

Managing National Assessment Report

Westland High School

May 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Westland High School

31 May 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

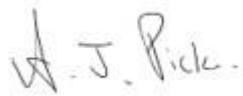
The school agreed that one action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Strengthen the process to follow up ongoing issues raised in external moderation.	In response to 2023 external moderation feedback.

For consideration

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

- clarifying the school's assessment appeals process with students.



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31 July 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 6 August 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

There were no action items in the previous Managing National Assessment report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes Follow up processes need to be strengthened to ensure that issues identified in external moderation are successfully resolved. Existing processes are effective in addressing issues at an individual standard level but may miss the identification of broader concerns.

Heads of Learning Area and Teachers in Charge respond to external moderation feedback and share their proposed action plans with the Principal's Nominee. Action plans are monitored by the Principal's Nominee in a shared document. The majority of issues identified by moderators are resolved by this process. A further step to analyse whole-school trends in moderation feedback would assist in identifying reasons for a decline in the overall agreement rate and where steps like using external verifiers would assist with improving assessor consistency with the standard. This would enable senior leaders and NZQA to be more confident that assessor judgements are consistent with the standard and that internal moderation processes are robust.

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 review occurs at a number of levels within Westland High School to give effect to goals of cultural responsiveness, academic excellence, and the provision of coherent pathways to meet student needs. The school has been working with an external professional learning provider over recent years with a goal of growing the capability and cohesion of middle leaders in their roles, resulting in improved leadership and ownership of processes within their learning areas. The focus of this programme has now shifted to resourcing curriculum developments across the school and within learning areas.

Changes to pathways and student support networks have been successfully implemented to address particular needs of identified students in the senior school, including mentoring and monitoring by Academic Pastoral Leads. The process for determining appropriate strategies for individual and groups of students involves discussions at senior leadership, Heads of Learning Area, and department meetings. Evaluation also occurs at these levels and is documented in department and committee minutes. Staff are comfortable in raising matters of concern with senior leaders and engaging in productive, robust discussions about assessment matters.

Preparing for NCEA Change Westland High School has made proactive steps to prepare for the implementation of the NCEA Change programme, including shifts in assessment practice and programming. A shared focus on covering all big ideas and significant learning for each subject is aligned with an approach that allows for

differentiated assessment programmes for students with assessment programmes that are fully within the school as well as students involved in courses with external providers. The school is experienced in offering digital assessment both for internal assessments and in Assessment Master and is trialling digital tools to further assist students to communicate effectively in a digital format. Lead teachers are working with staff to standardise the teaching of literacy strategies across the school, with the potential to progress a similar approach to support the preparedness of students for the numeracy NCEA corequisite requirement.

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.

Effective communication of assessment matters to staff Credible practice that meets student needs is supported by comprehensive assessment-related communications that include both explanations of the purpose and the documentation of required procedures. School assessment policies are living documents that are regularly reviewed and updated by the Principal's Nominee. Emerging issues are responded to as they arise, including the recent development of a policy to support staff with the use of artificial intelligence in learning and assessment, and the challenges posed to some means of ensuring the authenticity of student work. The Principal's Nominee leads regular conversations and bite-sized sessions in staff meetings to ensure that all staff are empowered to hold assessment conversations with students.

Students spoken to during the review were unclear about the school's assessment appeals process, and although it is seldom required, this is an area in which the school could consider strengthening its communications. The existing form on which students sign-off their acceptance of an assessment grade and attest to the authenticity of their work would be an appropriate place to support this message.

Supporting students' progress towards identified pathways There are effective supports to ensure that all students are set up for success in the area they wish to pursue beyond school. Students' learning and pathway needs are routinely catered for within multilevel classes and differentiated programmes. Individual pathways are widely known and frequently discussed, with distance learning and community training enabling a broad curriculum. Each leaving student is supported with their transition beyond school whether this is to the workforce, tertiary learning, or an apprenticeship.

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.

Westland High School has effective practices that give senior leaders confidence that all results have been subject to quality assurance processes before they are reported to NZQA. Teachers document the critiquing of assessment tasks and verification of assessor grades within the school's student management system. Grades cannot be published to NZQA until this process is completed. Verification comments are retained either within this system or in department records. Many teachers make use of their professional networks to find grade verifiers from outside the school. This

effective system helps to support teachers new to the school and those in smaller subject areas with making assessor judgements.

School processes ensure that any issues with internal moderation will be noted and responded to effectively. The Principal's Nominee has clear oversight of the completion of moderation processes for all learning areas. She makes regular checks on details including verifier credentials and the location of completed student work. Documented conversations are held with teachers or Heads of Learning Area about moderation as required, to ensure that samples of work and documentation are congruent with reported results.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Westland High School 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
- 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.

Westland High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- 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

Westland High School 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.

Westland High School 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
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Westland High School 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.

Westland High School 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

Westland High School 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.

Westland High School 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 Westland High 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.

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
- *Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy*, Board of Trustees, Westland High School, 2021
- *Assessment Procedures for Staff*, Westland High School, 2023
- *Assessment Procedures – Student presentation*, Westland High School, 2023
- *WHS NCEA procedures brochure*, Westland High School, 2023.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Acting Assistant Principal
- Heads of Learning Area for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- Teachers in Charge of:
 - Classical Studies
 - Music and Photography
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Acting 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.