Managing National Assessment Report

Ōtaki College
Te Kāreti o Ōtaki

May 2021

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 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
- *Staff Assessment Handbook/Guidelines* (Online Resource)
- *Student and Caregiver Information* (Student Handbook)
- Course outlines and selection process (an online tool) for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Curriculum Leaders for:
  - Digital Technology
  - Languages
  - Performing Arts
  - Social Sciences
  - Technology
  - Te Reo Māori
- five 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.

SUMMARY

Ōtaki College

26 May 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-19 pandemic.

What the school is doing well

Ōtaki College is connected strongly to its local community, particularly to Ngāti Raukawa and the Raukawa Marae. Ngā hapū o Ōtaki are deeply invested in the college having, among other things, a strong voice in school governance and in underpinning "Te Kawa o Te Ako" and the tikanga (the guiding principles and values) which establish positive relationships between students, staff and whānau.

In this environment staff and students ensure that a relational approach to supporting students, prioritising assessment when ready and meaningful commitment to review are guiding principles.

The school undertakes thorough review at multiple levels. Stakeholders contribute feedback and senior leaders enable change. For example, on-going and reflective review based on outcomes and feedback resulted in teachers focusing on learning, rather than on students attaining qualifications, with Year 11 students in 2020.

Senior curriculum review identified key goals for assessment for senior students and matched this to the development of pathways to meet student interests and needs. The school manages a wide variety of pathway options for its learners and works hard to ensure that students are appropriately matched to the available programmes.

Internal and external moderation processes are capably managed by the school's experienced Principal's Nominee. He oversees all processes to provide quality assurance at each stage. Feedback from external moderation is followed up to ensure constructive responses are made by teaching staff and curriculum leaders.

Teachers and leaders are effective in their management and review of data. They reflect on student achievement following units of learning to ensure they meet student needs. Data is used to identify at risk students and to support their attainment through meaningful and appropriate course design.

The Principal's Nominee works closely with all curriculum leaders to support them with managing NCEA processes in their learning areas. The guidance provided is thorough and ensures consistency of practice across the school. Information

provided to students and families through school-based and online channels supports good understanding about assessment and is thorough and up to date.

There are no agreed action items. Some next steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

06 July 2021

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 31 May 2017 Managing National Assessment Report   The school has made progress in addressing the action items from the previous review. There are some improvements to processes relating to external moderation and managing entries which would resolve the previous action items through to completion. These are discussed later in this report.

Response to external moderation outcomes   In response to issues raised by external moderators, teachers take appropriate action to improve their assessment practice. The rate of overall agreement between NZQA moderators and school assessors is consistent and identified issues are followed up. In a database overseen by the Principal's Nominee, teachers record their response to the feedback, including actions taken. Curriculum leaders reflect on the lessons learned in scheduled meetings with senior leaders.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes made in response to NZQA moderator feedback would strengthen the review system and may assist with preventing recurring issues in some departments. This could be done by prioritising standards for external moderation in a subsequent moderation cycle, for example.

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)

Using an inquiry approach, senior leaders have undertaken meaningful review to support student achievement. From 2020, the school prioritised giving students a broad range of educational opportunities over the attainment of the NCEA Level 1 qualification. At the end of the year senior leaders reviewed the outcomes of this decision, including stakeholder feedback, which resulted in changes this year. Departments are required to include more assessment in their programmes to meet student requirements.

School review of senior curricula identified that students need a broader range of course options to meet their interests alongside learning and qualification needs. School leaders have worked with a range of external providers to develop meaningful pathways for students. Distance learning is utilised to expand the school curriculum. Targeted students are supported through partnerships with Universal College of Learning (UCOL) and Pūhoro. School and curriculum leaders have designed new programmes such as He Toa Takitini aimed at supporting students to be successful as Māori.

Senior leaders are effective in supporting middle school leaders to review their processes and outcomes. All leaders affirm that the shared documentation, face-to-face meetings with senior leaders, and the support of the Principal's Nominee are

central to on-going review. In turn, curriculum leaders support teachers with review of their programmes and annually report to the Board of Trustees reviewing outcomes against school goals and priorities.

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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

Ōtaki College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- identifying their learning needs comprehensively throughout Years 7-10 and aligning these with applications for special assessment conditions

- providing assessment choices within courses, where appropriate

- prioritising the practice of assessing when ready.

Ōtaki College has effective processes and procedures for:

- handling students requests for extensions of assessment deadlines

- enabling students to appeal an assessment grade

- ensuring that student submissions are monitored for authenticity as they are developed and checked again using digital tools once complete

- ensuring evidence for derived grades is quality assured according to NZQA requirements.

