

Managing National Assessment Report

Otago Girls' High School

May 2025

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Otago Girls' High School

28 March 2025

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 2023.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

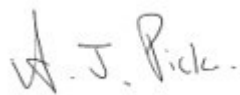
The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Review and document the Principal's Nominee responsibilities	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:

- Updating the process for selecting student work for external moderation
- Updating the staff and student NCEA handbooks
- Implementing departmental sign-off for derived grade evidence gathering.



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10 June 2025

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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 11 September 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

There were no action items from this report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes Otago Girls' High School's external moderation follow-up process effectively addresses any identified issues. Heads of Department, the Principal's Nominee and Deputy Principal - Learning analyse moderation reports when they are received during the year and document any actions to be taken as a result. Action plans developed from this analysis include reinforcing the use of clarification documents, exemplars, verification notes, and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgments.

With the change to year-round submissions instead of a designated month, the Principal's Nominee is introducing and refining a process for monitoring and documenting actions for the overall school review of external moderation once all reports are received. This will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's internal assessment to identify and support subjects and teachers with ongoing consistency issues, supporting improvements to the credibility of teachers' assessment practice and contributing to departmental self-review. As this is still in progress, the effectiveness of the change is yet to be seen.

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)

The school's leadership places a strong emphasis on self-review, resulting in effective analysis of achievement data and moderation outcomes across departments and subjects. This approach identifies areas where actions could support improvements in credible assessment and assessor processes. There is widespread teacher contribution to department self-review, leading to shared ownership. An example of this is the approach to using outlier reports to further analyse assessment processes in departments.

Review of the Principal's Nominee role and responsibilities Otago Girls' High School leadership and staff have strong assessment practices in place. There were several changes to the person designated as the Principal's Nominee from late 2023. This has highlighted the need for the school to undertake a review of the Principal's Nominee responsibilities to document the school's processes. Developing a framework of actions supported by a timeline would further embed and strengthen assessment practice in the school. This would support the school's leadership to eliminate any risks to the credibility of the school's internal assessment so that they are confident that all reported results have been quality assured.

Commitment to engage with Māori, Pasifika and Refugee Communities

Alongside strategic planning for Māori and Pasifika communities the school conducts regular noho and fono evenings with key staff and whānau, Participation at Polyfest and Te Hautoka is highly valued and demonstrates the school's commitment to cultural engagement and student involvement. This commitment is further supported

by off-site tutoring, university partnerships, and a dedicated Pasifika Dean. Similarly, there is engagement with refugee families who are recent arrivals. The school engages with youth workers and translators to help students and their families navigate the New Zealand secondary school assessment and qualification requirements. This is supported by the provision of mentoring, careers advice and achievement tracking.

The school requires each department to report to the board on Māori and Pasifika achievement, underscoring a commitment to ensure that assessment remains effective and responsive to the needs of the students and their families. Achievement data for Māori and Pasifika students at Otago Girls' High School generally outperforms national and school equity index comparisons, underlining the effectiveness of the school's approach.

Review of Numeracy and Literacy initiatives Otago Girls' High School emphasises developing literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, particularly for Year 9 and 10 students. Numeracy skills are practised through workbooks and a dedicated weekly mathematics lesson for all Year 9 students, while literacy development is guided by a literacy leader, in collaboration with a tertiary provider, to enhance students' skills in classes across the school curriculum. While results for literacy and numeracy achievement remain higher than for comparative schools, the school has implemented these strategies to address the small decline in NCEA Level 1 achievement following the changed requirements for the co-requisite.

Following a review of student achievement and feedback from students at the end of 2024, all Year 10 students will be entered for the Literacy and Numeracy co-requisite common assessment activities in the first assessment event in Term 2 in 2025. This approach aims to encourage students to view these assessments as opportunities for learning rather than high stakes assessments. It will also provide further data about students who are at risk of not achieving the co-requisite, so that they can be provided with focused support.

