

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Karamea Area School**

**September 2018**

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Karamea Area 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
- 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 2018* (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 Qualification Framework, Assessment Quality Management Practices & Procedures, Karamea Area School, 2018* (Staff Handbook)
- *National Certificate of Educational Achievement Student Handbook, Karamea Area School, 2018*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the:

- Principal's Nominee
- Teachers in Charge of:
  - Art
  - English
  - Mathematics and Science
- and three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal's Nominee and the staff representative on the Board of Trustees at the end of the review visit to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies and next steps, and to agree on any action required.

# SUMMARY

## Karamea Area School 27 September 2018

### 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

Karamea Area School has sound processes for conducting NCEA assessment. Their moderation systems are robust and they are reporting credible results to NZQA. The school has good assessment procedures and processes in place and self-review has identified and led to improvements in assessment practice.

Assessment programmes are flexible and individualised to meet student needs. External providers are used to extend assessment opportunities for students beyond what the school can offer. The school's assessment programmes ensure that students have access to assessment opportunities and pathways that meet their individual needs.

Assessment practices are well embedded in the school. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the school's policies and procedures. Students attested to a consistent practice across the school.

The internal moderation process is a strength of the school, with effective networks for teachers to use for external verification. The networks have been created within the Top of the South Island (TOSI) Kāhui Ako to enable sharing and verification of student work. Ensuring student work undergoes external verification adds robustness to the school's quality assurance processes.

Data informs teacher assessment practice and the Principal's Nominee reports a review of student outcomes to the Board of Trustees regularly throughout the year. Student progress towards gaining a qualification is monitored and Individual Learning Programmes are effectively used for any students identified being at risk.

The school effectively communicates NCEA policy and processes to inform students and families. School documentation has been updated and improved following review. Students who were interviewed demonstrated a good knowledge of how to gain a qualification and how to access appropriate support if required.

### Areas for improvement

Documented action plans are required in response to external moderation outcomes. Although outcomes are reviewed and discussed, action plans were not created at the time of review. Documented action plans should be monitored by senior management for completion to ensure that required changes are made for ongoing improvement in assessment practice.

The reporting of entries and results does not meet NZQA requirements. All entries should have a reported grade if there has been an adequate assessment opportunity. The school must report a Not Achieved grade where a student has had an adequate assessment opportunity but presented no work or withdraw the entry.

### **Agreed action**

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

- document and monitor the completion of action plans in response to external moderation
- report a Not Achieved grade where a student has had an adequate assessment opportunity or withdraw the entry.

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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)*

**ction Items from the 6 May 2015 Managing National Assessment Report** Three of the four action items from the 2015 report have been completed. The action item for strengthening the follow up process for external moderation outcomes has yet to be completed. This is discussed below.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** In the 2015 report, the school agreed to document action plans in response to external moderation. This has yet to be implemented. In the current process, the Principal's Nominee discusses external moderation outcomes with the teacher, where appropriate, and writes a summary report for the Principal and Board of Trustees. This procedure is in response to the fact that standards offered vary from year to year depending on teacher expertise and individual student programme design. A formal documented action plan will strengthen assessment practice, as it can be monitored to ensure required changes are completed, and:

- will help the teacher to improve their practice even if they leave
- can be shared or developed with the kāhui ako to strengthen the practice of the teacher and the verifier
- allow a new teacher to the school to clearly see what changes were needed and made, if they choose to use the same assessment task.

To further refine the process, the school has agreed to document action plans in response to external moderation to ensure completion is monitored by senior management.

### 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)*

Recent staff changes have had an impact on the school's self-review processes, as there have been three Principal's Nominees in the past 12 months. The current Principal's Nominee is reviewing the school's assessment practice as she becomes acquainted with the role and school processes.

The school identified that improving school-wide understanding of NCEA assessment practice would help it towards its strategic aims of having an involved community and support for the school, and increased student achievement. To achieve this, an NCEA presentation was held for the Board of Trustees and primary school staff to strengthen understanding about how school policy and procedures relate to quality assurance and how programmes in the primary school contribute towards NCEA goals.

Involvement in the TOSI Kāhui ako jumbo day and BCITO moderation day has given the school further opportunities to review its assessment programmes. Teachers received professional development in assessment best practice at these days, for example using student evidence to assess more than one standard. Assessment programmes were reviewed following attendance of these days and Independent Learning Programmes improved to provide more personalised programmes for students.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice. Senior management undertakes to:

- document and monitor the completion of action plans in response to external moderation.

