

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Rangiora High School

July 2021

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Rangiora 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.

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
- *Policies: Assessment, Curriculum, Professional Learning and Development, Timetabling Rangiora High School*
- *Senior Assessment Policies and Procedures Teacher Handbook Rangiora High School*
- *Senior Assessment Policies and Procedures Student Handbook Rangiora High School*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum
- Leaders of Learning for:
  - Business and Enterprise
  - Mathematics (Acting)
  - Social Sciences
- Curriculum Leaders of:
  - Digital Technologies
  - Music
  - Physical Education and Health.

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

## Rangiora High School

29 July 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 due to the restrictions of COVID-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2020.

### What the school is doing well

Rangiora High School's vision is to improve achievement outcomes for students. This vision endorses the school's commitment to provide a diversity of pathways and responsive approaches to effectively meet student needs and support success school-wide.

The school responds effectively to review and is improving and embedding NCEA practices. Teachers use achievement data and student voice to inform course and programme design. The school offers a wide range of academic and vocational opportunities, including through outside providers. This provides students with relevant and engaging assessment pathways to cater for their needs and interests. Year 11 and 12 semester programmes also support students to experience a broad range of learning.

The school's assessment practice is consistent and effective across faculties. This was also evident in student responses to interview questions. Teachers are using a greater range of assessment methods and strategies to gather evidence for assessment opportunities. This has included providing targeted feedback, using milestones and a variety of types of evidence of achievement. Students needing acceleration to build literacy and numeracy skills are identified and supported.

Clear processes and collective ownership of NCEA assessment practice ensure that results reported to NZQA for national qualifications are credible. The school has implemented a robust annual audit of internal moderation processes to ensure that only credible results are reported to NZQA. The review of faculty internal moderation processes confirms that documentation reflects actual practice. External moderation outcomes are addressed by teachers preparing an action plan to resolve issues. Senior leaders evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions and support improvement in practice, where needed.

School-wide management of assessment data is efficient, ensuring results reported to NZQA are complete, timely and accurate. Students are tracked to monitor progress towards meeting personal goals and qualification attainment. As appropriate, support and interventions assist students to improve their assessment outcomes. Faculty and curriculum leaders analyse results data to reflect on the

previous year's programme and design future courses. They report achievement outcomes to senior leadership and the Board of Trustees, informing strategic goals.

The Principal's Nominee effectively communicates assessment processes which informs professional learning and promotes consistent practice. The school has a range of communications that allows staff, students and their whānau to gain a common understanding of NCEA, school expectations and assessment procedures. The students interviewed for the review were well-informed about the NCEA and considered teachers positively supported them to achieve.

### **Areas for improvement**

Student work selected for external moderation must adhere to the school's random selection process using the student management system. Random selection will enable the school to confidently use external moderation results to measure the effectiveness of their internal moderation quality assurance practices. Teachers using their own selection process does not satisfy NZQA requirements.

Some other steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

### **Agreed action**

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

- ensure the selection process of student work for external moderation meets NZQA requirements.

Kay Wilson  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

20 September 2021

**NZQA**

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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)*

#### **Action Items from 24 August 2017 Managing National Assessment Report**

Three of the four items identified for action in the 2017 report have been addressed.

The Principal's Nominee has introduced a comprehensive review of moderation processes within each faculty, including reconciling internal moderation documentation with actual practice, to confirm expectations of quality assurance are being met and results reported are credible.

Subject leaders are provided with longitudinal and comparative statistical information to analyse student achievement. They report a reflective analysis to the Board of Trustees using a standardised format enabling relative evaluation against faculty and school-wide strategic goals.

There is evidence of some reduction in grade verifier workload through purposefully selected work at grade boundaries. However, this approach is not practised school-wide. NZQA recommends teachers explicitly focus on strategically selected samples of student work, including at grade boundaries, for verification of grade judgements.

The 2017 report required updates to the student and staff handbooks related to payment of NCEA fees. Changes to NZQA policy mean these are no longer applicable.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school has clear processes to respond to external moderation. All Heads of Faculty document for senior leadership the actions they undertake to rectify any issues identified in external moderation reports. The Principal's Nominee proactively monitors outcomes to identify developing trends and potential issues in a subject area. Appropriate support to improve practice is provided, where required. As part of their regular review cycle, senior leadership evaluates the progression and impact of agreed actions, to inform ongoing improvements.

### 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)*

Self-review is embedded practice at Rangiora High School. The school has a shared commitment to meeting the diverse and changing needs of students and providing opportunities for them to demonstrate their best achievement. Ongoing inquiry focuses on continuous improvement of teaching and assessment practice. Analysis of student achievement data and student voice informs school-wide review.

