

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

**Rotorua Lakes High  
School**

**March 2025**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## Rotorua Lakes High School

19 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 2022.

### Actions and considerations

#### Agreed actions

The school agreed that one agreed action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
<b>Credible assessment practice to meet student needs</b>	
Report a result for all internal entries or withdraw the entry as appropriate	By the last data file submission, 1 December

#### 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 developing the induction of new Heads of Department
- standardising assessment information in course outlines.

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16 April 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 31 October 2019 Managing National Assessment Report**

The agreed action item in the last report has been addressed by the school. The Principal's Nominee has completely revised the staff handbook to ensure the information it contains is current, accurate and aligns with all NZQA Assessment Rules.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** The school's external moderation follow up process meets NZQA's guidelines and outcomes have been predominantly consistent since the last review. The Principal's Nominee closely monitors all external moderation outcomes, including the emergence of any trends or issues raised in individual reports. She discusses the report with the Head of Department and any other appropriate staff members. Recommendations or actions are determined, recorded, and implemented. All moderation reports, whether consistent or not, are reviewed, and action plans are established as appropriate. Issues raised must be addressed within a given timeframe. The actions are then checked for completion by the Head of Department and reported to the Principal's Nominee. External moderation outcomes are part of the department's self-review, as detailed below.

In order to improve professional assessment expertise, support for teachers is provided as needed and includes working with subject associations, using and discussing exemplars, attending best practice workshops, teachers use of Pūtake as appropriate, and collaborating with other schools. The Principal's Nominee checks external verifiers to ensure that their practice supports the teachers as required. External moderation outcomes confirm that teachers assessment decisions are consistent with the standard, providing confidence in the school's internal moderation processes

### 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)*

Self-review continues to be a key part of the culture at Rotorua Lakes High School. Teachers and departments see review as an essential element of personal, professional, and departmental improvement. Classroom teachers, Heads of Department, and senior leaders regularly review their assessment practices, and the courses of study offered. Each department conducts a comprehensive review for the Principal, Senior Leadership Team, and the Board of Trustees every year.

**Comprehensive department reviews** Teacher and department reviews, analyse data, use student voice and report on every subject, topic, and standard throughout the year. The end-of-year review, includes an analysis of:

- assessment practice – processes and protocols
- moderation – internal and external, including reports and feedback on participation from subject associations

- data –checks on data management and use
- communication on NCEA assessment matters – including communication within the department, with the senior leadership team, as well as with students and whānau.

During these reviews, departments also discuss the main department goals associated with the school's strategic priorities, addressing issues such as at-risk students, priority learners, and Māori student achievement.

Heads of Department report their findings directly to the Principal, where the review is discussed, looking at next steps and department priorities and how these align with the schools' strategic goals. All department reviews are submitted to the Board of Trustees each year, and at times, Heads of Department are required to present to the Board themselves.

**Supporting students to gain the NCEA Co-requisite** The school conducted and completed a review of its data from the 2023 and 2024 NCEA Co-requisite Common Assessment Activities (CAAs). This led the “Deputy Principal Academic” to establish a CAA focus group. The goal of this group was to identify issues and discuss possible interventions to support success for all students. The following outcomes were recommended and are in the process of being implemented:

- appointment of dedicated numeracy and literacy support staff
- provision of support to embed literacy and numeracy practices across all departments
- support for the English and Mathematics departments in their deliberate teaching of literacy and numeracy skills
- identification, tracking, and provision of individual learning plans where necessary for Year 12 and 13 students who have yet to achieve the literacy and numeracy requirements to gain a qualification
- the school is also exploring the possibility of having targeted periods focused on improving literacy and numeracy skills.

The school review this data and also the value added for each student and cohort.

**Review of Derived Grade process** The school has reviewed the reporting of Derived Grades to ensure that all reported results are credible and quality assured. Teachers are required to document the following points in order to attest that preliminary examinations and in-class assessments used to determine derived grades mirror the conditions of the NZQA external assessments. Teachers are required to document the following:

- source of the assessment material
- the critiquing of the task
- whether the student work has been verified or justified
- ensure that all quality assured grades are entered to be submitted to NZQA prior to examinations.

## 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)*

**Monitoring and tracking student progress** Rotorua Lakes High School has effective systems in place to identify students at risk of not meeting their achievement goals and to provide targeted and tailored support. All senior students receive comprehensive guidance and mentoring regarding career pathways and subject choices, and their progress is tracked by their Year Level Dean. The students are advised on pathways for success that best meet their interests and learning needs. Those identified as being at risk of not achieving their academic goals are well-supported through extra tutorials, lunchtime classes and by involving their whānau. Subject teachers are proactive in advising whānau about upcoming assessments and readily offer differentiated learning programmes to support student success.