Pathways options create opportunities for students to be successful Ōtaki College works with a range of providers to expand its curriculum and offer an extensive range of pathways opportunities for its students:

- Online learning and Te Kura to broaden the range of available subjects
- Pūhoro Senior Science
- He Toa Takatini
- Partnership with UCOL to provide a secondary-tertiary pathway
- Short Courses with local providers via STAR and Gateway – including to support targeted students to meet NCEA literacy requirements

These opportunities are regularly reviewed to ensure they continue to meet student interests and needs for assessment and qualifications.

Support for senior Māori science students through the Pūhoro programme has begun to improve outcomes for Māori in STEM at Level 3. The improved results for 2020 include the first cohort of Māori students who have had Pūhoro tuition for two years.

He Toa Takitini was initially an intervention programme designed to assist students to gain Level 2 NCEA. It is supported by the Ministry of Education to provide targeted rangatahi with tikanga based learning and assessment. He Toa Takitini has become a full course of study in 2021 in response to the success of, and positive feedback from, the initial cohort.

The school sees its partnership with UCOL as critical for assisting students to gain skills they need to move into certificate and degree level training, apprenticeships and employment in locally important industries. The partnership also addresses goals the school has for improving outcomes at Level 2, in particular, for boys. More than one-quarter of senior students at Ōtaki College have some connection with UCOL

courses, often with a technology focus in carpentry and building, trucking, beekeeping, vet nursing and salon skills.

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)

Ōtaki College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- subject specialists verifying samples of student work at grade boundaries, often through networks involving teachers at other schools

- teachers documenting completion of each step in the internal moderation process from critiquing of tasks through to verification of grades

- storing and using benchmarked student samples to assist with future grade boundary decisions

- monitoring that every standard is subjected to the school's quality assurance systems prior to being reported to NZQA.

Ōtaki College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring that online and physical storage of samples of student work is secure and the location is reported and accessible to the Principal's Nominee.

Random selection of samples for moderation by someone other than the assessor   Where the amount of student work available for a standard requested for external moderation is greater than eight, a random sample selected by someone other than the assessor is required. Currently, due to the amount available for many standards, all the student work is sent for external moderation. It is recommended that the Principal's Nominee or curriculum leader provide teacher-assessors with a randomly generated list where there are more than eight samples of student work Where the curriculum leader is the assessor, the Principal's Nominee should generate the random selection. The staff handbook should be updated to reflect this requirement.

Request inclusion of standards in the moderation plan   The effectiveness of actions taken in response to external moderation feedback should be evaluated. Curriculum leaders could prioritise standards that required action in a subsequent moderation cycle. Requesting inclusion of standards supports evaluation by middle and senior leaders of the effectiveness of the response and actions taken.

For consideration

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

- ensuring that random selection is always made by someone other than the assessor when a sample of student work is required to be stored for external moderation

- prioritising standards for external moderation in a subsequent moderation cycle to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken.

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)

Ōtaki College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- giving students and families online access to the student management system, so that they can have up-to-date information about attainment and progress

- identifying students at risk of not achieving qualifications and creating individual support plans coordinated by curriculum leaders and deans working with Learning Support and Careers staff

- evaluating programmes of learning by analysing assessment results to make decisions about improving course design, teaching and assessment.

Ōtaki College reports accurate achievement data by:

- having the Principal's Nominee monitor school assessment data, from input through to submission

- submitting regular data files and correcting errors

- managing memoranda of understanding with external providers, including the use of correct provider codes.

Ensure entries for internal assessment have results or are withdrawn
Curriculum leaders should ensure that all internal assessment entries have a result or are withdrawn by the due date for the December datafile, if an adequate assessment opportunity has not been provided. Entries with no results reported potentially create problems for students and parents in understanding the completeness of assessment plans. A thorough check of entries in the student management system combined with a check via the NZQA provider login will identify entries where action is required.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- ensuring all curriculum leaders check internal entries have a result or are withdrawn by the end of year datafile due date, if an adequate assessment opportunity has not been provided.

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))

Ōtaki College has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive comprehensive and consistent digital outlines for all available courses

- supporting student decision making regarding pathways options, and involving whānau when appropriate

- supporting new teachers to ensure they understand and use school processes

- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Ōtaki College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- providing written information to students about the requirements of NCEA and the school's assessment processes

- reinforcing important NCEA information in subject classrooms, assemblies and by kaiarahi teachers.

Principal's Nominee leads professional understanding of assessment practice
The Principal's Nominee ensures that all curriculum leaders are very well informed about assessment practice. He coordinates regular meetings which address professional development for best practice, understanding changes to NCEA, sharing information from NZQA, curricula planning and review, and expectations regarding key processes to ensure consistency. The content of these meetings is shared digitally which gives middle leaders an excellent resource for managing their learning areas.

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.