Supported by senior leaders and teachers, the new Principal's Nominee is committed to further enhancing school-wide understanding and ownership of NCEA processes.

As part of this self-review focus, assessment strategies have been introduced or strengthened to ensure credible assessment.

**Enhanced monitoring of moderation processes** The Principal's Nominee has strengthened the quality assurance of moderation practices, both in response to external feedback and internally identified improvements.

She comprehensively audits the internal moderation processes of each faculty, matching information documented with actual practice for a sample of standards. Her audit includes checks of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* for sufficient and strategic selection of student work, the quality of verifier judgement statements, and storage arrangements.

Outcomes of the audit are recorded by the Principal's Nominee and where concerns are identified, they are resolved. Faculty and curriculum leaders indicated they valued this monitoring to ensure they are consistently meeting expectations of best practice.

The audit is complemented by a senior leadership review of all faculty teaching and assessment processes, including moderation, every three years, to support ongoing improvement. Senior leaders have established policies and processes to ensure teachers are provided with clear expectations for assessment processes.

Senior leadership can be confident as a result of ongoing and transparent review that moderation procedures carried out in all faculties are complete and robust. The audit has added value in strengthening the consistency of moderation processes across all faculties, ensuring the reporting of credible results.

**Digital practice supports engagement and access** The school engages in digital practice and end-of-year examinations to match students' everyday learning and assessment approach, and to prepare for future assessment practice

The Principal's Nominee has further digitalised assessment processes and materials and included links to relevant sections on the NZQA website and school learning management system. This format provides better access to information for students, whānau and staff, and supports improved consistency of teacher practice.

**Further review underway** Other areas under review by senior leaders to support student achievement success include:

- a commitment to improving Māori student achievement. An intended next step is to address equity of qualification attainment and access to future opportunities for Māori and Pacific students relative to their peers, including in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects
- staff professional development on how to use assessment to drive better learning, involving understanding student learning and assessment needs from their perspective, to improve engagement and achievement
- with the rollout of the NCEA Change Programme, exploring how the NCEA assessment model can be applied to best meet changing and future needs of students, including to effectively develop literacy and numeracy skills.

Effective school-wide leadership and a shared culture of meeting student needs has built staff capacity and collaborative ownership of effective NCEA assessment practice. The school expects improved achievement outcomes for students to follow.

**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)*

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

- broadening academic and vocational assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers to meet students' abilities, interests and planned career pathways
- semesterising Year 11 and 12 programmes to extend the range of courses available
- providing differentiated learning and assessment opportunities within the same class and across classes in the same subjects, including offering optional standards
- designing courses with learning contexts that are genuine and authentic, and engage students' interests
- managing student workloads through limiting the number of credits offered in each course and focussing on the quality of achievement
- providing targeted support for students throughout the year, including for priority learners and offering subject tutorials to support achievement success
- identifying and supporting students at risk of not meeting the literacy or numeracy requirements of NCEA or University Entrance
- collecting school-based evidence to support applications for students identified as eligible for special assessment conditions and providing appropriate support.

### **Rangiora High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring consistent school-wide assessment practice on missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- providing valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- using a range of strategies to monitor the authenticity of student work, including:
  - student sign-off on assessment cover sheets
  - modifying publicly sourced assessment tasks
  - keeping commercial tasks secure
- ensuring derived and unexpected event grades are based on standard-specific authentic evidence from practice examinations and assessments that have been subject to a quality assurance process
- effectively managing NZQA external examinations and reviewing practice to identify improvements
- motivating students by celebrating academic achievement through awards and acknowledgement of success
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* when issuing student results and using student work as exemplars.

**Evidence gathering allows students to present best achievement**

**evidence** Teachers have extended the methods used to collect evidence towards assessment to cater for students' diverse abilities and learning and assessment preferences. Methods include identifying and recording naturally occurring evidence, conferencing, portfolios, video recording, varied presentation formats and digital technology.

Teachers use formative assessment strategies that support students to be more prepared for summative assessment. These strategies include monitoring milestones carefully, tailoring feedback so authenticity is not compromised, and being explicit about what is required to achieve each grade level. This approach has been refreshed in response to the recent changes to resubmission rules. Students interviewed for the review complimented teachers' efforts for highlighting what was needed to prepare for summative assessments, which built their confidence around assessment success.

**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)*

### **Rangiora High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring assessment tasks reflect the standard by having amended or new tasks critiqued prior to use
- using clarification documents, benchmark exemplars, documented discussions on grade judgements and professional learning opportunities including, Pūtake, to inform assessment decisions
- using department marking processes or appropriate subject specialists from inside or outside the school to verify assessor grade judgements for a sample of student work
- documenting the quality assurance process on *an Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- following the internal moderation processes for Industry Training Organisations.

