

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

**Whakatāne High School**

**September 2024**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## Whakatāne High School

26 September 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 2022.

### 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
<b>Credible assessment practice to meet student needs</b>	
Develop a process to ensure derived grades are submitted to NZQA	Prior to external assessments
Develop a checking process to ensure all internal assessment entries have a result or are withdrawn	Prior to the last data file submission at the end of the year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:

- introducing a process to support staff understand NZQA procedures and the school's assessment policies so that practice is consistent school-wide
- monitoring of the literacy program and data collected to measure student progress
- developing an induction programme for teachers new to the school and assessing the NCEA qualification.

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1 November 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 13 March 2019 Managing National Assessment Report** The actions identified in the previous report have been effectively addressed. The staff and student handbooks are updated regularly ensuring that assessment practices align with NZQA's expectations. The handbooks are both accessible and fit for purpose. The school is now using its Student Management System for internal moderation. This has enabled line managers and the Principal's Nominee to monitor the completion of the internal moderation process. This is detailed later in the report.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** Whakatāne High School has effective processes in place to evaluate and monitor the outcomes of external moderation. All standards requested for external moderation are evaluated and reported on, with the outcome kept in a central drive for ease of access for all teachers, Heads of Department and Senior Leaders. This provides confidence to Senior Leaders that internal moderation practices are effective, and results submitted to NZQA are credible.

Senior Leaders, Line Managers and the Principal's Nominee closely monitor all external moderation outcomes including developing trends and any issues raised through the individual reports. The external moderation report is discussed with the Heads of Department and the teacher of the standard, with recommendations or actions determined, recorded, and implemented. This is often carried out in a department meeting to ensure all staff can provide input and gain an understanding of the standards requirements. Action plans are established as appropriate and discussed with the department's Line Manager, and issues raised are addressed. Prior to the end of the year the actions are then checked for completion and effectiveness by the Line Manager and the Principal's Nominee.

In the last three years the external moderation outcomes have improved. This is due to more robust systems being implemented to monitor both internal and external moderation including any materials not received for external moderation. Several newly appointed Heads of Department commented on how they have worked hard to improve the external moderation outcomes in their subject areas using clarification documents, subject experts in other schools and subject associations. All these departments previously had trends of not yet consistent and not consistent in moderation outcomes.

To improve professional assessment expertise, support for teachers is provided as needed and includes working with subject associations, using and discussing exemplars, attending several workshops provided for the NCEA level 1 pilots and collaborating with other schools.

**Examination Centre Quality Assurance Check** Whakatāne High School has taken steps to ensure issues identified in the 2023 Quality Assurance check of the school's examination centre are resolved.

## 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)*

Whakatāne High School has recently reviewed and changed their line management structure where all Senior Managers now oversee curriculum areas. This was in response to the increased workload placed on the Principal's Nominee. This has enabled greater ownership, capability, and leadership across the school, with Heads of Department expressing positivity about this change in approach. Line managers with their Head of Department, work on internal and external moderation, ongoing internal review of teaching and assessment programmes, and provide support as needed in other curriculum and assessment practices. This has already provided greater support for departments as commented on by the teachers interviewed.

**Review of Literacy** The school has prioritised improving literacy competencies for all learners through reviewing their literacy programme following reflection of the literacy achievement of their students. The school has introduced initiatives for teachers to implement with their classes. These have focused on improving both the reading and writing skills of their students. To emphasise the importance of literacy across the curriculum, it is a school wide goal and must also be included as a department and a personal goal for each teacher. At the time of the review there was no clear data of any progress made to date, but the Senior Leadership team is confident it will lift the literacy levels across the school, and this will be closely monitored through the ongoing data collected.

**Review of the NCEA Change Programme supported the successful implementation of Level 1** Whakatāne High School successfully piloted several new Level 1 standards in 2022 and 2023. Due to the high involvement from different departments the school was well placed to implement the full Level 1 programme this year. The pilot programme included the teaching, learning and assessment of all four standards which many subject areas found challenging with regards to the timing of their programmes. Those involved have been able to adjust their timings, the number of standards they are assessing as well as adjust assessor judgements accordingly from moderation of the pilot standards. The Principal's Nominee discussed the knowledge sharing between departments and the invaluable support this has provided to those departments who had not previously been involved.

**Communication of assessment information** the Principal's Nominee is looking at developing an effective system to provide information regarding the school's assessment and quality assurance systems to ensure consistency of practice across all curriculum areas.

The Principal's Nominee wants to provide clearer guidance of all assessment policies through face-to-face meetings regarding updates and changes to assessment processes and practice. Revising assessment policies and procedures with staff at the beginning and periodically throughout the year will help ensure a consistent understanding and improved practice, enabling greater ownership and commitment from staff.

Staff who are new to assessing NCEA or new to the school would benefit from extra support, guidance, and a more formalised induction programme in their initial year.

This would help to provide senior leaders with confidence that quality assurance processes are being followed.

