

Managing National Assessment Report

Waitaki Girls' High School

May 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Waitaki Girls' High School

25 May 2023

Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is effectively meeting the requirements of the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022.

No significant issues with the school's management of national assessment were found. The school's own review mechanisms allow them to identify and respond to most issues.

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

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2022.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications.

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Ensure staff and student handbooks are kept current and up-to-date	Immediate and ongoing
Ensure all staff have a common understanding of assessment policy and procedure	Immediate and ongoing
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
Strengthen systems for monitoring internal moderation to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none">standards have been adequately critiqued, andexternal grade verifiers are used where a pattern of inconsistency develops, andreplace external grade verifiers where their assessor judgements repeatedly lack consistency with the standard.	Immediate and ongoing
Further clarify <i>verification sufficiency</i> and <i>purposeful selection</i> so that all staff have a common understanding of NZQA's requirements.	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:

- ensuring all staff, and staff new to NCEA assessment, have access to Pūtake and the *Request clarification of an internally assessed standard* form
- schedule annual learning area audits to reconcile documentation with actual practice.



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21 June 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 12 June 2017 Managing National Assessment Report The school has effectively resolved the agreed action to ensure supported learning standard are used in accordance with their stated purpose.

The agreed action to ensure results from previous years are reported as unassigned to a course was resolved by the school but is no longer relevant as all results are reported within the current academic year.

Information relating to using school-based evidence for SAC applications has been actioned. However, owing to changes of personnel in the role of Principal's Nominee since 2017, there are further updates required in the staff handbook to maintain its currency.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes For the past five years, the school's external moderation outcomes have been variable, albeit close to 75 percent consistent with the standard. Where a pattern of inconsistency is evident, it is advisable for the Principal's Nominee to check whether the grade verifiers the learning areas have used have had recent, successful experience with the standards they are moderating. In most cases, where moderators identified that assessor judgements for individual standards were Not Yet Consistent or Not Consistent with the assessment criteria, there were issues with the verifiers, who did not meet this requirement. In future, a preliminary check of the verifier's familiarity and success with the standard is advised, and where necessary, the learning area should change verifiers where NZQA moderators report their grade judgements are not consistent with the standard.

Effective follow up by Heads of Learning, in conjunction with the Principal's Nominee, includes professional support where appropriate to help ensure that the issues identified by NZQA moderators are resolved.

Ensure all teachers have access to NZQA's assessor support In a few cases, staff new to the school, or to a particular standard, did not avail themselves of NZQA's assessor support, which contributed to lower than expected external moderation outcomes. Regular reminders of the supports available will ensure teachers are aware of additional assessor support that is available to them, especially where they are the sole teacher of a subject, a beginning teacher, or do not have access to a subject cluster. Common reminders in the school's external moderation reports from 2022 were that:

- "Making Assessor Judgements" courses for some standards provide further guidance about the quality of evidence required. These can be accessed via the relevant Subject page on NZQA's website
- annotated exemplars provided via the Subject resources page on NZQA's website illustrate the various grade boundaries for most standards
- the clarifications documents on the Subject resources page on NZQA's website are essential viewing as part of the critiquing process, prior to assessment

- further guidance and support is available for a growing number of standards on NZQA's Learning Management System – Pūtake.

Most teachers have been given access to NZQA's Learning Management System, 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 require clarification of a standard, 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.

A 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 might consider is to report on external moderation outcomes as part of the departmental review process and include this in the 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 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 report in 2017, Waitaki Girls' High School has had two new Principals and a change of Principal's Nominee. The new senior leadership team is in the process of reviewing the school's strategic priorities and programmes to better meet student needs and implement changes that reduce barriers to success for all students. The school has effective self-review processes, based on data analysis and the use of staff/student voice. The senior leadership is currently evaluating whether existing timetabling, courses and programming best meet student need for when the NCEA Change Programme rolls out from 2024. As part of the review, the school is considering what it currently offers for Vocational Pathways and will seek extensions to its Consent to Assess for options it hopes to offer in the future.

Improving attendance and student outcomes School evidence shows that full attendance is directly aligned with engagement in assessment opportunities and subsequent positive, achievement outcomes. A strategic goal for the school is to continue to target students whose attendance rate puts them at risk of not gaining a qualification and shift the school's overall rate of attendance to 90 percent. A Ministry of Education funded Community Truancy Officer works across all schools in the North Otago region and this has helped the school to move its attendance rate back to around 87 percent at the time of this review.

Student tracking processes rationalised For the past five years, effective tracking of student progress has ensured that the school's achievement and endorsement outcomes have compared favourably to those of comparable schools and schools nationally. As part of its internal review process, the school recently abolished its 20th of the month checkpoint on student progress, as weekly checks have rendered this additional checkpoint redundant. A weekly meeting involving the dean of each year level, a line manager and the Guidance Counsellor analyses data from a range of sources to identify students with attendance concerns and/or those at risk of not

gaining a qualification. The school leadership is confident this process is enabling those at risk of not gaining a qualification to be identified early, so suitable interventions can be implemented.

