

Managing National Assessment Report

Ōtaki College

1 May 2025

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Ōtaki College

1 May 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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

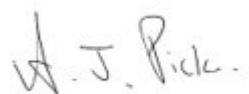
The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Ensure that derived grades are reported to NZQA	Prior to the commencement of external assessment
Update assessment guidelines as outlined in this report	Immediate and ongoing

For consideration

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

- ensuring documented steps responding to external moderation address all provided feedback
- utilising standard-specific authenticity declarations
- ensuring the school's extension policy is fit for purpose and consistently applied
- conducting annual department audits of quality assurance systems and assessment practice.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. J. Picken'.

Amanda Picken
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Support

12 May 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 26 May 2021 Managing National Assessment Report There were no agreed action items needing to be addressed from the school's previous Managing National Assessment (MNA) review.

External moderation processes Ōtaki College effectively meets all submission requirements of external moderation. Samples submitted to NZQA are timely and complete. The school has engaged well with the introduction of NZQA's requests for moderation samples to be submitted using the current year's work. The school values the immediate feedback and incorporates it into the assessment cycle of the following year. The school makes use of available resources to inform its assessment practice, including exemplars, moderator reports and Pūtake, NZQA's learning management system.

Moreover, recent submissions in all but a small number of subjects have returned high rates of consistency, which is indicative of the accuracy of assessor grade judgements and provides evidence of the strength of its internal moderation practices. The school demonstrated an understanding of the reasons behind the patterns of inconsistency in a small number of subjects and is actively working to overcome them.

Ōtaki College should consider improving the documentation of its responses to external moderation feedback. In reviewing current documentation, it was noted that the proposed actions did not consistently address all the issues raised in the reports. Specifically, feedback included in individual student samples was sometimes overlooked. To ensure this valuable information is incorporated, Ōtaki College may wish to add an additional field in its response document, allowing Curriculum Leaders to highlight these points. This change would enhance the thoroughness and effectiveness of the college's response to external moderation feedback.

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)

Ōtaki College has an effective self-review cycle across all levels of the school, from the Board of Trustees to individual teachers. The school values the analysis of practice, identification of issues, and evaluation of responses. Self-review involves reflecting on achievement data, considering external report recommendations, measuring progress against school-wide goals, and incorporating feedback from teachers, students, and whānau. Sharing the results from review cycles during staff meetings fosters participant ownership and leadership, not only in the review process itself but also in subsequent actions. This approach ultimately enhances collective capability and ensures continuous improvement across all areas of the school.

Holistically meeting the educational needs of students The school's internal review cycle is highly effective in addressing and meeting the evolving educational needs, interests, and aspirations of its students. The review process has been shaped by a focus on engagement, behaviour, attendance, and achievement,

underpinned by a commitment to fostering a strong sense of belonging. Evidence of this includes the expansion of its use of distance learning and external providers for courses they cannot resource themselves as well as the introduction of semester courses in Years 8 and 9. Culturally grounded programmes such as the Māori Achievement Collective, carving and food preparation courses, Te Reo Māori, Kapa Haka, as well as the opening of a Whare Kura in 2025 reflect a strong integration of identity and learning.

Ōtaki College's Māori students generally feel proud and supported in their identity, bolstered by strong whānau encouragement and a positive school environment. Surveys of students and Whanau show a predominantly positive attitude toward the school's incorporation of Te Reo and Tikanga Māori into its practices, with students recognising their cultural importance. Notably, lifting the perspective and pride in being Māori has led to better attendance and participation, contributing to improved overall outcomes.

These outcomes demonstrate that the school is not only meeting the diverse needs of its students but is also building a culturally affirming environment where all learners, particularly Māori, can thrive both personally and academically.

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)

Preparing all learners for NCEA Co-requisite attainment Ōtaki College demonstrates a proactive and strategic approach to meeting the requirements of NCEA attainment, particularly the newly introduced literacy and numeracy co-requisites. The school has developed a comprehensive, school-wide plan aimed at ensuring all students have equitable opportunities to succeed. Key elements of this strategy include developing a transparent literacy and numeracy plan, identifying and reporting student progression toward undertaking the Common Assessment Activities (CAA) from Years 7–13, and the creation of a consistent process for entering students into these assessments. Using a combination of diagnostic assessments and teacher professional judgement, students identified at the recommended level are given the option to sit the assessments when they feel prepared, following discussions with their teachers. The college has also taken deliberate steps to create targeted classes for students who have previously struggled to attain the co-requisites through the CAAs. These classes offer focused practice on the dedicated standards or through the use of the additional standards to support student success. Opportunities are being developed for students to meet the co-requisites through Te Reo Matatini and/or Te Pangarau, ensuring an inclusive and culturally responsive approach. This strategic planning not only positions Ōtaki College to successfully implement the new NCEA requirements but also reinforces its commitment to equity, student agency, and culturally sustaining practice across all year levels.

