

Managing National Assessment Report

Te Aroha College

May 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Te Aroha College

23 May 2023

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 2021.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

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

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	External and internal review
Strengthen follow-up to external moderation through checking and evaluating the effectiveness of actions	Immediate and ongoing
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Update external and internal moderation processes in the staff handbook and strengthen the process to ensure information remains current	Immediate and ongoing
Report a result for all entries in internally assessed standards, or withdraw the entry, as appropriate	Ongoing throughout the year and to be completed by 1 December
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
Strengthen internal moderation processes.	Immediate and ongoing
Strengthen internal moderation monitoring to check and evaluate actions	Immediate and ongoing

For consideration

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

- further refine the current implementation of your digital tracking system for internal moderation processes.



Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

23 June 2023

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 24 August 2018 Managing National Assessment Report The school has addressed both action items from its 2018 Managing National Assessment review. Whole staff professional development and reference to and use of NZQA's Mythbuster - *Resubmission* has clarified with all teachers the correct application of NZQA's requirements for resubmission. This is now embedded as practice.

The school's documentation was updated as requested in the last report. In this review there are a number of further updates that will now need to be made. These are covered under the Credible Assessment section of this report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes Follow up processes need to be strengthened to address ongoing issues identified by external moderation in one learning area so that they can be effectively resolved.

The school's existing process does not extend to an evaluation of the effectiveness of responses to external moderation outcomes. Currently the school requires learning areas to respond to all external moderation. The Principal's Nominee holds a discussion with the Head of Learning or Teacher in Charge over any issues arising from these reports and actions planned to resolve them.

Closer monitoring of effectiveness of moderation action plans needed Where moderation outcomes have not improved there needs to be a further check on actions to improve the efficacy of those responses and better assure senior leaders that reported results are valid. This more consistent process of closing the loop by evaluating the completion of the actions outlined in the External Moderation Response form will allow the school to use its external moderation feedback as a lens to measure the effectiveness of internal moderation processes within departments.

Teachers are using the process to query and appeal assessment decisions where they need more feedback or clarification. This may help with providing clarity about the standard and to provide further feedback from the moderator.

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)

After a period of leadership and governance change, the new Principal and Board of Trustees have established a strategic direction and a school wide review of assessment systems and practices.

Achievement targets set by leadership The school continues to set a target for student achievement that looks to ensure that 75 per cent of students gain Level 2 before leaving the school. The school sees this as an opportunity to build aspiration around assessment and learning and to take a new direction as part of its ongoing review.

Review of annual reporting format Senior leaders identified a need to review the school's annual reporting format to provide "sound bite reporting with substance" that better connects its goals around learning and assessment pathways. Identification of barriers and enablers to achievement highlighted through gender and ethnic data breakdown help the school be responsive to student needs.

Credit reduction and reduction in the number of unit standards offered In response to implementing a reviewed structure of fewer and larger standards that will result from the Review of Achievement Standards, and the school's focus on literacy and numeracy at Level 1 in 2022 senior leaders considered the number of unit standards on offer. They have reduced the number of Unit Standards assessed across all levels.

This change provides the opportunity for teachers to provide greater depth of learning within their offered courses. The Principal has indicated that ongoing review will monitor this reduction to support individualised learning programmes that connect students with local businesses and contexts.

Engaging Māori students and supporting their achievement Every year the school analyses its data and identified the need for strategies to improve Māori student achievement by creating a deeper connection between students, their experience of school and with whānau. Late in 2022 community voice confirmed the need to provide a whānau class that responded to meeting cultural assessment needs. The whānau class currently learn Te Reo Māori and Tikanga in a Te Ao Māori context, but students interviewed commented that they would value Te Ao Haka being validated through assessment opportunities. These next steps will form part of community discussions under the new leadership of the school.

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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.

Students able to articulate career goals and pathways The school's Gateway programme enables the flexibility of NCEA to be used to support both its vocational and academic pathways. This adds to both engagement and provision of future opportunities for students. Students interviewed explained their careers advice and could articulate their NCEA goals.

