Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Managing National Assessment Report

Timaru Boys' High School

May 2026

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Timaru Boys' High School

7 May 2026

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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

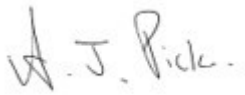
The school agreed that the following actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
Moderation to ensure assessment quality	
Ensure assessors' pre-assessment checks of assessor support material are more thorough and include mandatory checks of previous action plans for the standard, to improve assessment quality and credibility.	Immediate and ongoing
Ensure external moderation follow up is consistent across all Learning Areas and that all relevant documentation is readily accessible to future assessors of the standard.	Immediate and ongoing

For consideration

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

- hyperlinking information from the NZQA and Ministry of Education NCEA websites to its staff and student handbooks, in particular, information about how NCEA awards and qualifications are calculated
- periodically checking unassigned standards to see if a student result can be moved into a course for the purpose of endorsement.



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15 June 2026

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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 28 July 2022 Managing National Assessment Report
The two action items from the 2022 Managing National Assessment review have been appropriately and effectively addressed, as follows:

- where Timaru Boys' High School students attend Timaru Girls' High School for particular courses, the school is careful to use the provider code of the school delivering and assessing the standard
- the school has responded to the agreed action to improve its staff and student handbooks. The information for each target audience is now concise and more fit-for-purpose. Recommendations to consider for improving each handbook are outlined in the Credible Assessment Practice section of this report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The Heads of Learning Area (HOLAs) interviewed for this review value NZQA external moderation reports for their professional learning component. There is a common understanding that the publication of these reports generates a change process which is cyclical in nature and used to inform and improve assessment quality and credibility.

Overall, the school's external moderation follow up processes are effective, complete and compliant. However, the school did agree that requiring a mandatory check of any previous action plans for the standard will better inform assessor grade judgements, avoid the repetition of any prior missteps and support more consistent assessment practice. Recent action plans must be accessible to future assessors of the standard so they can:

- implement any changes required to the task or assessment schedules, and
- improve their understanding of where the grade boundaries lie.

It is important to note that there are existing examples of good practice for external moderation follow up, albeit not always exercised consistently. At the Principal's Nominee's request, shortly after external moderation reports are published, HOLAs create any follow up action plans required and share these with the Principal's Nominee for his evaluation. The action plans are then stored either physically within the Learning Area, or electronically on the Learning Area shared drive. The school should include a clear outline of follow up expectations in its induction procedures and staff handbook. HOLAS should ensure they are applied consistently.

Response to 2025 additional moderation In 2025, the school was required to send NZQA moderation samples for three Achievement Standards with previously identified consistency concerns. Two were found to be *Not Yet Consistent*. The remedial action plans devised by the assessors of those two standards have appropriately and effectively addressed their respective issues and provided evidence of additional professional learning leading to improved understanding of how to assess each standard.

Response to 2025 Derived Grade Outliers The school has an effective process for following up on outlier reports generated by NZQA, when statistical anomalies are identified in school-generated grades compared with its actual external assessment grades. The Principal's Nominee has shared two derived grade outlier reports received in 2025 with the respective HOLAs. Each HOLA was asked to respond with a written review and reflection of the reasons for the difference between the grade spread in their derived grade exam, compared with the grade spread generated in the end of year exam. Moving forward, the Principal's Nominee will share the Derived Grade Profile report with all HOLAs to share ownership for managing this issue.

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, Timaru Boys' High School has effectively consolidated its data driven approach to the internal review of programmes and courses. Robust data analysis is carried out against identified strategic goals at all levels by individual teachers, learning area leads and senior leaders, and is used to inform practice and strategic direction. The school has assessment and moderation review procedures that are systematic and lead to shared understanding and improvement in assessment quality. The newly appointed Principal's Nominee/Deputy Rector works closely with the Rector to ensure that the school continues to meet all of NZQA's requirements under its Consent to Assess.

The school's preferred practice is to compare its NCEA achievement outcomes with those of comparable boys' schools only. However, even without using this filter, the school's rate of Level 2 and Level 3 NCEA attainment has exceeded that of all comparable schools, and schools nationally. A strategic goal for the school is to place a "*greater focus on attaining higher grades"* and consequently improve students' attainment of Certificate Endorsement.

The 2026 introduction of a Scholar's Cap programme is based on the successful practice of another school in the South Island Boys' Schools Network (SIBSN), which found it incentivised Year 11 - 13 students to focus on the attainment of higher grades. Timaru Boys' High School has added a Scholar's Cap to its system of reward and recognition in the hope this will motivate students to aim higher. Those who achieve 60 credits, or more, at excellence level, in one academic year, will be eligible for the Scholar's Cap and earn a place on the Honour Roll. The students interviewed were motivated by the goal of achieving a Scholar's Cap and understood the competitive value of endorsements in gaining monetary scholarships, preferential entry to restricted university courses and places in university accommodation halls.

