

Managing National Assessment Report

Waimate High School

April 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Waimate High School

27 April 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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed on an action to improve the quality of their assessment practice and systems for national qualifications.

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student / ākongā needs	
Clarify the resubmission rules with all staff	Immediate

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 verification discussions and the final agreed grades are recorded on the Internal Moderation Cover Sheet
- creating a process for monitoring and managing changes for missed and late assessment.



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17 May 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 5 June 2019 Managing National Assessment Report The school has resolved both agreed actions by developing a process to maintain student privacy when signing-off grades and documenting all steps in the critiquing process. The school is yet to ensure that all completed Internal Moderation Cover Sheets record verification decisions and record the final grade awarded.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes For the past five years, the school's external moderation outcomes have been variable. A pattern of inconsistency is more evident in those subjects that rely on the use of external grade verifiers. It is advisable to check that external verifiers have had recent successful experience with the standards they are moderating.

Effective follow up by Heads of Department, in conjunction with the Principal's Nominee, includes professional support where appropriate to help ensure that the issues identified by NZQA moderators are resolved. All teachers interviewed said they valued external moderation feedback for its professional learning component.

In 2021, human error contributed to a lower than expected level of consistency, including:

- incorrectly coded standards resulting in a number of "Materials Not Received" reports
- using external grade verifiers with insufficient experience of some standards
- sending work that could not be accessed by the NZQA moderator, and
- one subject area with high staff turnover.

The Principal's Nominee has resolved all of the issues related to personnel and staffing and is now the sole person responsible for managing markbooks and NCEA related data. There is currently a high level of consistency between NZQA moderators and the school's assessors. The inclusion of additional checks in the management and monitoring of the whole moderation cycle has produced better external moderation outcomes, as an improvement was evident in 2022 with no "Materials Not Received" reports, nor any "Not Consistent" reports received.

A next step for the Principal's Nominee is to evaluate the effectiveness of external moderation follow-up during her annual audit of departmental assessment practice and record it on the moderation spreadsheet. An effective practice that the school might 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 2022 Examination Centre quality assurance check, the school had two actions to resolve. These were to:

- securely store examination materials, and
- develop facilities required for examinations.

This review found that both of these actions have been resolved to NZQA's requirements and the school will be reviewed again in four years.

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, Waimate High School has had a change of Principal and is in the process of revising its strategic priorities to better meet student needs and align its goals with those of the Waimate Kāhui Ako. Waimate High School uses its own processes of self-review, based on effective use of data analysis and staff/student voice to review programmes and implement changes that reduce barriers to success for all students.

Improved student tracking raises levels of attainment In 2022, the school made significant gains across all levels of the NCEA. Achievement outcomes were the best they have been over the past five years, most notably at levels one and three. The school leadership attributes the improvement to the implementation of a new process for tracking and monitoring student progress, and earlier identification of students who are at risk of not gaining a qualification.

Following a review of its "Learning Teams" approach to pastoral and academic support, these were deemed no longer fit-for-purpose, and "Learning Area Pastoral Management" (LPMA) hui were established in their place. LPMA hui meet at least twice a term to track and monitor each student's progress using a centrally held spreadsheet, which is visible to all teachers. Learning Advisors monitor the progress of students in their Learning Advisory, tracking the completion of key milestones. Early identification of students who are at risk is a key goal for the school's leadership and in 2022 all but one student achieved their qualification's goal.

Late last year, the school made effective use of additional funding received to compensate for its loss of learning time. External providers were employed to deliver a range of courses aimed at strengthening students' skills and competencies in areas such as, leadership, employment readiness, Health and Safety and well-being. This initiative enabled most students at risk to gain the credits they needed to complete their qualifications and address gaps in their learning and skill development resulting from the disruption to learning time throughout 2021 and 2022.

Developing courses to support students to complete qualifications Two new courses have evolved in response to the lost learning time initiative described above. This has resulted in the development of a new, short-course for all year 12 to "jumpstart" their new school year. This programme is better placed at the start of the year for two reasons. It ensures itinerant students and those who leave during the school year to take up employment, or further training, can maximise the learning and assessment opportunities available to them. It also ensures the majority of internal results can be reported before 1 December. The course comprises a number of standards which are necessary prerequisites to participation in Gateway and Dual

Pathways and allows the whole cohort to develop core skills in readiness for participation in the workplace.

Te Awa Whiria is a new skill-based Pathways course offered at each level from one to three for priority learners, who require more time and support to complete a qualification. Students can access learning support, and assessment is highly personalised, with some students on an Individual Learning Plan. Students needs are met by accessing a localised curriculum and preparing for a vocational Pathway.

Professional development aligned with Waimate Kāhui Ako goals The school has employed a consultant to identify areas where cultural competencies need strengthening. Staff and student voice was gathered as part of a needs analysis. Targeted professional development is building the capability of staff to deliver culturally responsive pedagogical and pastoral practices. The school is yet to evaluate how effectively this new learning is being implemented in classrooms and in the school culture.