**Improving outcomes for Māori students** Rotorua Lakes High School, as part of its strategic plan, has a key focus on improving outcomes for all students, particularly Māori. These outcomes include both academic achievements and appropriate career pathways. Programmes in place have included the introduction of Te Ao Haka, in the senior school and Te Ao Māori for all Year 9 students. The school has also focused on Culturally Responsive Practices for staff professional development. The emphasis is on ensuring these students achieve success in their chosen pathways, with the school monitoring its leaver data to analyse trends and provide targeted support. A large number of these students do not have an explicit qualification goal but have been successful in securing apprenticeships, enrolling in tertiary training or transitioning to employment upon leaving school. For those students fully engaged in programmes to gain a NCEA qualification, the school's participation data shows their success rate is higher than that of national data and their equity index.

**Reporting entries with no results recorded** The school should strengthen its process to monitor that internal assessment entries without grades are appropriately withdrawn or, where students have had an adequate opportunity to be assessed, a Not Achieved grade is reported. The Principal's Nominee will ensure entries are withdrawn if students have not had the opportunity to be assessed to improve the tracking of students' progress towards their intended assessment programme and qualification's goals.

**Supporting new Heads of Department** The school should consider further developing its induction programme for new Heads of Department to ensure the school's assessment policies, processes and practices are implemented. This could include a buddy system to support a new Head of Department, which will help provide consistency, credible assessment practice, as well as the implementation of the school's robust quality assurance processes, including the monitoring of internal and external moderation, for national qualifications and ensure that assessment is meeting student needs.

**Provide consistent course assessment information** Currently the assessment information in course outlines is presented in a variety of formats. Students interviewed said that some were more useful than others. Providing clear and consistent information in course outlines would ensure that students and parents have access to the same information across all subjects. The school should consider making similarly formatted information available to stakeholders, so assessment programmes are easier to understand and to inform subject selection.

## **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 results are recorded**

The school's internal moderation process is integrated into the normal quality assurance practices in all departments. Heads of Department ensure that assessment tasks have been thoroughly critiqued, and all internal results reported to NZQA have been verified. Internal moderation cover sheets are reviewed by Heads of Department and stored with student work. They report all moderation to the Principal's Nominee, who has oversight of all internal moderation within the school.

Departments ensure that the process used for grade verification is appropriate for each standard and that the verifiers are subject experts. Where experts are not available within the school, teachers have established verification relationships with other schools. Teachers view this process as an integral part of their professional development. If a Head of Department feels that external verification is needed, this is discussed with the Principal's Nominee, who checks the appropriateness of the external verifier, ensuring their external moderation has been returned as consistent and can assist and support the teacher as required.

The selection of student work for internal moderation is strategic, focusing on grade boundaries or areas where a teacher may be uncertain about a segment of the assessment task or schedule. New staff members are supported in this process and provided with further guidance to ensure the effectiveness of internal moderation. They are usually required to provide additional samples or work with a more experienced staff member for support in making standard-specific judgments. If discrepancies arise, all staff members agree on the importance of seeking input from a third party. This thorough process gives the senior leadership confidence in the schools' internal moderation process.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**Rotorua Lakes 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
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

**Rotorua Lakes 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
- 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**

**Rotorua Lakes 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 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.

**Rotorua Lakes 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**

**Rotorua Lakes 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.

**Rotorua Lakes 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

- 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 and their whānau about assessment**

### **Rotorua Lakes 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
- 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.

### **Rotorua Lakes 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 in order to gain a qualification.

## Appendix 2: Overview

### What this report is about

**This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Rotorua Lakes 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) 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
- *Authenticity Policy and Procedures*
- *Department Self Review template*
- *Derived Grade quality assurance check template*
- *Leavers Data 2024*
- *NZQA Reminders 2025 (Staff)*
- *Questions and answers about moderation*
- *Response to External moderation form*
- *Rotorua Lakes High School New Zealand Qualifications Framework Assessment Procedures (Staff Handbook)*
- *Student Assessment Information Level I, II, III NCEA and Scholarship (Student Handbook).*

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
  - Arts
  - Humanities
  - Māori
  - Physical Education
  - Science
  - Technology
- 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.