

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Waihi College

August 2022

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## Waihi College

23 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
<b>Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results</b>	
Strengthen moderation monitoring to better ensure departments are using strategies to make accurate grade boundary decisions	Immediate

## **For consideration**

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

- continuing to develop the use of clarifications documents, explanatory notes and Making Assessor Judgements workshops to develop understanding of standards within departments
- ensuring better access to achievement standards in Mathematics as Work and Study Skills standards are replaced
- requesting the addition of standards to the school's assessment plan.



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10 October 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 17 May 2018 Managing National Assessment Report** Waihi College has addressed the action items from its previous Managing National Assessment review.

The Principal's Nominee ensures that all teachers work with a suitably qualified subject specialist to complete the internal moderation process. In single-teacher departments this occurs with a teacher from another school to ensure that reported results are not the work of a single teacher working in professional isolation.

#### **Communications are now consistent, purposeful and tailored to their audience**

The school is updating its communications annually so that both student and teacher handbooks are current and are hyperlinked to the NZQA website. The documents are written in plain English and provide resources to assist staff to understand assessment processes, evidence-gathering and moderation requirements. Staff use online handbooks and students and whānau receive a digital copy of the student handbook emailed to them.

**External moderation processes and response to outcomes** The school is developing effective systems to respond to external moderation findings. The Principal's Nominee co-creates action plans with teachers where assessment tasks need to be rewritten or where assessor judgements are not consistent with the standard. She effectively monitors the strategies used to complete these plans holding documented follow-up conversations with teachers.

The Principal's Nominee encourages appeals of moderator decisions and changes to grade verifiers where this is indicated through external moderation feedback or where there is a pattern of inconsistency in grade boundary judgements. Teachers are supported to seek professional development, and this is resourced where needed.

### 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)*

A cohesive and experienced senior leadership team leads an embedded cycle of self-review at Waihi College.

**Digital Literacy and Numeracy assessments** A post-COVID schoolwide review of Literacy and Numeracy identified that students were ready to take part in Literacy and Numeracy pilots. The school used diagnostic assessment to identify student readiness to be assessed resulting in the delivery of these assessments at scale for students from Years 10 and 11. Heads of Department, in discussion with senior managers, decided that this would better engage students with their current way of learning and the momentum of online learning so that this meets their needs. The Principal's Nominee reports that this is effectively engaging students.

**Engagement with Review of Achievement standards** The Principal's Nominee explained that students are better engaged with assessment through aligning their current mode of learning with ownership of assessment outcomes through the introduction of digital examinations. In 2021 they trialled History at Levels 1, 2 and 3 and this year will scale this up to include Level 3 English. Students interviewed confirmed that they enjoyed completing their examinations in this way. Senior Management and teachers plan to continue to monitor the effectiveness of these new processes for students as the school progressively engages new cohorts and scales up engagement in digital examinations. As a next step it is considering the introduction of Digital Practice Examinations to further support student preparedness for external examinations.

**Review of internal moderation systems supported with professional development** Through discussion with Heads of Department and Teachers-in-Charge, senior leadership identified that there was a need to build consistency in staff understanding of the internal moderation processes. The Principal's Nominee uses a range of media and professional development to inform staff about these processes. This includes use of "Teachers New to NCEA" and Mythbusters through staff meetings.

Teachers make explicit use of process posters in all classrooms. This has developed a greater shared understanding of the purpose of internal moderation processes. In addition, the school's new digital moderation system is used to ensure transparency and to model best practice that can be shared.

By using its external moderation as a lens on internal moderation practice the school has identified several departments, including many with sole teachers, which may need to look more broadly to locate new grade verifiers. This would help ensure that the second pair of eyes in moderation is confirming grade boundary decisions from a sufficient sample of assessed student work to provide confidence in the grades awarded. Senior management agreed that this consideration can provide specific feedback on the accuracy of grade boundary judgements and further enable the retention of exemplars to provide consistency and confidence in grades reported.

All of those interviewed commented that senior leaders are having a positive impact on the way teachers discuss internal moderation and its purpose. This is effective leadership.

## **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)*

**Credit reduction and student interest combine to support student ownership of academic, vocational and cultural pathways** In response to a suggestion for improvement in its last Managing National Assessment review the school conducted a review into the delivery of assessment against standards to all students. Senior Leaders identified the need to remove credit accumulation as a driver and positioned student interest at the centre of a new Super Tuesday Programme. For the first six months in Year 11 teachers use Super Tuesday to build student understanding of concepts that underpin NCEA and assessment for learning. To mitigate any loss of subjects through Super Tuesday initiatives the school is making more use of online learning through Volcanics to maintain access for students. This system now

encourages the use of naturally occurring evidence so that assessment falls out of learning.

