

Managing National Assessment Report

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School

September 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Taikura Rudolf Steiner 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
- 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 2019 (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
- *New Zealand Certificate of Steiner Education* (Student handbooks Levels 1-3 2019)
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- the Special Assessment Needs Co-ordinator
- two students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal 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.

Background

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School is an integrated special character school reflecting the educational philosophies of Rudolf Steiner, comprising a lower school from Class 1-7 (Kindergarten to Year 8) and a high school from Class 8 to 12. (Years 9 to 13). The high school offers the New Zealand Certificate of Steiner Education (NZCSE) Levels 1 to 3. Graduates of the NZCSE Level 3 Certificate credited with University Entrance can apply for entry to any university or polytechnic in New Zealand.

To date, Taikura Rudolf Steiner School has reported results to NZQA only where the delivery, assessment and moderation have been undertaken by external providers. The school reported results in 2016 and 2018 to NZQA for a small number of students in vocational pathways and a student enrolled in Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu in a subject the school was unable to staff. Students who transfer to the school, or students who have an interest in a particular subject the school is unable to provide may be assessed against standards through Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu. Results are also reported to NZQA for students attending the local Trades Academy at Eastern Institute of Technology (E.I.T) and Gateway or STAR programmes.

The scope of this Managing National Assessment review focuses on the school's management of external providers and the reporting and analysis of results for students enrolled at the school. As Taikura Rudolf Steiner School does not itself deliver and assess against standards, it is not required to undertake moderation.

SUMMARY

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School

03 September 2019

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.

What the school is doing well

The key focus for Taikura Rudolf Steiner School is that all students feel valued, represented, respected and 'seen' within their school and community. The senior school has processes in place to support credible assessment for the New Zealand Certificate of Steiner Education (NZCSE) and to meet the academic, vocational or personal needs of students.

The school has not yet undertaken to assess against any standards on the NZQF. However, if it were at any time in the future, the NZCSE grading and certificate endorsement terminology and processes are well aligned to the NCEA model.

For on-campus NCEA assessment conducted by external providers, the school provides supervision to ensure the assessment is fair, valid and authentic. Students have full access to special assessment conditions as required.

The school has well developed relationships with its school community and whānau. Achievement gained through external providers and reported to NZQA forms part of the feedback to parents on student progress throughout the year.

Areas for improvement

The school could better assist students undertaking independent study through Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu by ensuring they have a copy of the *Te Kura Years 11-13 Student Guide* and clarifying processes such as the application of derived grades, resubmissions and further assessment opportunities, requests for extensions and appeals.

A handout documenting generic information on the NCEA qualification would be a useful tool for students undertaking assessment towards standards with external providers. In addition, students should be encouraged to register for their NZQA Learner Login to check results and gain access to the services it provides.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are to:

- encourage and support students enrolled with NZQA to register and use their NZQA Learner Login
- provide students assessed against standards by external providers with generic information on NCEA.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

04 November 2019

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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 the previous Managing National Assessment Report This is the first Managing National Assessment review for Taikura Rudolf Steiner School.

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)

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School's self-review focuses on providing students with the best opportunity to achieve through a holistic, student-centred approach that embraces the special character of the school. The school fully supports students to achieve their academic and personal goals through flexible and varied course provision, including supporting students who return for another year following Class 12.

The school extends assessment opportunities by engaging external providers such as, Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu and specialist First Aid providers, to deliver assessment and learning opportunities it is unable to offer. Additionally, in support of individual needs, interests and future pathways, students can apply to attend The Hawkes Bay Schools Trades Academy through E.I.T and vocational opportunities through Gateway and STAR programmes. No students gain sufficient credits to be awarded an NCEA qualification

Community and student voice are sought to inform the school's review processes and the formation of the School Charter.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and/or 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 2019 5.5)

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- using class profiles to identify ability and differentiate programmes and assessment
- having staff attend NZQA seminars to inform understandings of NCEA assessment practice and procedures
- collecting evidence to support applications for students identified as eligible for special assessment conditions and subsidising costs incurred as required
- familiarising students sitting NCEA exams with a preparatory visit to the host school.

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing authenticity, including supervising programmes on campus delivered by external providers to ensure assessment is fair, valid and authentic
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

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 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)

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School manages NZQF assessment-related data by:

- submitting results to NZQA in a timely manner
- ensuring it reports results from external providers with whom it holds a current, signed memorandum of understanding
- checking entries in externally assessed standards with students, to limit late entries and ensure accuracy.

Encourage NCEA enrolled students to register and use their NZQA Learner Login While students can see their results through the online portal to the school's student management system, it is only through their NZQA Learner Login that they can check the accuracy of their entries and the results reported to NZQA, request reviews or reconsiderations of examinations, or print an official copy of their Record of Achievement. The school is encouraged to facilitate this access for their students.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- encourage and support students enrolled in NCEA to register and use their NZQA Learner Login.

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))

Taikura Rudolf Steiner School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- reporting on student progress on a termly basis, including courses undertaken with external providers
- attending a range of NZQA seminars and informing teachers about developments in assessment best practice or changes to special assessment conditions entitlements, assessment practice or rules.

Ensure adequate support for students undertaking assessment Students being assessed against Unit and Achievement Standards with an external provider need adequate support to understand the provider and NZQA's requirements, and how to access assessment information and subject resources on the NZQA website. One student interviewed was unsure of how to check his Record of Learning, or order a reconsideration, or how to access support materials available on NZQA's website for external assessments. An NCEA student handout would help students navigate the gap between the NZCSE and NCEA qualifications.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- provide students assessed against standards by external providers with generic information on NCEA.