

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Waikato Diocesan School for Girls**

**March 2025**

## **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

### **Waikato Diocesan School for Girls**

**25 March 2025**

#### **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 2024.

## **Actions and Considerations**

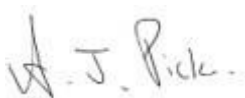
#### **No action required**

The school has no action items relating to the quality of its assessment systems.

#### **For consideration**

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

- Strengthening the assessment policy to explicitly address the use of Generative AI
- Formally capture student voice to enhance course, department and whole school review processes.



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5 May 2025

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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 1 July 2021 Managing National Assessment Report** This review highlighted the need to strengthen the follow-up to external moderation by ensuring that planned actions addressed identified issues and supported assessors in making decisions consistent with the standard. The Principal's Nominee continues to strengthen and improve the monitoring process and the completion and effectiveness of action plans to address issues raised by external moderators, ensuring the school can be confident in the validity of reported results.

The Principal's Nominee discusses external moderation reports and planned actions with each Head of Department, and a review system is in place to evaluate the impact of the changes made.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** The school's follow-up processes for addressing issues identified through external moderation are comprehensive and effective, as evidenced by the high number of consistent outcomes since 2021. Upon receiving external moderation reports, the Principal's Nominee, in collaboration with the teacher in charge, develops an action plan to address any identified issues and implement necessary improvements. This plan involves comparing the report, the standard, and assessor judgements to accurately identify issues and formulate a response. Collaboration with subject experts from other schools is encouraged at each stage of the assessment process. The school supports this by providing professional development opportunities, such as liaising with other schools and subject associations as needed. The Assessor Practice Tool in Pūtake and short courses have been utilised by a few departments, and wider use is encouraged over a greater range of subjects.

One department has consistently received external moderation feedback as Not Yet Consistent over the past few years. Although this is somewhat skewed by the submission of the same work for the same standards in consecutive years, significant efforts have been made in this area. Appeals and queries have been submitted, resulting in a greater understanding of the standard. Consequently, the Principal's Nominee can be confident that the changes made will lead to more consistent assessor judgements.

### 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)*

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls places strong emphasis on continuous review and improvement to best meet the needs of its students. Through effective leadership, teachers are empowered to take ownership of credible assessment and moderation practices. Student engagement and academic achievement are prioritised and are reflected in their NCEA results.

Following thorough consultation using a robust review process, the school decided to remove the Level 1 NCEA qualification to better meet student needs and support

their pursuit of higher-level qualifications. After the first year of implementation, both staff and students have appreciated the increased freedom and flexibility. The school will continue to review whether this change has achieved its intended purpose over the next few years.

**Commitment to Continuous Improvement** The school conducts an annual analysis of variance to measure its progress against previous years' outcomes and to draw meaningful comparisons with comparable schools and schools with similar student populations nationally. This analysis, combined with input from students and whānau, helps to inform practice and strategic direction. Teachers and departments review each standard annually, documenting and discussing their findings with senior leaders to evaluate successes and identify areas for improvement. Data-driven annual reports are presented to the Board of Trustees, the senior leadership team and the whānau hui.

To ensure that student feedback is effectively incorporated into the teachers' review process, a more formal approach to capturing student voice should be considered. This would ensure that students' recommendations regarding teaching methods, assessment task design and the relevance of these tasks to their needs are not overlooked from one year to the next.

A key feature of this school's review cycle is the whānau hui. This group meets termly, begins with student performances and using the Kaupapa Māori Strategic Plan as its guiding document, focuses on student achievement. The whānau hui ensures accountability and transparency for Māori students, providing a platform for dialogue that allows challenging questions and issues to be debated.

## **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 2025)*

### **Supporting student success through comprehensive support programmes**

Student assessment and achievement are enhanced through a variety of initiatives. The timetable includes dedicated periods for careers advice, incorporating discussions on how to achieve students' goals. An extended form time runs a programme of scheduled events to support conversations around tracking student progress and NCEA processes and procedures.