The combined effect of these change strategies is to ensure improved student engagement and more individualised academic, vocational and cultural pathways so that students are engaged with their assessment goals.

**Development of mentoring systems to meet students' cultural needs** Growing awareness of students' mentoring needs has led to changes to the mentoring system through an Ako grouping system. Pou Ako meet with whānau and akōnga for extended interviews at midyear. Whānau classes can choose to meet in the whare Maia to hold conversations in te reo Māori. Mentoring is supported with pastoral care as any behavioural needs impacting upon assessment are identified. This is better meeting the needs of all students.

**Students engaging through their Learner login** A steadily increasing number of students are using their Learner login to check their results in January during results release. Senior management notes that this represents an evolving sense of purpose and ownership by students of their achievement. Student understanding that this is the means they can order certificates, access digital examinations, access their completed examinations and request reviews and reconsiderations, is developing.

**Improved identification and processes for students entitled to Special Assessment Conditions** The school has made significant progress in identifying those students who may be entitled to special assessment conditions. The Learning Support Co-ordinator alerts staff to the use of school-based evidence in identifying students from Year 9 onwards. Two-way communication between teachers and the Learning Support Co-ordinator has greatly increased the number of students who are provisioned. Teachers and students reported that this is effectively meeting student assessment needs and keeping whānau informed. In addition, growing understanding of the use and provision of special assessment conditions is better embedding teacher understanding of appropriate levels of guidance in both internal and external assessments.

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) considerations** To build levels of student aspiration for all students through changes to literacy and numeracy a next step will be to consider whether the use of new achievement standards in Mathematics will better serve student needs by providing improved access to achievement standards for all students, especially where Work and Study Skills have been used in the past. This strategy may inform further change around the better alignment of STEM entries and results.

## **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)*

**Suggest standards are added to the school's assessment plan** The school can take further ownership of the outcomes of external moderation by identifying standards to be added to its assessment plan. Senior management agreed that this consideration can provide specific feedback on judgements at grade boundaries to better assure decisions are at the national standard.

**Increasingly effective internal moderation monitoring systems** The Principal's Nominee agreed that as part of an increasingly effective internal moderation monitoring system the next step will be to make follow-up visits to departments during the year. This will ensure proactive follow-up and closure of any identified actions in a timely manner. The recent introduction of the Assay3 system already means the Principal's Nominee is aware of all storage arrangements and confirms critiquing of assessment tools has occurred. She sights all verification comments from departments on internal moderation cover sheets before these are reported to NZQA. She checks that the quality of discussion over assessor/moderator judgements is improving to focus on specific aspects of student work in relation to the assessment criteria of the standards. The system is tracked and highlights any issue of capability within departments so that professional support and adjustments to assessor judgements at grade boundaries can now confirm changes made are timely and new understanding is applied when the standard is offered again. The next step is to close this loop by confirming the effectiveness of changes made through internal moderation.

# Appendix 1: Effective Practice

## Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

**Waihi College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students / ākonga by:**

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on student / ākonga 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 / ākonga can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students / ākonga when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student / ākonga needs
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students / ākonga 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 / ākonga 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.

**Waihi College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating student/ākonga appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student / ākonga 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 / ākonga results.



## **Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality**

**Waihi 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 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

**Waihi College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of student / ākonga work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of student / ākonga 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**

**Waihi College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students / ākonga by:**

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

**Waihi 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 / ākonga and teacher / kaiako 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 / ākonga and their families / whānau about assessment**

### **Waihi 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 / ākonga receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students / ākonga to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on students' / ākonga progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting teachers / kaiako new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' / ākonga success, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

### **Waihi College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students / ākonga
- informing students / ākonga about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students / ākonga 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 Waihi 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 / ākonga and families / 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
- *Teacher / Kaiako Handbook, Managing National Assessment, Waihi College 2022* (staff handbook)
- *Student Handbook, National Qualifications, Waihi College 2022* (student handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Head of Department for:
  - English
  - Health and Physical Education
  - Mathematics
  - Pathways and Transition
  - Science
  - Technology
- three students / ākonga.

There was a report-back session with the Principal / Tumuaki 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

Waihi College is a small rural school with a large number of sole teacher departments. This background forms the basis upon which digital changes are being explored and developed to better meet student needs and grow internal assessment capability.