## 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 2018 5.5)*

### **Karamea Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- using a range of methods during assessment to gather evidence of achievement
- providing differentiated assessment within courses to match student abilities.
- using school-based testing to identify students requiring Special Assessment Conditions and making applications as appropriate
- scaffolding and contextualising assessment tasks so that they are more relevant and better engage students
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers to deliver:
  - courses the school is unable to offer
  - assessment against individual standards related to career pathways
- assessing students when they are ready, where appropriate.

### **Karamea Area School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules and student appeals of assessment decisions
- ensuring credible assessment through consistent school-wide assessment practice on late and missed work, extensions, resubmissions, and further assessment opportunities
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence for derived and emergency grades
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993* when handling students' assessment information.

**Ensuring assessment opportunities for students** Individualised Learning Programmes (ILP) help the school to ensure that students have good access to qualifications pathways. The school endeavours to offer assessment programmes to meet individual needs based on student interests and strengths. Where the school cannot provide a course, external providers are used to extend assessment opportunities for students. Students attend courses once a week through the West Coast Trades Academy, block courses in Nelson through Whenua Iti, or online courses through NetNZ. Each student has an ILP that the school considers best meets their qualification aspirations, interests and ability.

### **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 2018 6.4b)*

### **Karamea Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- using external subject specialists to verify teacher grades on a purposefully selected sample of student work for each standard
- documenting the internal moderation process by using a standard *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- ensuring internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed prior to reporting results to NZQA
- keeping benchmark exemplars and verification notes to inform future assessment decisions.

### **Karamea Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored
- attending the regional BCITO moderation meeting to have student work verified and share best practice with other teachers
- valuing external moderation feedback for the clarification of grade boundaries, assistance with understanding of the standard and to confirm the robustness of the school's internal moderation.

**External verification of teacher assessment judgements a strength** An effective process to have assessments externally verified has been established within the TOSI Kāhui Ako. This helps to ensure that the school has a robust internal moderation system. A moderation schedule for core subjects was developed in June, so that all teachers within the kāhui have an external verifier available to them if they do not have another specialist within their own school. Moderation discussions and decisions between teachers occur online. Completed internal moderation coversheets and evidence of verification are passed to the Principal's Nominee, who then reports the results to NZQA.

### **No action required**

No issues with the school's internal and external moderation 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)*

### **Karamea Area School effectively:**

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
  - informing assessment programme design so that the standards offered match student strengths and interests
  - monitoring student progress to identify learners at risk of not achieving their goals, and provide appropriate support
  - the Principal's Nominee reporting throughout the year to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement.
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
  - reconciling results from external providers with which they hold a current Memorandum of Understanding, to ensure results are reported with the correct provider codes
  - reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
  - ensuring all students attest that their results have been reported correctly to NZQA
  - actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the NZQA learner login
  - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors.

**Ensure all entries have a result or are withdrawn** The process for reporting student entries and results does not meet NZQA requirements. Student entries must have a result reported if there was an adequate assessment opportunity. If not, they must be withdrawn. The school's assessment practice allows for negotiation of assessment deadlines as part of the ILP process. This creates a situation where some assessments are not completed and entries are not amended appropriately.

The school has agreed to clarify with teachers that if a student has had an adequate assessment opportunity but presented no work, then a Not Achieved grade must be reported. If there was an inadequate opportunity, then the entry should be withdrawn.

### **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:

- report a Not Achieved grade where a student has had an adequate assessment opportunity or withdraw the entry.

## 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))*

### **Karamea Area School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current
- communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through staff and student handbooks
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails and staff meetings
- ensuring students receive assessment information for all courses they undertake.

### **Karamea Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- providing an information evening to parents and Year 10 students on NZQA and school assessment related processes before they commence a full NCEA programme
- holding student workshops during Canopy time to inform them of school assessment policies and procedures
- having a standardised template for course outlines across subject areas ensuring consistent assessment information, which are reviewed and updated annually.

**Communications fit for purpose** School documentation has been improved following the last review. It is fit for purpose, written in plain English and relevant to students. Students interviewed for the review demonstrated a good understanding of school policy and procedures and the requirements to gain a NCEA qualification.

### **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.