Staff in the Learning Hub support students engaged in courses not offered by the school, those students enrolled in university study, and students engaged in STAR or Gateway programmes needing to work on their subjects outside regular course times.

The school's internal scholarship programme identifies Years 9 to 13 students who demonstrate exceptional academic potential. These students have access to an enrichment programme that includes attending trips and listening to guest speakers to expand their critical thinking skills.

Once a week, all students participate in a 10-minute literacy-rich task. For those requiring additional support to gain the co-requisite component of the qualification, there is an intensive wrap-around plan, which includes weekly small group interventions by a literacy and/or numeracy specialist.

**Effective tracking of student NCEA progress** All students are monitored through the school's Achievement and Attendance tracking tool, which is updated every fortnight. Following these updates, meetings between staff are held to discuss the students on the list and to determine what support and interventions may be required. Students and their whānau are then invited to participate in these discussions. Running alongside this, the school tracks its priority learners, which includes those with SAC conditions, Māori students, and those in the enrichment programme, covering both junior and senior students.

**Strategies to ensure student work is authentic** The school is proactively integrating technology into its teaching, learning and assessment practices. In addition to the school's assessment policy, there is an academic authenticity policy outlining the promotion of academic integrity, appropriate responses for alleged academic misconduct, and the consequences for any proven breaches of authenticity. Authenticity is a regular topic for discussion and is a standing item on subject meeting agendas. This ongoing professional development promotes awareness and understanding among staff and students. This complies with the Ministry of Education guidelines. To maintain currency with developments in the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), there should be specific mention of Generative AI tools and technologies within this policy

With the growing uptake in digital assessment, several teachers have taken the lead in evaluating a Generative AI tool to determine its potential in helping students effectively plan, complete and improve their assessments within the boundaries of academic authenticity. Although this initiative is still in its infancy, it is hoped that it will be rolled out to all staff by the end of the year.

**Consistent appeal and extension processes** Students recognise and value the consistency maintained by staff and the Principal's Nominee in handling appeals and extension processes. When students believe their work has been graded below their expectations, they know they can access the appeals process. This process involves a thorough review, often including impartial input from external teachers, with feedback provided to the student explaining why their work received the grade that it did. Additionally, the fairness of the extension process ensures all students are given the opportunity to complete their work, given extenuating circumstances, or not, if the student chooses to be absent. This comprehensive review process provides students with confidence regarding the fairness and accuracy of their grades.

## **Moderation to ensure assessment quality**

*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 2025)*

**Established moderation practices** The school's Internal Moderation process is effectively managed and monitored by the Principal's Nominee and the Academic Database Administrator. Although staff complete a digital copy of the internal moderation cover sheet, results are not reported until a paper copy has been shared with the Principal's Nominee, who ensures that the critiquing and verification processes have been completed and are compliant. All teachers interviewed have Pūtake access and are aware of the need to check both the NZQA and Ministry of Education websites to access available assessor support.

All moderation records are stored online and can be easily accessed. The quality of verification discussions recorded on the internal moderation cover sheet are thorough

and reflect departments' engagement with subject experts from across the region, membership of subject associations and changes in practice resulting from external professional development. This professional learning reinforces the intent to support teachers in making accurate assessor decisions and engaging in robust internal moderation practices.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

### **Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students**

**Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

**Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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 grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

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

**Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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.

**Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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**

**Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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**

### **Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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.

### **Waikato Diocesan School for Girls 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 Waikato Diocesan School for Girls:**

- 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 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 2025*.

### 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
- Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy
- *Staff NCEA Assessment Handbook 2025*
- *Student NCEA Assessment Handbook 2025*.

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum/Assessment
- Academic Database Administrator
- Heads of Department for:
  - English
  - Maths
  - Social Science
  - Technology
- Teacher in Charge of:
  - Economics
- Teacher of:
  - Biology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Acting Principal, 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.