In 2025, a high number of standards remained *unassigned.* A consideration for the school is to periodically check the unassigned standards at each level to see if it is appropriate for a student result to be moved into a course for the purpose of Course Endorsement.

At the time of the last MNA review, the school had adopted the SOLO (Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes) taxonomy schoolwide and had woven it into the design of NCEA assessment to build teacher capability and engage students to take their learning further. In a recent review of its strategic priorities, the current senior leadership team concluded that SOLO was no longer a useful school wide strategy and its practice is now largely confined to junior classes, where individual teachers can use it if it suits the students' learning style and/or needs.

New schoolwide strategy to improve Literacy Writing skills School leaders have prioritised the need for students to complete the NCEA co-requisite and have set a target of 80 percent completing the Literacy and Numeracy requirements by the end of Year 11. Literacy Writing has been identified as the weakest of the three strands and the school has adopted a new schoolwide teaching/learning strategy, *CAP?,* to improve Literacy Writing competencies for the NCEA co-requisite. The acronym stands for *Capitals, Accuracy, Paragraphs, Explain* and focuses on strengthening students' editing skills. In their annual Learning Area report, each HOLA is required to report to the Principal and the Board of Trustees on the impact of *CAP?,* supported by data and/or Teacher Observation Judgements. The school's use of a consistent template for Learning Area reports enables senior leaders to track progress towards strategic goals and measure the school's success. The success of this strategy will be measured annually until the NCEA co-requisite is replaced by the new Year 11 Foundational Award in 2028.

Managing the rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) In order to maintain its high standards of academic integrity, Timaru Boys' High School has invested in a platform that minimises students' ability to access tools with embedded AI during digital assessment. The platform is used for the majority of digital internal assessment, as well as for the digital derived grade exams. This provides assessors and school leaders with greater confidence that students' work is authentic. In 2025, a small number of breach investigations resulting in Not Achieved grades were identified through teachers recognising inconsistencies in students' use of vocabulary and writing style. The school still relies heavily on the vigilance of assessors to maintain credible, authentic assessment, and uses checkpoints to check authenticity where an assessment is carried out over a long period of time.

Course change in response to roll growth and student demand In response to recent roll growth and changing student demand for both academic and vocational subjects, the school has expanded its offerings in the Hospitality space and plans to establish a Construction course by 2027. Business Studies and Agri Business have expanded significantly, with many students now using Business Studies as one of their three UE approved subjects

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment and Examination for NCEA and New Zealand Scholarship Rules 2026)

Timaru Boys' High School remains highly committed to removing disparities and inequities for its priority learners. The school's target for its Māori students is to exceed the national NCEA attainment rate of male Māori learners by 20 percent, at all levels. The school's NCEA Principal's Report (not disaggregated by gender) shows Timaru Boys' High School's UE attainment well above all Māori learners nationally from 2022 - 2025. Similarly, Level 2 NCEA achievement outcomes for Māori students were more than 20% higher from 2021 – 2025, with the exception of 2023. The school maintains an achievement plan specifically for its Māori and its Pacific learners. Alongside this, a current strategic goal is to improve the student body's attitudes towards, and acceptance of diversity.

Managing students at risk of not completing the NCEA co-requisite The school has identified a group of "at risk" students who struggle with the NCEA co-requisite digital online Common Assessment Activities (CAAs). This group includes a number of students from refugee background families with low levels of English proficiency. A schoolwide strategy is to wait until September to offer Literacy Writing, so all students have more time to hone their skills. A specialist Literacy teacher has been employed to work with a small number of students in Years 12 and 13 who are yet to complete the NCEA co-requisite's literacy component. Most use the additional standard pathway if they do not succeed through the dedicated unit standard path. The school uses its Exam Centre Manager to run the CAAs to ensure that these assessments are consistent with the exam protocols for end-of-year examinations.

Programme design supports University Entrance Award Over the past five years, Timaru Boys' High School's attainment rate for University Entrance has been better than, or similar to, that of comparable schools and schools nationally. Most students at Timaru Boys' High School study six subjects. For those on university or blended pathways, the school's usual practice is to include four UE approved subjects in a student's programme of learning. The school's results' data demonstrates this practice effectively supports attainment of the University Entrance award.