Building capability in Literacy and Numeracy A school goal is to embed the teaching of literacy and numeracy strategies across the whole school, with an integrated approach from year 7-10. The school plans to enter all of its year 10 students into the new literacy reading and numeracy standards in 2023.

Only those students likely to succeed will be entered for the literacy writing standard due to poorer outcomes for this particular standard in the 2022 pilot. This will enable teachers to evaluate more effectively which students are ready to engage with the Literacy and Numeracy standards when they become mandatory corequisites to NCEA.

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 Candidates 2023)

Waimate High School uses learning tools and technology, in conjunction with effective assessment practice to ensure it meets the needs of its students and delivers credible assessment that is fair, valid and authentic. With the benefit of small classes and the fact many students attend from year seven, teachers and Deans can more readily identify students who are at risk and modify their programmes accordingly.

Breaches of authenticity managed effectively Teachers in this school know their students well, enabling them to readily identify work which may not be authentic. The school uses a range of plagiarism checkers to ensure student work is properly referenced and authentic. With rigorous checks in place, breaches of authenticity for internal assessment are rare and where necessary, managed appropriately by reporting Not Achieved.

More effective management of missed and late assessment needed to ensure fairness and equity for students Although there is a process to follow, and forms to use for requesting extensions to assessment deadlines, these are not always used, nor followed consistently. If this process were managed and monitored by the Principal's Nominee, this would provide an additional check on authenticity, ensuring that extensions are managed consistently and enabling the tracking of individual students.

Clarification of new Resubmission rules and Further Assessment

Opportunities required Further cementing understandings around the use of resubmissions and further assessment opportunities will prevent inconsistencies in assessment practice. Interviews with staff members revealed that some of the finer points of the new resubmission rules need further clarification, in particular the following:

- a resubmission should not be offered following grade verification. In this instance, a further assessment opportunity is more appropriate
- teachers must be careful not to over guide students regarding how the “minor error” can be fixed. A student must be capable of identifying the error by themselves
- NZQA’s #4 *Myth* on Resubmission states: “*effective use of checkpoints and feedback/feedforward will usually remove the need for resubmission where evidence is gathered by portfolio, or over an extended period.*”
- where an assessment is carried out over several weeks or longer, and checkpoints and advice have been offered, if the student has chosen not to get their work checked, or has chosen not to act on the teacher’s feedback, a resubmission should not be offered.

Heads of Department can strengthen this practice by monitoring resubmission decisions in their learning areas to ensure that the correct process is followed and that resubmissions are managed appropriately and equitably.

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 Candidates 2023)

Shared ownership of internal moderation improves quality assurance Since the last Managing National Assessment review, Heads of Department have been encouraged to take shared ownership for the quality assurance of internal assessment. They provide the first pair of eyes over the quality of internal moderation. All of the documentation for each standard is linked to a centrally held spreadsheet. Before grades can be double ticked in the markbook, the Principal’s Nominee carries out a second check and highlights the moderated standards in green to indicate the results have been approved to send to NZQA.

Following the grade verification process, each Head of Department uploads the required, selected documentation for external moderation to a cloud-based folder so that materials are always available to send to NZQA.

The Principal’s Nominee intends to trial the new moderation tool in the school’s Learning Management System with one department this year with a view to switching to this in 2024 if it proves advantageous.

Record grade verification discussions and agreed grade Most internal moderation cover sheets checked in the review recorded grade verification discussions and the final grade and this good practice should be viewed as the gold standard for what is required. One of the cover sheets sighted during the review did not record the final grade where the assessor was at variance with the verifier’s grade judgement. It is the assessor’s prerogative to assign the grade they believe is most accurate. However, sending this work to external moderation will confirm

whether the assessor's judgment was the correct one in this instance. The Principal's Nominee's second pair of eyes needs to check that each internal moderation cover sheet records the final grade awarded and any anomalies in the awarding of grades should be followed up with the respective Head of Department.

Teachers have access to NZQA's assessor support All teachers have been given access to Pūtake. It is here that teachers can find support for internal assessment by subject, and NZQA's new modules on authenticity, and digital assessment using Assessment Master. Teachers may need to be reminded that if they are assessing a standard for the first time, they can use the *Request clarification of an internally assessed standard* form available on the Internal Moderation page of the NZQA website to seek clarification from the moderator of that subject about any aspect of the standard, or to get their schedules/materials checked to confirm they are appropriate. Regular reminders of these supports will ensure teachers are aware of additional assessor support that is available to them, especially where they are the sole teacher in a subject, a beginning teacher or do not have access to a subject cluster.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Waimate High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their 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
- 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.

Waimate High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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
- 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

Waimate 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.

Waimate 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
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Waimate 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.

Waimate 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**Waimate 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 with awards, badges and special assemblies.

Waimate 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 Waimate 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:

- a link to the course selection handbook for seniors 2023 (Student Handbook).
- a link to Waimate High School policies and procedures
- *Analysis of Variance 2022 - Waimate High School*
- *Assessment Guidelines Waimate High School 2023* (Staff Handbook)
- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education/Health
 - Science
 - Social Sciences.
- Pastoral Manager/Teacher of Digital Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the 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.