

Managing National Assessment Report

Geraldine High School

March 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Geraldine High School

20 March 2024

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.

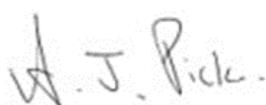
As a school with effective assessment systems and practices for national qualifications, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three to five years.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2021.

For consideration

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

- ensuring all course outlines are user-friendly, consistently formatted, and are checked for accuracy
- checking all internal moderation cover sheets are completed fully as outlined in the report.



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10 April 2024

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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 19 September 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

The school has resolved its agreed actions by:

- creating a centrally held spreadsheet for tracking each department's internal moderation and checking that only those results that have been subject to the internal moderation process are reported to NZQA, and
- improving the monitoring of the critiquing and verification phases of internal moderation with greater ownership taken by Heads of Department where required, and
- ensuring all teachers understand NZQA's requirements for sufficient and purposeful selection for internal moderation.

This good practice is generally well embedded across all departments and is monitored by the Principal's Nominee.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes External moderation documentation and its follow up are highly visible through the school's online storage and monitoring system. Follow up from past years is well archived and easily retrieved to inform future assessment of previously externally moderated standards. The school had more than 80 percent of its external moderation reported as "Consistent" in 2022, with slightly more standards coming back Not Yet Consistent in 2023. Teachers interviewed were positive about the professional learning component in the feedback they received and either acted on the moderator's advice directly or sought further professional advice where necessary.

The next step for the Principal's Nominee is to evaluate and record the effectiveness of external moderation follow-up during her audit of departmental assessment practice. An effective practice that the school may wish to consider is to report on external moderation outcomes as part of the departmental review process and include this in annual reports to the Principal and/or Board of Trustees.

Quality assurance check of the examination centre As a result of the 2023 Examination Centre quality assurance check, the school was found to be fully compliant.

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)

Since the last Managing National Assessment review in 2019, Geraldine High School has had several changes to its Senior Leadership including a recent change of Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal (Curriculum) and a more recent change of Principal. Over 2021 - 2022 the school redesigned its vision statement and reviewed its strategic priorities to better meet all students' qualifications and pathway goals. The school's self-review process is effectively building teachers' assessment capability and frequent, clear, consistent reporting has created improved transparency for students and their families when tracking student progress. Improved data analysis at departmental and senior leadership level is used by all teachers to inform their assessment practice and track progress against clearly identified strategic goals.

A key change from the internal review is the introduction of "Foundation Learning," a new system of assessment and reporting for Years 7-10. This change was prompted by the need for more reliable data to measure the achievement outcomes and key capabilities of students in the junior school. Foundation Learning uses a coherent and consistent system of assessment designed to prepare students for standards-based assessment using similar concepts and terminology. All students' academic performance is measured using an eight-point scale. Similarly, their key capabilities are recorded on an eight-point scale and measure how well, and how frequently, a key capability is observed by each teacher over the reporting period.

Another facet of the Foundation Learning approach is the consistent use of academic language, for example, the use of measurable verbs, such as, *describe*, *compare/contrast* and *analyse* and phrases such as, *to what extent*, which students will encounter in their NCEA programmes. The school provides students and families with an academic word list which teachers use so students can navigate where higher order thinking is required or to help them unpack why their work has been evaluated at an achieved, or other level.

Data analysis indicates students at the school have strengths in self-organisation and relating to others but need to develop critical thinking skills. This information will be used in the design of future NCEA assessment tasks.

The school took part in the pilot of the new NCEA Co-requisite Literacy standards using the opportunity to evaluate its assessment of student readiness, alongside the opportunity to build familiarity with the digital platform. Early identification of students "at risk" in Year 10 and additional remedial support for these priority students, led to improved outcomes for Writing Literacy with 82% of students passing in 2023 compared with only 52% in 2022. Most students completed the Literacy Common Assessment Activities (CAAs) without access to any special assessment conditions. A Geraldine High School staff member is taking up a leadership role within the local *Kā Awa Whiria Kāhui Ako* and they anticipate there will be a more targeted focus on strengthening literacy and numeracy skills from Year 4 onward to enhance students' success when they engage with the NCEA Co-requisite at high school.

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 2024)

NCEA change at Level 1 clearly communicated to students and their families

The Principal's Nominee created an effective presentation for students new to NCEA focusing on the new NCEA Co-requisite requirements, the structure of the qualification and students' obligations and entitlements.

Course design reflects student needs In 2024, the Senior Leadership team decided not to impose a set number of credits for a Level one course. The workload and engagement will be evaluated in the first year of change and any required shifts will happen in the following year. Some departments are offering four standards and others are offering three. As in the past, a different Assessment Standard may be added to an individual student's programme, where the student has a poor chance of achieving an Achievement Standard.