Ensuring the authenticity of student submissions Ōtaki College has comprehensive and consistent practices in place to ensure the authenticity of student work across all subjects. Students are well supported to avoid authenticity breaches by being notified of what constitutes appropriate practice in specific tasks in line with the conditions of assessment of that task. Staff are also well-versed in identifying breaches of authenticity, using a variety of third-party detection tools and extensive knowledge of student capabilities gained through checkpointing and evidence gathering. The practice of interviewing students to determine their understanding of

the content and skills being assessed is also well utilised. The school's process for managing suspected breaches and appealing decisions is understood by both students and staff, ensuring equitable outcomes. This approach gives senior leaders confidence that internally assessed results at Ōtaki College are authentic.

To further support teacher and student practice in this area, the school is encouraged to include a standard-specific student authenticity attestation in place of the current annual attestation. This could provide an additional means of keeping students informed of appropriate practices in specific types of assessment, further enhancing the integrity of the college's assessment processes.

Report derived grades to NZQA Ōtaki College must ensure that NZQA receives a comprehensive list of derived grades prior to the commencement of the assessment of external standards. Although the school has appropriate systems in place to determine quality assured grades from standard-specific evidence in practice external assessments, the number of these results that were reported to NZQA have remained low over the previous three years. Investigation of this anomaly in the school's data, revealed that it was caused by incorrect recording of these results in the school's Student Management System (SMS). As these results safeguard students' grades if their external assessment is disrupted, the school must take steps to ensure they are reported to NZQA.

Ensure current practice is documented The school needs to review assessment documentation provided to staff in order to increase their usefulness. Currently there is one assessment document that is provided to students, caregivers and teachers alike. However, teacher-specific assessment guidelines are absent from this document and need to be provided to staff to ensure consistent practice. This information should be fit-for-purpose and accurately reflect current practice. Required updates to staff documentation identified in this review include:

- the requirements of internal and external moderation
- ensuring the school has consent to assess standards
- applying for subcontracting arrangements and extensions to consent to assess

By keeping these guidance documents current, the school will strengthen its support for staff, particularly for those new to the school and/or less experienced with NCEA.

Improve consistency in the granting of extensions The school is encouraged to consider taking steps to ensure its extension policy is fit for purpose and followed consistently by staff. While the current policy is sound and is clearly documented, this review found it was not being routinely followed. Although no instances of improper conduct were identified, the school may wish to further ensure equitable outcomes for its students by either updating the policy or communicating it more clearly to its staff.

Moderation to ensure assessment quality

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 2025)

Robust internal moderation process Ōtaki College demonstrates strong credibility in its internally assessed results due to effective internal moderation practices. Curriculum Leaders take ownership and leadership of the moderation cycle, thoroughly documenting processes using standardised templates for each

assessed standard. Extensive use of external subject specialist critiquers and verifiers, along with support from NZQA, subject associations, and the Ministry of Education, ensures tasks and judgments meet current standards. Teachers value the process of internal moderation for the learning opportunity it provides and the assurance of objectivity in assessor judgments. High-quality verifier judgement statements contribute to effective quality assurance for internally assessed standards and are routinely used alongside external moderation feedback and moderator reports during the following year's critiquing process. Together with mostly consistent external moderation outcomes, the effective management by the Principal's Nominee indicates that the school is meeting its quality assurance obligations in internal moderation. This robust process ensures the reliability and validity of the school's internal assessments.

Conduct Departmental Audits The Principal's Nominee could consider conducting annual department audits of quality assurance systems and assessment practice across the senior school. A discussion relating to internal and external moderation processes, including action plans and their effectiveness, will assist in ensuring that practice aligns with NZQA's expectations. It is also an opportunity to check on the storage of student work in both electronic and hard copy formats. This will enable the Principal's Nominee to review each department's processes and quickly resolve any issues with regard to quality assurance and credible assessment.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Ōtaki College 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 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
- providing credible opportunities for students to complete the NCEA co-requisite
- 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
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Ōtaki College has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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
- ensuring teachers and students are aware of authenticity requirements including the use of Generative AI
- 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

Ōtaki College 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
- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

Ōtaki College 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
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Ōtaki College 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.

Ōtaki College 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 families about assessment

Ōtaki College 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
- celebrating students' success.

Ōtaki College 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 Ōtaki College:

- 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
- *NCEA Student and Caregiver Information, Ōtaki College 2025* (Assessment Handbook)
- *Curriculum and Assessment Policy, Ōtaki College 2021*
- *Māhere Rautaki – Strategic Plan, Ōtaki College 2021*
- *Literacy and Numeracy Strategic Plan Ōtaki College 2025.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Data
- Curriculum Leaders of
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Performing Arts
 - Social Studies
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - Distance Learning/Japanese
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal and the Senior Leadership team 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.