Managing National Assessment Report

Tawa College

April 2025

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Tawa College

10 April 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 highly 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.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2023.

Actions

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
Moderation to ensure assessment quality	
Ensure that samples of student work are strategically selected for moderation	Immediate
Update the staff handbook as described in the moderation section of this report.	By the end of the current year

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30 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 10 March 2020 Managing National Assessment Report   The school has taken appropriate steps to ensure that the agreed action items in the previous report have been addressed. These were to monitor that responses to external moderation outcomes are completed effectively and to update staff and student handbooks to reflect current practice. A further update to the staff handbook is needed as explained later in this report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes   Tawa College now has a robust system to ensure that outcomes from external moderation reports are considered and, where needed, action plans are developed to address any issues highlighted in moderation reports. Concerns raised in moderation reports for some departments across multiple years have been noted and are being addressed by the school.

On receipt of a report, Heads of Department reflect on the outcome, complete a *Review of External Moderation Outcomes* form and lodge this with the Principal's Nominee. The Principal's Nominee meets with the Head of Department if the outcome of the report is either Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent so that an action plan to address concerns can be developed. A later meeting is also scheduled to monitor whether planned actions have been completed effectively. Where possible, these standards are also requested for moderation in the following year. This approach provides confidence to Senior Leadership that appropriate actions are both being developed and effectively enacted.

The school now requires Heads of Department to submit a moderation outcome form for all standards that have been externally moderated, even if the outcome is Consistent. This is good practice, as issues may be identified in these reports that are worthy of consideration and action. Although the Principal's Nominee reviews these submitted forms, a meeting with the Head of Department is not necessarily scheduled in such cases.

Each member of Senior Leadership has line manager responsibility for a group of Heads of Department, with meetings scheduled every two weeks. This process is intended to support and enhance good practice through professional conversations and will include discussion of moderation concerns if needed. This approach enhances the effectiveness of the school's overall response to moderation outcomes with an intention of lifting professional standards.

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)

A feature of the school is the emphasis on self-review which is an embedded process, occurs at all levels and is informed by the analysis of data. This is well led by Senior Leaders, with a strong interconnected approach to ensure that feedback from teachers and departments guide broader school decisions and the school's strategic goals. Teachers interviewed during this review stated that they are

consulted on important strategic matters and that their opinions are heard and considered.

Departments submit an annual report to Senior Leaders and the Board which considers student attainment in the previous year, reflects on these outcomes and proposes approaches for the coming year. A recent initiative is to conduct a review of student achievement immediately following each assessment event rather than wait until the start of the following year. This is good practice as it reinforces review as a continuous cycle that considers current practice on an ongoing basis rather than only completing an historical evaluation.

School self-review has resulted in a number of significant initiatives that have been introduced over the past few years, all intended to improve outcomes for students. These include:

- Removing NCEA Level 1 as an "exit" qualification in Year 11 in order to create the opportunity for deeper, authentic and contextual learning whilst retaining assessment in one standard in each Level 1 course. The intention is for students to aim to achieve NCEA Level 2 in Year 12. However, targeted programmes are provided for students who rely on Level 1 as a qualification.
- Offering the NCEA co-requisite Common Assessment Activities only from Year 11 with Reading being completed in May and Writing and Numeracy in September.
- Introducing specific programmes for English Language Learners with 5% of the cohort deemed as needing this support.
- Moving to a 'vertical' house, pastoral care and student academic guidance system to better integrate these processes and to enhance each student's sense of belonging to a wider school group.
- The introduction of a coaching programme using an outside provider to support Heads of Department in their leadership roles.
- Offering short courses for those students in Years 12 and 13 who have not yet achieved the literacy and numeracy requirements for NCEA to support them to be successful in their next assessment opportunity.
- Including an attestation from Heads of Department in annual reports that they are following required NZQA procedures which is monitored through regular departmental reviews by the Principal's Nominee.

