

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Waimea College**

**September 2023**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## Waimea College

6 September 2023

### 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.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2022.

### Actions and considerations

#### Agreed actions

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

Action	Timeframe
<b>External and internal review</b>	
Document the completion and evaluation of actions taken to resolve issues identified through external moderation	By the end of 2023
<b>Credible assessment practice to meet student needs</b>	
Ensure that teachers share a common understanding of resubmission rules	Immediately

#### For consideration

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

- including quality assurance systems and external moderation follow up in line manager meetings with Heads of Department.

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13 October 2023

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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 20 August 2019 Managing National Assessment Report**

There were no action items identified in the previous report.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** To further ensure the effectiveness of action plans created in response to external moderation feedback, the school should document their completion and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken. This will give senior leaders assurance that the process is used to improve school quality assurance of results and the accuracy of assessor judgements. There are existing processes to ensure that action plans are created in response to not yet consistent or not consistent outcomes. The Principal's Nominee meets with the Head of Department or Teacher in Charge of relevant standards to agree on next steps. The school may wish to consider including discussion of next steps in regular line manager meetings with Heads of Department to distribute the ownership of moderation evaluation across the leadership team. This would assist in identifying any patterns that may require a response across more than one learning area.

Heads of Department interviewed for this review could each explain effective responses they had taken in their learning areas to improve assessor understanding of the standard. These include accessing support from subject associations, NZQA assessor support including courses on the Learning Management System Pūtake, and sourcing new verifiers from outside the school as needed for sole-teacher subjects. There are a few learning areas that would benefit from more considered interventions due to patterns of inconsistency with the standard over time. Inclusion of moderation in line manager discussions should help to identify the reasons for these concerns and provide targeted support for teachers as needed.

### 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)*

**Effective leadership practices** The new Principal's Nominee and experienced Deputy Principal are an effective leadership team for assessment in the school, supported by capable Heads of Department. Significant changes to the senior leadership team that include a change of Principal and another Deputy Principal have not interrupted the school's effective and aligned expectations for teachers and Heads of Department in the ownership of assessment processes. Any changes to assessment procedures and expectations are raised in Heads of Department meetings and staff meetings and followed up in department meetings in a timely manner. Assessment matters are openly discussed, and questions encouraged, leading to a sound understanding of principles and practices across the staff.

**Preparation for NCEA Change implementation** The school has made good progress with its preparation for the introduction of new Level 1 Achievement Standards and the corequisite requirement in 2024. To date, all Level 1 courses have been designed, published, and selected by students, and teachers are well on the way to planning their teaching and learning programmes. The school intends to retain

its effective use of some industry standards at Level 1 as well as providing majority-Achievement Standard courses that can be adapted to meet student needs. Literacy and Numeracy are being integrated across the curriculum to assist in the development of students' skills in preparation for the corequisite requirement.

**Reviewed assessment communications** The Principal's Nominee has updated the previously paper-based staff assessment handbook to make key information more readily accessible and link directly to key NZQA resources. Staff interviewed for this review appreciate the improvements to the handbook and the discussions and quiz at a staff meeting that supported its implementation. The student handbook will be reviewed in time for distribution to next year's Year 11 students and changes to school policies aligned to the NCEA Change programme.

**Ongoing review of assessment practice** The nature of the impact of artificial intelligence on the authenticity of student work is a matter of ongoing discussion and review within departments and across the staff. This issue is also related to the challenges of completing an increasing volume of internal assessment in a digital format and school systems for tracking and storing this work. This is an effective approach an assessment issue that will have implications across all learning areas and vary according to the nature of the assessment concerned. The review process should ensure that teachers have an opportunity to establish the purpose and principles behind any changes to their practice before they are cemented in school policy.

## **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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)*

**Varied pathways and assessment programmes to meet student needs and aspirations** Waimea College uses the flexibility of NCEA effectively to offer a diverse range of assessment programmes that enable students to complete qualifications that match their learning and pathway requirements. Some students access industry training courses at school or through external providers, while others are on track to complete their qualifications ahead of their peers and may access university courses and New Zealand Scholarship examinations.

**Changes to the provision of special assessment conditions** Waimea College teachers are proactive in offering within each course a range of methods of communicating evidence for assessment to enable students to produce work that fits with both their own strengths and the nature of the standard. Teachers are continuing to develop their own expertise in teaching how to create a range of different evidence, and many students continue to default to typed reports as this expertise develops. When they are offered a range of alternative assessments and methods of communication students do not always need to use the special assessment conditions to which they are entitled for internal assessments. This is effective practice that supports universal design for assessment principles.

**Ensure a common understanding of resubmission rules** The school needs to ensure that and teachers are familiar with the requirements for a credible resubmission opportunity. Although the staff assessment handbook clearly communicates the rules, it became apparent during the review that some teachers may be offering too much guidance to students on correcting errors to improve their

grade from Not Achieved to Achieved. A valid resubmission opportunity can only occur where individually identified students should be able to discover and correct minor errors by themselves, and teachers have given only non-specific feedback and taken care not to over-direct them. The NZQA Myth resource on resubmission has further guidance on effective practice.

**Revised systems to quality assure derived grades** The school has reviewed its processes for documenting the completion of quality assurance processes for derived grades and as a result will use the NZQA template to formalise this documentation in 2023. Consistent documentation will enable senior leaders to be more confident that each grade has been subject to a verification or justification process. Teachers are already familiar with critiquing and adapting practice examinations sourced from subject associations, to meet the needs of their students. Student work is either check-marked within departments or with colleagues outside the school. Some departments are exploring means of offering practice examinations on a digital platform to give students as comparable an experience to the external examination as possible.

## **Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results**

*Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)*

**Purposeful internal moderation** Heads of Department oversee the moderation of all internal assessments to ensure consistency with the standard, supported by the Principal's Nominee. Middle leaders can describe a range of methods for completing moderation tasks, including check-marking by department members, using verifiers outside the school, and blind marking on grade boundaries. Heads of Department complete a checklist annually to ensure that each is familiar with all expectations and documentation and to assist the Principal's Nominee to follow up any issues or queries. Each year the Principal's Nominee also meets with each Head of Department at least once to discuss internal moderation, reconcile documentation with actual practice, and assure senior leaders that moderation processes are being followed

**Reviewed documentation process** The successful trial of using the embedded internal moderation documentation within its student management system in 2023 will see a change of the school's process beginning in 2024 as it is implemented across all departments. Teachers are looking forward to streamlining administration and the potential improvement to the timeliness of completing moderation and reporting of student results.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

### **Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students**

**Waimea 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 and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- 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
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- 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.

**Waimea College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed or late assessment
- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- 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 and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

## **Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality**

**Waimea 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.

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

## **Effective management and use of assessment-related data**

**Waimea 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
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**Waimea 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 whānau about assessment**

### **Waimea College has effective processes and procedures for:**

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

### **Waimea 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 Waimea 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 Candidates 2023*.

### 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
- *Waimea College Quality Management System, August 2023*
- *2023 Staff Handbook NCEA, Waimea College 2023*
- *2023 Student Handbook NCEA, Waimea College 2023*
- School policies for student assessment and achievement, curriculum and student achievement, and documentation and self-review.

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal
- Heads Department for:
  - Languages
  - Performing Arts
  - Physical Education and Health
  - Technology
- Assistant Heads of Department for:
  - English
  - Science
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy 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.