## **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)*

**Mentoring, tracking, and monitoring of student progress** The school has effective processes to track and monitor student progress towards gaining an NCEA qualification. All senior students receive comprehensive guidance and mentoring on career pathways, subject choices, and tracking their achievement. Wrap around support is provided from their mentors whom they meet in a timetabled period once a week. Students spoke about how their mentors kept them informed regarding their progress towards gaining a qualification as well as all assessment related matters. Data is used to track student success and those at risk of not achieving their academic goals. Students are identified if they are at risk of not gaining numeracy, literacy or the relevant qualification and interventions are put in place to support them.

**Māori achievement a priority** Achievement of Māori learners continues to be a focus at Whakatāne High School. The school has introduced several programmes to support these learners and their whānau. Iti Pounamu, the homework centre, was offered on one day but is now twice a week. Mentors and classroom teachers advise students and their whānau to attend. The increase to two days per week is in response to the increased pressure of the literacy and numeracy requirements. The school is meeting student needs for intended education, vocational and employment opportunities, with many subjects proving popular to Māori learners. Students are engaged and interested in what is being offered as there is something for everyone. Data over recent years show the increase in achievement of Māori learners compared with those nationally and of the same equity index. The school is aware that their Māori students remain behind all other ethnicities in the school, especially with University Entrance and are working hard to continue to improve Māori achievement outcomes as well as provide equitable access to achievement and broadening future opportunities for their Māori learners.

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, STEM opportunities available for all learners** Whakatāne High School is successful in offering courses that meet student needs. In 2025 all Year 12 students have chosen to take at least one Science option. They have a well-established Marine Biology programme which provides students with opportunities for future study and employment in this area. The school has developed this programme in partnership with local iwi and businesses, providing clear pathways and opportunities for their learners.

**Submit derived grades to NZQA** The school must develop a process to ensure potential derived grades generated from practice examinations or similar assessment events are submitted to NZQA in a datafile before the assessment period. This will ensure that these grades are readily available should they need to be applied for certain students due to a disruption to their external assessments.

In recent years, the school has had a low reporting rate for these grades, particularly in 2022 where only 2 percent of grades were submitted. Though significantly better in 2023, with 44 percent of grades reported, the school needs to improve this to meet NZQA requirements.

**Develop a process to reduce internal entries with no result** The school over the last 3 years has not reported results for a considerable number of standards for which entries had been made. For standards not chosen for assessment by individual students, the school must ensure that entries are withdrawn or report a not achieved grade if the student has submitted no work. Although the percentage of entries submitted for internal standards with no result reported has decreased over the years, it remains a considerable number. Staff need to check their markbooks as whole cohorts have entries in standards for which they have not had the opportunity to be assessed. This can be misleading to students as to how many credits are available to them. While attaching a wide range of internally assessed standards to their courses supports student choice in learning, teachers need to ensure students are aware through their mentoring programme what is required for them to gain a qualification.

## **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)*

### **Robust internal moderation processes assure credible reporting of results**

Whakatāne High School's internal moderation processes are now embedded in its quality assurance practice. Monitoring by the department's Line Managers with spot checks by the Principal's Nominee helps ensure all results reported to NZQA are verified and credible.

The school is now using the school's Student Management System moderation tool which has helped the monitoring of internal moderation processes. Checks include the critiquing of the task, purposeful and strategic selection of student work for grade verification, the grade verification process and storage of student work. This helps ensure all internal results reported to NZQA have been verified as being at the standard.

Staff use a variety of methods to verify grades awarded to samples of student work. Verification is undertaken by a subject specialist within the school or by verifiers obtained through subject associations, or colleagues at other schools where they often have a reciprocal arrangement. Teachers are working with subject specialists from other schools and subject associations to support the management of the quality assurance of the new Level 1 standards. This has given the school confidence in the assessment and moderation of these standards. The school sees this as valuable professional learning as well as supporting teachers to grow their expertise in assessor judgements. Teachers are beginning to engage in using Putāke, the NZQA Learning Management System tool, to support teacher judgement and the Principal's Nominee is keen for more involvement in this area as a form of professional learning and support.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**Whakatāne High School 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
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- 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.

**Whakatāne 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
- 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**

**Whakatāne 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.

**Whakatāne 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**

**Whakatāne 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.

**Whakatāne 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
- 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 whānau about assessment**

### **Whakatāne High School 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
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- celebrating students' success.

### **Whakatāne High School 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 to gain a qualification.

## Appendix 2: Overview

### What this report is about

**This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Whakatāne 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 2022* (CAAS) and its *Guidelines* (CAAS Guidelines) 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
- *Assessment Policy and Procedures 2024* (Staff Handbook)
- *Student Handbook, National Certificate of Educational Achievement 2024.*

### **The School Relationship Manager met with:**

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads Department for:
  - Careers
  - Mathematics
  - Music
  - Physical Education
  - Science
  - Social Sciences
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the 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.