Create more consistent course outlines The Level 1 course outlines could be improved by being formatted in a more consistent style school-wide, so that students and their families can more easily determine:

- where each assessment will fall in the school calendar to identify any bottlenecks
- whether a standard can contribute to the NCEA Co-requisite
- whether a school-based external standard has a derived grade available
- where students and their families can find assessment information for that course on the NZQA website, especially where a course is made up of standards from two or more domains.

Language across the course outlines should mirror NZQA terminology, for example, *Further Assessment Opportunity* rather than *Reassessment* to assist students and families when searching for related information on the NZQA website.

Student well-being and success effectively tracked and supported Academic tracking begins in Year 10, or earlier, so students "at risk" of not gaining the NCEA Co-requisite are identified, and interventions can be planned and implemented. The number of students in this priority group is very small as evidenced by the high percentage of students gaining literacy and numeracy in the Level 1 NCEA results statistics over the past three years. From 2022-2023, the number of students gaining Level 1 NCEA was twenty percent higher than that of comparable schools and schools nationally.

Data collection and reporting is effectively used by year level Deans and the Academic Director to track student progress and enable Whānau Teachers to ensure each student is on track to meet their pathway goals. An extended Whanaungatanga period once a week for Personal and Social Education enables Whānau Teachers to check on student progress and wellbeing.

The school's Gateway programme and Primary Industry Academy are well-subscribed, with a healthy level of competition to earn a place on the programme. The Primary Industry Academy enables many students to gain Level 2 NCEA who might otherwise struggle to attain it. A recent study done for the Ministry of Education

by Impact Lab showed that those students in the programme did well across all their subjects. Students are motivated by the need to perform well in all their subjects to retain a place in the programme.

Authenticity checks more rigorous Geraldine High School teachers use a range of tools and strategies to maintain the credibility of the qualification. Tools in common use are Google's *Draftback* and *Winston AI*, an AI detector. Teachers know their students well and have clear processes in place when a breach of authenticity is alleged. In 2023, there were only three investigations elevated to a senior leader. Most teachers have incorporated milestone checks into assessment carried out over time to ensure academic integrity is maintained.

NZQA and MOE assessor support accessed The Principal's Nominee has ensured all staff have access to NZQA's Learning Management Platform, *Pūtake*, and the teachers interviewed talked about how they used it to follow up on External Moderation reports when outcomes were not consistent.

The school's Specialist Classroom Teacher carries out the induction of new teachers who can access the *Teachers New to NCEA* self-guided tutorial on *Pūtake*. Most teachers have signed up for the subject-based webinars offered by Ministry of Education personnel and their National Assessment Facilitators to unpack their understanding of the new standards. This gives school leaders confidence that the credibility of the NCEA qualification is upheld by teachers new to standards-based assessment.

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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)

NZQA's internal moderation requirements well-understood Significant changes were made to internal moderation practice, procedures and paperwork following the last Managing National Assessment review. Consequently, assessment practice across all departments is generally more robust and consistent than it was at the time of the last Managing National Assessment review. The Principal's Nominee created a centrally held spreadsheet, which effectively monitors that every standard reporting a result is internally moderated in the year it is assessed. Following that, internal moderation has been a lot more consistent and transparent.

Communications on the steps to follow for internal and external moderation are clearer for all staff, with effective use made of hyperlinks to related documentation and where materials can be digitally stored. Some departments have elected to adopt the new internal moderation tool in their Student Management System, while others use the paper-based approach. There is shared ownership of the process with some Heads of Department enlisted to provide another layer of monitoring to support the credibility of assessment practice in their department.

Although in most cases, Internal Moderation Cover Sheets are completed fully, this process could be strengthened by ensuring they always:

- indicate that assessment materials have been critiqued
- record verification comments to clarify why the verifier agrees or disagrees with the assessor's grade decision

- show the final grade awarded on the cover sheet
- ensure both the assessor and verifier are identifiable.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Geraldine 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
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing targeted 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.

Geraldine High School 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
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work were there examples of this?
- 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

Geraldine High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- 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.

Geraldine 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

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

Geraldine 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, students and their families about assessment

Geraldine 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.

Geraldine 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 Geraldine 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) 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 2024.

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:

- a range of policy documents and communications for students and/or their families
- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- GERALDINE HIGH SCHOOL: Assessment and Achievement Guidelines for NCEA 2024 (Staff Handbook)
- Geraldine High School Strategic Plan 2023-2025
- GERALDINE HIGH SCHOOL: Student Assessment Information 2024 (Student Handbook)
- Process for submitting External Moderation.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education (Absent)
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
 - Visual Art.
- 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.