student needs. Career counselling scaffolds support for each student in developing their flexible learning pathway.

Local contexts used effectively Teachers are successfully developing the range of local contexts to engage student interest. For example, the school is using an iterative process to successfully build teacher capability and cultural awareness. In 2023, the school trialled Pūtaiao, the Science standards derived from the TMOA curriculum, and in the process contacted appropriate verifiers. A department review identified the need for further professional development for assessors and engaged in a strategic response to build teacher capability. Initial progress has meant the school can access moderator capability, is building understanding of the requirements of the standards and is considering ways to re-establish the course through its course design committee.

Maintaining authenticity of assessment processes Teachers use effective checkpoints and milestones and teacher observation of students to ensure there are as few breaches as possible. In this way most possible breaches are dealt with through applying the school's clear Authenticity policy. Where there needs to be further intervention, breaches are reported to the Principal's Nominee, Details are recorded and natural justice is applied.

The school investigated three breaches in 2023 and two of these resulted in grades being removed and reporting Not Achieved. Close collaboration between the Principal's Nominee and Data Manager has resulted in a centrally held spreadsheet to effectively track and identify any authenticity concerns and issues for students. To support staff understanding, the Principal's Nominee provides staff professional development on NZQA's Rules: *Processes for Candidate Breaches of External Assessment* and most recently shared schoolwide professional development on the acceptable use of Artificial Intelligence. Communications on breaches are shared effectively at all levels of the school and these support practices to give senior management confidence in the validity of the school's assessment outcomes.

Supporting student with special assessment conditions The school effectively manages special assessment conditions. Teachers use a collection of school-based evidence and reports to ensure equity. A range of methods including provision of reader/writers, separate accommodation and extra time are provided by teachers to help students to manage their specific learning difficulties. To best direct the scope of its large number of applications the school uses Computer Only Use for students where this is appropriate. Each of these strategies best enables students to equitably access conditions that will support any specific learning needs.

Communication aligned with NZQA's assessment advice The school's communication processes are accessible and effectively support fairness so that students, parents and teachers can understand the requirements for credible assessment practice. All processes are aligned to the NZQA website and the NCEA Myths are widely used. Students receive their NCEA information alongside the ability

to raise queries about NCEA via a weekly newsletter *Pānui* and through year level assemblies. Extensions and appeals are run through digital booking systems by teachers, Heads of Department and the Principal's Nominee. Regular communication occurs with families through digital communication and report evenings.

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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)

Internal moderation effectively documented and monitored Internal moderation is quality assured and processes are managed through the student management system. Comprehensive tracking charts of moderation progress are held in departments and digital files of assessment materials and student evidence are held in faculties and on drives. Where necessary, portfolios are stored physically within faculties in secure spaces. Evidence sighted during the visit shows processes for storing, critiquing, verifying and maintaining exemplars of student work are consistent and compliant. Students could explain their clear understanding of moderation processes and expected timeframes for return of their assessments for review and appeal purposes.

The Principal's Nominee uses a centralised spreadsheet to monitor external moderation follow-up with changes required noted as clear and actionable items. There is some evaluation of changes made. The success of actions should continue to be fully evaluated at this level to ensure closure of any ongoing issues identified through the school and NZQA's moderation processes. Already this is largely in place through the annual departmental reports and face-to-face conversation with the Principal and the Board of Trustees so the Principal's Nominee is well positioned to finalise and summarise the small number of evaluations required. This will further develop confidence to senior leadership and at all levels of the organisation that assessor judgements are consistent and that processes for change are enacted where needed.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Waitakere College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of its 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 and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- 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
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to open opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Waitakere College 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

Waitakere College 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.

Waitakere College 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
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Waitakere College 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.

Waitakere College 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

Waitakere College 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, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

Waitakere College 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 Waitakere College:

- 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 NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024*.

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
- *New Zealand Qualifications Framework Waitākere College's Assessment Procedures and Guidelines NCEA Levels 1,2 and 3 - 2024* (Staff handbook)
- *Pānui and Student Assessment Hub Waitākere College 2024* (Student handbook)

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Head of Faculty for:
 - Commerce
 - English
 - Humanities
 - Languages
 - Science
 - The Arts
- three students.

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