Reporting on student progress reviewed The school uses a process of continuous reporting to allow parents/caregivers to track their daughter's progress. The school has moved away from three-way conferences back to parent/subject teacher report evenings as a result of community voice and declining attendance at the three-way conferences.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.

Effective and appropriate credible assessment practice Every Head of Learning interviewed described situations where they have offered a resubmission. In all cases, it was apparent that these were carried out appropriately with the student being required to discover the error for themselves. There was no evidence of over guidance or inappropriate timings.

There are robust checks on authenticity and a clear process for the management of missed and late assessment.

A significant number of students are out each week attending Gateway and Dual Pathways programmes and deadlines are managed differently and with greater flexibility for these students to accommodate their time out of the classroom.

Staff and student handbooks under review The newly appointed Principal's Nominee is updating the staff and student handbooks to ensure they are current and accurate. Another consideration is their user-friendliness which could be improved if more items such as NZQA's "Mythbusters," the "UE Approved Subjects" spreadsheet and the "Request clarification of an internally assessed standard" form were hyperlinked to where the documents concerned reside.

It is also important to align terminology in school documentation with the terminology used by NZQA so teachers searching the NZQA website can find what they are searching for, for example, "Further Assessment Opportunities" rather than "Reassessments."

Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023.

Over-verification still in evidence In the 2017 Managing National Assessment review, some departments' practice of verifying all work at Excellence was discussed and the advice at the time was to follow NZQA's requirements. The Leading National Assessment seminars in 2018 and 2019 reiterated what those requirements are. Although interviews with Heads of Learning revealed a mostly common understanding of NZQA's requirements, some aspects are yet to be fully embedded across all middle leadership.

These include:

- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements, and
- selecting these pieces from around grade boundaries.

There is no prescribed number of pieces of student work required, but the sample size should reflect the assessor's familiarity, confidence and experience with the standard. Assessors need to be mindful of the workload for grade verifiers. Where more pieces of work are verified than would normally be required, there ought to be a valid reason for doing so, such as, the professional learning component.

Strengthen monitoring of internal moderation Although the school's internal moderation is moving online to be completed within the Student Management System, the Principal's Nominee is encouraged to share ownership of the process by ensuring that in the first instance Heads of Learning check:

- that the grade verifier is a subject expert, with recent, successful experience with the standard
- that a subject with a poor external moderation history considers a change of verifier
- that verification discussions are recorded on the internal moderation cover sheet to inform future assessment of the standard
- that the verifier's grade and final grade are recorded on the cover sheet
- that there is a discussion where an assessor chooses not to agree with the verifier and reports a different result.

To improve the overall quality of moderation, learning area and/or department leaders can provide the first pair of eyes and monitor their internal moderation as suggested above, while the Principal's Nominee, provides the second pair of eyes before confirming that grades can be sent to NZQA.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Waitaki Girls' 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
- 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
- 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.

Waitaki Girls' 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
- 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

Waitaki Girls' 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
- 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.

Waitaki Girls' 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
- 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

Waitaki Girls' 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.

Waitaki Girls' 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

Waitaki Girls' High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students to monitor their achievement
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- celebrating students' success, such as the holding of parent gatherings, awards and badges for academic honours and recognition for students who exhibit, or uphold the values of the Waitaki Way.

Waitaki Girls' 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 Waitaki Girls' High School:

- has addressed issues identified through NZQA's Managing National Assessment review and through the school's own internal review
- manages assessment practice for national qualifications
- manages internal and external moderation
- makes use of and manages assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

Why we review how schools are managing national assessment

The purpose of a Managing National Assessment review is:

- to confirm, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, that schools are effectively meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2022* (CAAS) and its *Guidelines* (CAAS Guidelines) in order to maintain their consent to assess; and
- to help schools achieve valid, fair, accurate and consistent internal assessment according to the requirements of the *NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards, and Candidates 2023*.

What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- identifying the effectiveness of the school's review processes, assessment practice and quality assurance
- requiring action from the school where an issue is identified that significantly impacts on the school meeting the requirements of their *Consent to Assess*
- agreeing action with the school where an issue has been identified that could become significant if not addressed
- making suggestions for the school's consideration to enhance good assessment practice.

What this review includes

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of the school's internal assessment.
- A check on specific aspects of assessment systems on an annual basis.
- A check on the school's assessment systems at least once every five years.

How we conducted this review

The review includes examination of documentation from a range of sources and interviewing key stakeholders.

Prior to the visit the school provided the following documents:

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *1. Student Achievement Policy*
- *2021-2013 WGHS Strategic Plan Waitaki Girls' High School 2023*
- *Waitaki Girls' High School Information to students and parents. (Student Handbook)*
- *Waitaki Girls' High School Annual Plan 2023*
- *Waitaki Girls' High School 2023 Staff Handbook (Staff Handbook)*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- Assistant Principal
- Heads of Learning for:
 - Arts
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education/Health
 - Science
 - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal 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.