Enhancing staff and student handbooks An effective staff or student handbook should be a living document that can be relied upon with current, up-to-date information reflecting NZQA's changing requirements. The school's staff and student handbooks have improved since the last review. However, there are some gaps, which the Principal's Nominee is currently reviewing. A consideration for the school is to add hyperlinks from some of the content in the student handbook to the NZQA website, where the information will be current and more detailed. Recommended links include:

- the UE approved subjects page
- the UE literacy standards page
- the updated UE numeracy standards page
- the Reviews and Reconsiderations page
- the literacy and numeracy pages on both the MOE and NZQA websites that outline the additional standards pathway valid until the end of 2027.

The staff handbook needs more explicit guidance on the school's processes and procedures for carrying out both Internal and External Moderation, including External Moderation follow up. This information should align with the moderation pages on the NZQA website and NZQA's quality assurance requirements.

Moderation to ensure assessment quality

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment and Examination for NCEA and New Zealand Scholarship Rules 2026)

In this review, the Principal's Nominee and Heads of Learning demonstrated effective shared ownership for monitoring both internal moderation and external moderation follow up, ensuring that the school's processes are complete, compliant and consistent with NZQA's requirements. The agreed actions in this report seek to strengthen that good practice and support continuous improvement.

The school's increased proportion of *Consistent* external moderation outcomes in 2025 reflects better use of available assessor support. More school assessors used the Assessor Practice Tool on *Pūtake* in 2025, than used it in 2024. The tool was developed to support assessors' understanding of where grade boundaries lie for the new Level 1 standards. The external moderation reports the school received for Level 1 standards over 2024-2025 commonly pointed to the need for the assessor to access more of the available assessor support. Pre-internal assessment, assessors should check:

- the latest version of the standard, and unpack the EN2 criterion where applicable (Level 1only)
- the current year's Clarifications for each standard
- the National Moderator's report
- past feedback from external moderation for the standard
- any changes to standards arising from the Review and Maintenance Programme (RAMP)
- assessor support in Pūtake, particularly in the Assessor Practice Tool (APT)
- the relevant NZQA subject resource pages for exemplars
- the subject association and NZQA subject resources pages
- and for Level 1, the NCEA.education website for approved tasks, exemplars and assessment schedules.

Many teachers in Timaru share their external moderation feedback with colleagues in local subject clusters, which expands understanding of a standard and its grade boundaries. Subject clusters are particularly useful for teachers in the school, and others in South Canterbury, who are the sole teacher of their subject.

Internal moderation tool strengthens quality assurance Senior leaders can be confident that results are only reported when internal moderation has been completed. All staff use the moderation tool within their Student Management System to manage internal moderation. This enables the Principal's Nominee and senior leaders to monitor the end-to-end process effectively and time efficiently. In addition, some larger departments run their own internal moderation spreadsheet with links to more samples of work and additional commentary on grade change

decisions. Once the Principals' Nominee receives a notification that internal moderation is complete, he checks the cover sheet to ensure that the selection of samples is sufficient and that the verification process is compliant. Only then are results sent to NZQA. Internal moderation documentation is linked within the moderation tool and accessible to future assessors of the standard.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Timaru Boys' 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 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
- providing credible opportunities for students to complete the NCEA co-requisite
- 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 expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- 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.

Timaru Boys' 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
- ensuring teachers and students are aware of authenticity requirements including the use of Generative AI
- 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 grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Timaru Boys' 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
- selecting *sufficient* samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- 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.

Timaru Boys' 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 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
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Timaru Boys' 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
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

Timaru Boys' High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- ensuring that data is submitted to NZQA in a timely manner so that NZQA holds up-to-date entries and results
- checking Key Indicators to identify and resolve any issues

- 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
- seeking NZQA approval through a subcontracting agreement to engage with a non-consented provider to deliver specific standards.

Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their families / whānau about assessment

Timaru Boys' 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 throughout the year for academic, cultural and sporting excellence.

Timaru Boys' 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 Timaru Boys' 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 / whānau.

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 *Assessment and Examination for NCEA and New Zealand Scholarship Rules 2026.*

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
- *2026 Staff Assessment Guide* (Staff Handbook)
- *2026 TBHS Strategic-Annual Plan*
- *TBHS Student NCEA Assessment Information* (Student Handbook)
- three assessment and curriculum policies, including updates on the use of AI
- three Learning Area Board of Trustees Annual Reports.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee / Deputy Rector
- Heads of Learning Area for:
    - Commerce
    - English
    - Mathematics
    - Physical Education
    - Science
    - Social Sciences
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Rector and Principal's Nominee / Deputy Rector 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.