### **Rangiora High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored
- teachers suggesting appropriate standards to be considered for inclusion in the moderation plan
- digitally submitting the majority of student work
- clarifying and appealing outcomes to assist with understanding of the standard
- valuing moderator's feedback for professional learning to inform changes to assessments and assessor's judgements.

**Reinforce verification requirements to reduce teacher workload** NZQA expects that grade verification should involve checking sufficient samples of student work strategically selected at grade boundaries as well as any grades that need review. All teachers interviewed were verifying more samples of student work in their quality assurance of grades than required. In addition to student work selected at grade boundaries, samples were chosen randomly, covered all grades, or focused on a specific number per teacher or class size. These are not recommended verification selection methods.

Reinforcing verification requirements with teachers has the potential to reduce verifier workload, without compromising the quality of the assurance process. Verification does not require a fixed or predetermined number of pieces of student work. Factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and number of students assessed should determine the sample size.

**All selections for external moderation should meet NZQA requirements** The review identified that teachers randomly select some student work. However, teachers also included student work they would like feedback on, at grade

boundaries or a cross selection of all grades, to gain confirmation from moderators of grade decisions.

The school agreed to clarify selection requirements with staff to ensure the outcomes of external moderation can reliably evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation.

For consistency and ease of selection, the school expects teachers to use the student management system to generate the external moderation submission sample. This method is outlined in the staff handbook and meets current NZQA requirements that the selection method for external moderation must not be manipulated. The need to follow current NZQA requirements must be reinforced with teachers.

### **Agreed action**

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure the selection process of student work for external moderation meets requirements.

### **For consideration**

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

- reinforcing with teachers that grade verification for internally assessed work should focus on a sufficient number of strategically selected samples at grade boundaries.

## 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)*

### **Rangiora High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- Wānanga and subject teachers monitoring and tracking student achievement progress to identify those at risk of not achieving their chosen assessment pathway and qualification goals
- reporting high levels of unexpected event grades to support the recognition of achievement in the event of misadventure
- supporting teachers in their professional growth enquiries, to improve student achievement.

### **Rangiora High School reports accurate achievement data by:**

- only reporting results for standards the school has consent for, or against the correct code of outside providers with whom the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

**Data management systems are a strength** Established data management practices, regularly promoted by the Principal's Nominee, ensure accurate and timely data is reported to NZQA. The Principal's Nominee effectively uses Key Indicators, file submission and data reports to identify and resolve data issues. Students are actively encouraged to use the student management system portal and NZQA Learner Login to monitor their progress, and check results for accuracy. Evidence of thorough data management, and a match to students' intended assessment programme include internal entries reported with a result or withdrawn, and low levels of late external entries.

**Effective use of data to inform change** Teachers, Heads of Faculty, senior leadership and the Board of Trustees evaluate data, including student and staff voice, to inform self-review. Data is used to annually reflect and report on student achievement, measurement of strategic goals and the effectiveness of changes made.

Faculty and curriculum leaders evaluate the effectiveness of learning and assessment programmes to inform course design, teaching strategies and professional learning. Resultant changes include offering different modes of assessment, contexts and standards to best support students to meet their achievement goals.

### **No action required**

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

## 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))*

### **Rangiora High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring students receive course information for all subjects they take
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including through the student and parent portal, reports and Student Achievement Interview Days.

### **Rangiora High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- supporting professional learning opportunities, including collaborating with external subject specialists and attendance at NZQA Best Practice Workshops, when available
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme on the school's assessment and moderation processes
- encouraging teachers to use their Education Sector Logon to access secure information and website functions.

**Clear communication of assessment practice** Effective communication by the Principal's Nominee has enabled ownership of assessment systems across the school. Pro-active use of digital, face-to-face and written communication ensures assessment information is accessible and understood.

The Principal's Nominee informs staff about assessment best practice and updates. She clarifies changes of procedures or expectations at Leaders of Learning, Faculty and Curriculum meetings and through the weekly 'Beacon' publication. Robust discussion and sharing of ideas on NCEA assessment procedures and processes ensure school-wide consistency amongst staff.

Communications are annually reviewed and are digitalised on the online learning management system and website, allowing easier access to updated information.

Discussion with students interviewed for the review identified a thorough knowledge of school assessment procedures and what is needed to gain a qualification. Wānanga teachers support students to register and use their Learner login, experience the digital platform and understand plagiarism. NCEA information is also presented at tailored student assemblies and at parent interview days. Students acknowledged the staff supported them to provide their best evidence of achievement.

### **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.