

Managing National Assessment Report

Stratford High School
October 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Stratford High School

20 October 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.

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	
Ensure actions in response to external moderation are monitored for completion.	Immediately for the 2023 external moderation round and beyond.
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Ensure assessments that provide evidence for a derived grade have been quality assured and this process is documented.	Immediately for any assessment in 2023 that could be used for a derived grade.
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
Strengthen internal moderation monitoring by ensuring documented processes reflect actual practice.	Immediate.

For consideration

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

- including in Heads of Department's annual reviews an evaluation of how well assessment practice is meeting student needs at a class and individual level.



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13 December 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 8 August 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

Stratford High School has addressed both the significant issues from the 2019 review.

Internal moderation Cover Sheets are reconciled against grades reported by the Principal's Nominee to confirm only results that have been subject to an internal moderation process are reported to NZQA. This process should be strengthened by confirming the documentation reflects actual and good practice. Programmes delivered off-site are now monitored and the standard of delivery reviewed including internal moderation processes, where appropriate.

Progress on significant issues A one-year return visit on 3 June 2021 by NZQA confirmed progress had been made on the two significant issues identified in the 2019 MNA review report. These changes provide evidence of the school's ability to respond to external review.

Progress on agreed actions The three agreed actions from the 2019 review have been implemented. Students in Years 9 and 10 identified as potentially benefiting from special assessment conditions are now having evidence collected to support applications made when in Year 11.

Memorandum of Understanding are filed centrally with an annual reconciliation against Provider Codes that grades are reported against.

Teachers are reminded of the resubmission rules and those interviewed confirmed practice aligns with current NZQA rules.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes Teachers develop an action plan in response to external moderation where *Not Yet Consistent and Not Consistent* outcomes are indicated by NZQA moderators. The Principal's Nominee checks that the planned actions will resolve issues in assessment decisions and / or assessment task design identified by moderators. The next step is to ensure that all the planned actions are completed and have been effective in addressing the identified issues.

The effectiveness of the school's actions in response to external moderation feedback can be evaluated by requesting the standard for external moderation in a subsequent year where moderation has identified concerns such as a *Not Consistent* outcome.

The school provides additional support where assessment judgments have not been consistent with the standard across several years. This support includes review of the verifier and verification process, use of Pūtake and facilitating professional learning to further develop the assessor understanding of the standard. There has been a marked improvement in teachers' assessment decisions with most being consistent with the standard in 2022, reflecting strengthened 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)

Since the 2019 review there is a new Senior Management Team and Principal's Nominee. The change in school leadership has resulted in multiple layers of review over the past two years including planning for the upcoming NCEA changes and to determine strategic goals.

Preparing for the NCEA Change Programme The Senior Management Team has conducted a curriculum review. The outcome of this is the introduction of modules for juniors so that students currently in Years 9 and 10 will have coherent assessment pathway choices when in Year 11. The school is using the Accord days to review and reflect on its current curriculum and assessment programmes in preparation for the NCEA changes. These steps will enable the school to be well prepared for the transition to the reviewed NCEA qualification.

In 2023 the school will adopt a *Bring Your Own Device* policy. This approach aims to further the development of digital teaching, learning and assessment, including engagement in digital NCEA examinations. The school piloted the co-requisite literacy and numeracy standards in 2022 with Year 10 students and used this to test the school's upgraded wifi and digital capability. These changes reflect the school's strategic focus to ensure the school is ready for the future learning and assessment under the NCEA Change Programme.

While Māori student achievement at Level 2 is above national and decile levels, at Levels 1 and 3 it is significantly below. The school recognises the need to continue to incorporate Te Ao Māori into their curriculum and assessment practice, and offer assessment programmes that support student needs and success. These considerations form part of the school's ongoing discussion as they plan for the NCEA changes in 2024 and again trial the literacy and numeracy pilots in 2023.

Development of schoolwide understanding of assessment good practice The Principal's Nominee's focus has been on increasing teacher understanding of the school's assessment processes and expectations. Building Heads of Department capability around the ownership of assessment processes in their area of responsibility alongside implementing school wide digital storage protocols are the school's planned next steps. These changes aim to enable whole school ownership of and responsibility for assessment processes.