Digital examinations to meet student needs By effectively engaging in transition year arrangements for the Literacy/Numeracy corequisite the school is continuing to strengthen its capability to offer digital assessment. The process is supported for students through the issue of devices to all in Year 9 and consideration of readiness to be assessed. Staff are receiving training to administer, supervise and deliver digital assessment through Assessment Master. In addition, teachers have Education Sector Logins and are using Pūtaka to support their professional development on standards and digital assessment practice.

Increased use of Learner Login In 2022 students creating their Learner Login account increased fourfold from 2021 so that two thirds of students engaged with NCEA now have this access. Learner login access allows students to take part in digital examinations, check their entries and results, apply for reviews and reconsiderations, and order certificates. Students interviewed during this review noted that this helps them to understand NZQA processes and track their results.

As a next step the school aims to support all NCEA students to register for Learner logins, to access the functions available.

Effective use of data to track student engagement and achievement The school's data monitoring system enables teachers to meet students' ongoing assessment needs and support them towards gaining NCEA. Senior leaders, deans and form teachers use an effective colour-coded system to track student progress throughout the year and identify any interventions that may be necessary to keep students on track to achieve their qualifications goals. They make immediate contact with family around missed and late assessment and adjust courses to meet student needs to resolve issues as required.

Updates to the staff handbook required to ensure consistent understanding and application of NZQA requirements The staff handbook should be updated to align with current NZQA requirements for external moderation submission, to include N, A, M and E and two grade boundary samples of student work. Although teachers interviewed report using the correct process, it has not been updated in the staff handbook and result in inconsistency of sample selection in the future.

While the practice of purposeful selection of student work for moderation is occurring, there is currently no reference to sufficient selection of samples of student work for grade verification in the staff assessment handbook. By making explicit the requirement for teachers to select sufficient, appropriate samples of student work for verification, the school can gain assurance that the process will further strengthen teacher understanding of the standard and has the potential to reduce workload without compromising the integrity of results.

Further guidance will embed this practice for all teachers so that they understand there is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work for which grades must be verified. The sample size in departments will 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.

Standards withdrawal process inconsistent in several departments The school needs to review its processes for identifying and removing entries for which there is no reported result because no assessment took place, before the 1st December. It will support accurate student assessment records for tracking purposes.

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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.

Monitoring of internal moderation processes The Principal's Nominee makes physical checks of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* to confirm critiquing, grade verification, maintenance of exemplars have been undertaken and that storage of assessment materials is complete before results are submitted to NZQA.

Strengthening consistency of grade verification The Principal's Nominee requires teachers to seek new verifiers or to undertake professional development through accessing subject associations, Pūtake and clarifications documents when there is a pattern of assessors grades not being consistent with the standard. Grade

verifiers are required to be subject specialists with current experience of the standard. However, there are two subject areas within one learning area where this forms part of their ongoing documented Moderation Action Plan. The Principal's Nominee will evaluate change made to ensure there is further support for effective grade boundary decisions.

Supporting understanding of storage requirements for internal moderation In one learning area storage of internal moderation materials needs to be strengthened so that the material is available for external moderation and the Principal's Nominee can undertake monitoring checks. There are examples of excellent storage practice in the school that can be shared to support a change in practice where this is needed.

Consider a digital tracking of internal moderation process Given that all the school's external moderation is submitted digitally it may be timely to consider expanding the currently used digital method of tracking and monitoring materials supported through a digital storage policy for internal moderation materials.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Te Aroha College 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 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
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- 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.

Te Aroha 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
- 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

Te Aroha 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
- using grade verifiers from outside the school
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes

Te Aroha College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Te Aroha 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.

Te Aroha 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
- ensuring low levels of late external entries
- 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 families about assessment

Te Aroha College 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.

Te Aroha 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 Te Aroha 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 Candidates 2023*.

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
- *Te Aroha College Staff Assessment Handbook 2023* (Staff Handbook)
- *Te Aroha College Student Assessment Handbook 2023* (Student Handbook).

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Learning for:
 - Mathematics
 - Science
- Teachers in Charge of:
 - Food Technology
 - Visual Arts
- Teachers of:
 - Mathematics
 - Science and Agriculture
- the Gateway Co-ordinator
- five students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, two Deputy Principals and the 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 school has been under Limited Statutory Management since 2021 and has appointed a new Principal and several new board members in 2023.