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)

Support for students to meet their attainment goals is significant   The school shows an extensive commitment to meeting the individual needs of students. This is done through clearly understood and consistent assessment practices, appropriate course offerings and comprehensively tracking student progress. This allows for bespoke support to be provided to each student. Students interviewed during this review had a clear understanding of schoolwide expectations regarding NCEA, felt well supported and knew where to access the information they needed.

A very active Career and Pathways Department offers a wide range of opportunities in vocationally-oriented programmes run both by the school and a range of outside providers. An experienced SENCO manages applications for Special Assessment Conditions and ensures that identified students receive appropriate support in

assessments.

A feature of the school is the widespread use of data analysis both to track student progress and to improve assessment practice. Student voice is regularly gathered and combined with ongoing achievement and attendance data. This information is made available to teachers, middle managers and Senior Leaders on a continuous basis to ensure that students who may need additional support are identified and appropriate intervention provided.

Schoolwide approach to authenticity and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is evolving   The school acknowledges both the opportunities that AI provides for enhancing learning and assessment as well as the challenges this brings to the confirmation of authenticity. This approach is appropriate and is focused on educating students on the appropriate use of AI rather than banning its use altogether, with Senior Leaders appreciating that a final policy will need to be developed over time. Various departments are trialling different ways that authenticity may be assured in an AI environment and the school is also investigating systems that could be used to increase the assurance of authenticity.

Good communication about NCEA is provided   The school is committed to ensuring that information on NCEA is current and communicated in various ways to the school community.

Staff are updated on NCEA matters at regular meetings, via email communication and at professional development opportunities. The student handbook is fit for purpose and the school holds regular assemblies at key times to reinforce expectations and to inform students of upcoming events such as exams. A general parent evening to explain NCEA procedures is held, and the school also hosts NCEA me te whānau and NCEA ma le Pasifika workshops. A bespoke workshop for the parents of Filipino students was also hosted by the school.

A further clarification about moderation procedures in the staff handbook is required as mentioned below.

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)

Moderation practices are generally sound, and the process is valued   Heads of Department interviewed during this review appreciated the importance of internal moderation in assuring the credibility of results submitted to NZQA and its value in improving the assessment judgements of teachers.

Internal moderation practices are robust. These practices vary somewhat from department to department depending on size and the availability of verifiers, but they are in accordance with NZQA's and the school's expectations except, occasionally, when random selection is used. Outcomes are recorded in detail using the school's student management system and monitoring by the Principal's Nominee is effective.

All external moderation is currently submitted digitally, which is commendable, and the school has an appropriate process for storing samples of student work digitally prior to submission to NZQA.

In a very few cases, random selection of student work for moderation is still occurring, which is contrary to NZQA's expectation. For both internal and external

moderation, student work should be strategically selected. The school must ensure that all teachers follow this requirement.

The section on moderation in the staff handbook should also be updated to better emphasise the need for strategic selection and to explain the schoolwide approach to the selection of student work for moderation in order to support teachers to make decisions on grade boundaries. A clearer indication of the need for external moderation to be submitted immediately after internal moderation practices are completed will further enhance this section of the staff handbook.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Tawa 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.

Tawa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment

- 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 student 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

Tawa 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 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.

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

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored

- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate

- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback

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

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Tawa 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.

Tawa 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

- seeking NZQA approval through a subcontracting agreement to engage with a non-consented provider to deliver specific standards.

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

Tawa College has effective processes and procedures for:

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose

- 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, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

Tawa 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 Tawa 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.

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
- *Quality Management System Documentation, Tawa College, 2025*
- *Guidelines and Assessment Procedures for National Qualifications, Tawa College, 2025* (Staff Handbook)
- *Procedures for Assessment towards National Qualifications: Student Guidelines & FAQs, Tawa College, 2025 (Student Handbook)*
- *Policy on the use of Generative AI, Tawa College, 2025.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
    - Careers and Pathways
    - Digital Technologies
    - English
    - Mathematics
    - Science
    - Social Sciences
- 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.