Heads of Department described how the COVID disruptions provided the mechanism for them to review their current assessment practice leading to broadening the ways evidence is collected, the use of digital tools to provide feedback and feedforward and where appropriate flexible assessment timelines. Some of these have now become current practice in classrooms. Students acknowledged these changes supported their continued achievement and ability to provide their best evidence over the period of teaching and assessment disrupted by Covid.

Data analysis used to inform next steps Heads of Department are required to annually review student achievement including reporting to the Board of Trustees an analysis of achievement and progress towards annual and strategic goals. As a next step the school should consider including in the reviews an evaluation of how

teachers use of flexible timelines and broadened evidence gathering strategies are meeting student needs at a class and individual level.

The schools effective tracking of student progress towards NCEA qualifications by the Academic Dean is complemented by departments tracking student achievement. Both these strategies enable students at risk of not achieving a qualification to be quickly identified so additional support can be put in place. Introduced in 2022 is an extension to the end of the school year for students without NCEA exams. These students are requested to continue attending during NCEA study leave to complete internal assessment to reach their qualification goal. This change will be evaluated when NCEA results are released in January.

Credible assessment practice to meet student 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)

Assessment practices and programmes meet student needs Heads of Department interviewed demonstrated a common understanding of the school's assessment processes and NZQA assessment rules. Their improved confidence, since the previous Managing National Assessment Review, is a consequence of the leadership of the Principal's Nominee and the informal and formal discussions he leads.

As a community college the school has actively expanded the range of vocational opportunities offered through Trades Academies and Gateway programmes to support those students whose planned pathway is employment or further vocational training. Senior Management asks teachers of these students to review assessment timelines, so they are not disadvantaged from being involved in a Trade Academy during other course time. Modifying assessment timelines for these students will provide them with the opportunity to complete assessments and demonstrate their best evidence.

Improving student literacy and numeracy is a current focus The deliberate focus on literacy and numeracy development is in response to the introduction of the co-requisite requirement in 2024. The school is working with local primary schools within the Kahui ako to support the large number of students who enter the school in Year 9 with very low literacy and numeracy skills. The school is using their involvement in the 2022 co-requisite pilots to inform changes and next steps and is an example of the school's strategic focus on future assessment readiness.

Clarification and use of derived grade quality assurance processes required A system to monitor and document that a quality assurance process has been applied to assessments that could be used for a derived grade must be introduced. Teachers were unaware of the need to verify or justify grades for assessment evidence that may be used for a derived grade.

Subjects where there is more than one teacher described a panel marking process, but the process was not documented. Single subject teachers' grades were not subject to a justification process which can be used where a suitably qualified "second pair of eyes" is not available to verify grades. The grades can be justified because evidence exists that the teacher's judgements are consistent with the standard.

The school agreed to implement a verification and/or justification process for practice examinations or assessments where the grade could be used for a derived grade. This will provide confidence that decisions are consistent with the standard when reported as a derived grade.

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)

Strengthening of internal moderation processes required The Principal's Nominee's monitoring of internal moderation requires strengthening to ensure that the documented process reflects actual and good practice. Currently his monitoring involves checking the filed *Internal Moderation Cover Sheets* against grades reported and visits to departments to check the storage of work. This process should be strengthened by checking during the department visits the use of subject specialists to verify grades awarded and that grade boundary samples of student work are selected for verification. Checking that previous external moderation feedback has been used to inform the marking process would also improve the monitoring particularly for any standards where *Not Yet Consistent* or *Not Consistent* has been previously reported.

Internal moderation expectations are well understood by Heads of Department with some describing how they monitor its completion within their area of responsibility.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Stratford High School 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 to offer courses the school is unable to offer
- 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 targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

Stratford High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- 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
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Stratford 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.

Stratford 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.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Stratford High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- 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.

Stratford 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
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Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their families / whānau about assessment

Stratford High School 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.

Stratford 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 Stratford 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 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
- *NCEA Staff Handbook*
- *NCEA – A Handbook for Parents and Students.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- The Principal
- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
 - Arts
 - Business Studies
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
 - 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.