

Managing National Assessment Report

Waitara High School

August 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Waitara High School

11 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 following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student / ākonga needs	
Ensure all internal entries have a grade reported or are withdrawn where students have not had an adequate assessment opportunity.	By 1 December 2022

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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

16 November 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 28 March 2018 Managing National Assessment Report Four of the five agreed actions from the 2018 review have been completed. The staff and student handbooks have been updated supporting teachers / kaiako to correctly apply the 2020 resubmission rule and use purposeful selection of student / ākonga work for internal moderation verification. Course outlines now use a standardised template to assist with student / ākonga understanding and ensure consistent and sufficient information is provided.

The agreed action to reduce the number of internal entries without a result reported requires further action and is discussed in the Assessment Practice section of this report.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The Principal's Nominee monitors planned actions in response to external moderation outcomes to ensure they are effectively resolved. This includes issues in assessment decisions and / or assessment task design.

The analysis of historical moderation outcomes is used to identify subjects where assessment judgments are not consistent with the standard across several years. This information is discussed with Learning Leaders to support them to improve their grade verification process including the use of clarification documents and exemplars.

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)

Strong assessment leadership from the Deputy Principal - Curriculum and Principal's Nominee alongside on-going review ensures the continuous evolution of assessment practice to meet the school's vision and aim. Waitara High School's vision is to meet the learning needs of individual students / ākonga ensuring they are connected, lifelong learners with a strong sense of belonging and belief. As a community college, the school aims to enable students / ākonga to leave equipped with a sense of purpose with a qualification that enables them to continue into tertiary study, workplace training or employment.

Student feedback, after the 2020 lock down, stated they liked being able to focus on the larger blocks of learning they had during lockdown. To improve quality teaching and assessment the school has increased the length of teaching periods and reduced the number of subjects studied. The move from six to five subjects at Level 1, along with the impact of COVID is currently under review to establish if this is a contributing factor for the decline in Level 1 NCEA achievement in 2021. This demonstrates the school's capacity to undertake its own review and to effectively use of data to inform review and change.

As part of their strategic plan the school is introducing school wide literacy and numeracy programmes in Year 9 to prepare students for the Literacy/Numeracy NCEA co-requisite to be introduced in 2024. These programmes are to support the large number of students / ākonga who enter the school below their curriculum level in literacy and / or numeracy.

To ensure readiness for the *digital first* focus of external assessment and the NCEA Change Programme implementation in 2024, the school is engaging in NZQA digital practice examinations and NCEA digital examinations. This engagement aims to confirm the capacity of the school's digital infrastructure and assist teachers to develop an understanding and confidence in the use of the Assessment Master platform.

The loss of teaching time from COVID disruption has led teachers / kaiako to review standards offered in courses and consider the use of more innovative assessment practice. Changes include learning material on Google Classroom being expanded, the granting of extensions taking into consideration individual student circumstances, a greater focus on assessing students / ākonga when ready and a broader range of evidence gathering methods being common practice. These changes in assessment practice allow students / ākonga to continue to access learning when isolating and to provide their best evidence to reach their qualification goal.

To strengthen the school's mentoring programme and improve student achievement particularly at Level 3, *Coaching Time* was introduced in 2021 to complement the school's effective tracking of student / ākonga progress towards NCEA qualifications and University Entrance. This new initiative includes self-directed study time to encourage students / ākonga to take more agency and ownership over their learning and qualification progress. Learning Coaches support students through mentoring, qualification tracking and discussing pathway aspirations. Students interviewed described using *Coaching Time* to track their progress and discuss with their Learning Coach *where they are at and next steps* and their pathway planning as an effective way to support them.

Credible assessment practice to meet student / ākonga 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)

Engaging students to improve qualification outcomes a priority The flexibility of the NCEA model is used to engage students and design assessment programmes to meet student abilities and aspirations. To engage students / ākonga and support them to have a sense of belonging and belief, the school is using the rich history of the local area, community connections and resources to develop contextualised, authentic and relevant learning experiences. The use of an increasing number of external providers has enabled students / ākonga to access vocational opportunities including Trades Academy, 3 + 2 Courses and the Build-a-House Project. Evidence of these changes is improved achievement at Level 2 and 3 for all students, including Māori, with Level 2 Māori achievement being above national and decile levels.

Data checking processes to reduce the high number of internal entries reported without a result is required While the school has reduced the number of internal entries without a result reported over the past two years, more robust checking processes are required. A grade must be reported where a student has had

an adequate assessment opportunity, or the entry should be withdrawn to ensure entries reflect a student's assessment programme. This will also provide accurate data to support the school's traffic light system of monitoring student qualification progress.

Learning Leaders can use the NZQA *Entries and Results by Standard Report* prior to 1 December to assist with ensuring that a result is reported or the entry withdrawn if no assessment has taken place. Learning Leaders were clear in their understanding that Not Achieved must be reported where a student has had an adequate assessment opportunity and not submitted any work.

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)

Robust moderation processes give Senior Leadership confidence in the reporting of credible results The school's move to digital storage of internal moderation documentation, assessment tasks and schedules, and samples of student work, provides the Principal's Nominee with visibility to support more effective monitoring of internal moderation alongside their annual visits to Learning Areas.

Internal moderation is embedded practice. Expectations are well understood by Learning Leaders who monitor its completion including the use of subject specialists to verify grades awarded on a strategically selected sample of grade boundary student work. Moderation evidence sighted at the review demonstrated effective documenting of the process including grade boundary discussion.

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Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students / ākonga

Waitara High School 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 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 / 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 / kaiako are aware of individual students / ākonga with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing targeted support for students / ākonga at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

Waitara High School 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 / ākonga 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 / ākonga privacy in the issuing of student / ākonga results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Waitara 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 / ākonga 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.

Waitara High School 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

Waitara High School 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.

Waitara 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
- 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

Waitara 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 / 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
- celebrating students' / ākonga success, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

Waitara 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 / 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 Waitara 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 / 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
- *Breach of Internal Assessment Rules: Waitara High School Policy*
- *Moderation Processes at Waitara High School*
- *Waitara High School NCEA Assessment Policy and Procedures – Staff and Students Manual 2022*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum
- Learning Leader for:
 - Arts
 - Health and Physical Education
 - Languages
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Technology
- three students / ākonga.

There was a report-back session with the Principal / Tumuaki, Deputy Principal Curriculum 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.