

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Tolaga Bay Area School**

**July 2021**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Tolaga Bay Area 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.

The summary section evaluates the school's overall effectiveness and provides a broad overview of the review's key findings for all readers. The remaining sections provide detail of these findings for school managers.

## 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 meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* (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 2021* (Assessment Rules).

## What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- 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 to consider 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 four 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
- Tolaga Bay Area School *Curriculum Booklet*
- Tolaga Bay Area School *NCEA Student information booklet 2021*
- Tolaga Bay Area School *Guidelines for assessment – Teacher guide*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Teacher(s) of:
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Music
  - Te Ao Haka
  - Uawanui
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the 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.

# SUMMARY

## Tolaga Bay Area School

7 July 2021

### Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*. 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. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2020 due to the COVID pandemic.

### What the school is doing well

Tolaga Bay Area School sets high expectations of achievement in NCEA for its students. It provides a range of assessment programmes to help them meet these expectations and their academic and vocational needs.

Self-review is a developing practice at the school. Thorough analysis and use of data and student voice enable the school to respond effectively to identified issues, develop and monitor progress towards strategic goals, and improve outcomes for all students.

The school is committed to giving personalised attention to all students. This is reflected in the support it offers them. Teachers meet regularly with students and parents to help set achievement goals and monitor academic progress. For those identified as at-risk of not meeting qualification requirements, individualised interventions are developed to provide support.

School assessment processes are well managed by an experienced Principal's Nominee, and consistently applied by teachers, ensuring credible assessment for national qualifications.

School communication ensures information on qualifications and assessment procedures are appropriately provided to its community. The range of formats used to distribute this information has enhanced the development of a shared understanding of the school processes and NCEA requirements.

Some next steps for the school to consider to further strengthen assessment practices are detailed in the body of the report.

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# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

### External review

*Evidence for external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)*

**Action Items from 18 May 2016 Managing National Assessment Report** There were no action items from the 2016 report.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has an effective process for teachers to respond to external moderation findings. A series of templates guide them through this process to:

- provide a summary of the moderation outcomes and any issues identified by moderators
- describe any actions planned to address issues raised
- evaluate the effectiveness of any strategies used, or actions taken.

Senior Leaders ensure that staff are provided with the appropriate support and monitor the effective completion of planned actions. This is a comprehensive process and provides confidence that concerns raised in moderation reports are addressed.

### Internal review

*Evidence for 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)*

The school is developing a culture of self-review leading to the development of initiatives designed to raise assessment outcomes. These include:

- identifying ākonga 'At Risk of Not Achieving' (ARONA)
- 'Hooked Up to Achieve' (HUTA), that involves ākonga and whānau working with local community mentors
- subject specific wānanga that use a cultural pedagogy
- Uawanui - a cultural environmental group with a sustainability focus, that enables ākonga to achieve success within their community.

### No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

## How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

*Evidence for 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)*

### **Tolaga Bay Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- providing differentiated and flexible assessment across classes, and within courses, using optional standards
- engaging their interests and setting assessment goals so they can enter tertiary study, trades or work pathways by following appropriate courses of study
- extending assessment opportunities by:
  - offering new courses that will engage student interest, such as Uawanui
  - working with the wider community to provide credible assessment opportunities
  - assessing ākonga when ready, where appropriate
  - collecting evidence to gather students' best evidence of achievement through different modes, such as digitally, through group activities, performance, and portfolios.

### **Tolaga Bay Area School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide application of procedures for late and missed work, extensions, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities
- investigating appeals using the principles of natural justice
- using a range of strategies to ensure student work submitted is authentic
- meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act 2020 by ensuring student results remain private and permission is sought to use or share student work.

**Meeting ākonga assessment needs through course design** The school works closely with local businesses, a range of tertiary providers, local iwi, and the wider community to create assessment opportunities that meet the needs of their ākonga. They mentor each ākonga to identify interests, and engage them in courses, or individualised programmes, that will meet their needs and aspirations. These initiatives support student achievement and make use of the flexibility of NCEA by fully engaging and supporting student academic and vocational outcomes.

**Culturally responsive approach enhances student achievement success** The school continues to provide student focused assessment opportunities. The teachers know their ākonga very well and work with the Deputy Principal and Ako to further develop courses relevant to the context of the students they teach.

As part of their ongoing culturally responsive approach the school is piloting the new Level 1 Te Ao Haka standards.

**Students at risk of not achieving a qualification are supported** The school continues to develop systems that enable their ākonga to achieve to their potential. In partnership with the local iwi, Te Aitanga a Hauiti, ARONA has been introduced by the kura to support ākonga who are at risk of not achieving.

**No action required**

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

## How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

*Evidence for internal and external moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 6.4b)*

### **Tolaga Bay Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using external subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- teachers using published clarifications and exemplars to inform their grade judgements during marking
- requiring teachers to document the steps of their moderation processes, including noting verification discussion and decisions, on the standard *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.

### **Tolaga Bay Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- keeping benchmark exemplars of student work to assist with future judgements
- using feedback to support the development of future assessment plans
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

**Focus on reducing workload by considering verification requirements for sufficiency** The school should consider providing staff with further guidance on how to conduct sufficient verification by the strategic selection of student work. Strategic selection has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process.

Teachers currently assure the quality of grades awarded by including work at grade boundaries when verifying assessor judgements. However, most of those interviewed verify more samples of student work than this.

There is no fixed, or predetermined, number of pieces of student work that must be verified. The sample size will be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed.

**Strengthen the monitoring of internal moderation** Internal moderation could be further strengthened by the Principal's Nominee reconciling completed Internal Moderation Cover Sheets with actual practice to provide confidence that all results reported to NZQA have been quality assured.

### **For consideration**

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- implementing a stronger monitoring process so that the Principal's Nominee and Senior Leaders can be confident that all standards assessed have been subject to internal moderation.

## **How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?**

*Evidence for data management and use supporting student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)*

### **Tolaga Bay Area School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- faculties and staff, in consultation with the Senior Leaders, analysing previous years' achievement data to inform current year courses or programme design
- implementing a schoolwide student achievement tracking system.

### **Tolaga Bay Area School reports accurate achievement data by:**

- submitting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- checking for, and correcting where necessary, data submission errors shown on the Key Indicators and data file submission reports from NZQA
- students checking results and personal details held in the school's student management system and reporting any inaccuracies to the Principal's Nominee
- removing, where appropriate, internal entries of students who have left or changed assessment programmes, to ensure all entries have a reported result

**Close monitoring helps achieve assessment goals** Monitoring students' progress throughout the year helps Tolaga Bay Area School identify and support students to achieve their academic goals. Close monitoring of academic progress by teachers, mentors and senior management ensure that all ākonga can achieve at a level appropriate to their ability.

### **No action required**

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.

## **How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?**

*Evidence for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))*

### **Tolaga Bay Area School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive appropriate information to help them understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification
- reporting on student progress towards qualifications by providing all key stakeholders with regular updates in a variety of mediums
- communicating assessment policy and procedures to kaiako, ākonga and their whānau
- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake
- supporting teachers new to the school
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

### **Tolaga Bay Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- the Principal's Nominee providing teachers with information about assessment changes and best practice, and giving them the opportunity to discuss changes in school or NZQA requirements at staff, faculty and curriculum meetings
- tracking ensures students know what credits they need to gain a qualification.

### **No action required**

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.