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 2025)

Coordinated monitoring of student progress The school's student mentoring program is focused on tracking learner progress towards qualifications and the literacy and numeracy co-requisite. All teachers are encouraged to provide feedback via a shared Academic Concerns document, which is regularly updated with achievement data. This is analysed by Year Level Deans and the Deputy Principal – Learning in order to determine supportive interventions for at-risk students.

All Year 10 to 13 students have a mentor teacher and participate in regular check-ins throughout the year. These meetings, which also involve whānau input, allow mentor teachers to identify if a student needs extra support or changes to courses or assessment programmes. They can then connect the student with the necessary resources.

Tracking includes monitoring authenticity concerns that are identified by teachers, to determine if the issue is pastoral or academic and to decide on the best way to support students while maintaining academic integrity across the school. Addressing

the challenges for the use of generative artificial intelligence while maintaining authenticity is a current focus for the school.

The effectiveness of student support and mentoring is comprehensively evaluated through the school's data analysis and NCEA and Junior school data are used to assess the effectiveness of assessment programmes. It is expected that student voice will be collected at the end of teaching topics and included in teachers' reflective journals to inform ongoing improvements to teaching, learning and assessment.

Sharing assessment-related communication The school employs a range of methods to communicate assessment-related data to students and their whānau. Regular reporting of achievement data and a timeline for checking in with students in the weekly Whānau Time supports both students and their whānau to understand assessment requirements and progress towards achieving qualifications. This includes regular use of student and parent portals. The school recognises both academic achievement, through school academic Blues awards, and academic effort, via Deans awards.

Through the regular review of the school's staff and student assessment handbooks, the Principal's Nominee has identified an opportunity to use the staff handbook to promote the use of clarification documents, exemplars and professional learning opportunities to inform making assessor judgements. Changes to both handbooks are needed to clarify the co-requisite requirements for Level 2 and 3, distinguish the difference between University Entrance Literacy and the co-requisite, and to update the selection process for external moderation, as discussed in the next section.

Moderation to ensure assessment quality

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 2025)

Otago Girls' High School has capable teachers who demonstrate a strong understanding of the internal moderation process, resulting in high levels of ownership. The school has established robust processes to ensure accurate, quality-assured data is provided to NZQA. Each department has a shared drive, accessible by all teachers in the department to store student work for external moderation and exemplars. The Principal's Nominee has developed a moderation shared drive for Heads of Department that provides templates for teacher use and other moderation process information. This supports consistency of practice across departments and teachers.

The Principal's Nominee encourages the use of the function in the Moderation Application to query and/or appeal external moderation outcomes. A work in progress is to check the external verifiers used by the school in each subject to make sure that their moderation history is consistent and that a range of verifiers are used.

The school should update the criteria used for the selection of student work for external moderation. This should be consistent with the advice given by NZQA rather than random selection, as stated in the staff assessment handbook.

The school's evidence for derived grades undergoes a similar quality assurance process as used for internal moderation. The Principal's Nominee intends to implement sign-off documentation for derived grade evidence gathering, including

material sourcing and verification. Analysis of any derived grade outlier reports generated by NZQA should be discussed here. This would give senior leadership confidence that the school's derived grade data supplied to NZQA is valid and has credibility.

Transparent internal moderation review processes The school's leadership is confident that internal moderation processes are robust across all departments and the Principal's Nominee, Heads of Department and Deputy Principal – Learning conduct yearly reviews to monitor this. Included in this is a comparison of internal and external results as a further check on the credibility of internal assessment. This will be supplemented by the intended tightening up of the review of external moderation.

Department reviews are aligned to school goals, including response to moderation. Issues arising are discussed and analysed at Heads of Department Meetings and in the end-of-year department review with the Senior Leadership Team. This approach is key to developing assessment leadership by middle leaders in the school.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Otago 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
- 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 opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing 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.

Otago 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
- ensuring teachers and student 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

Otago 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
- 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.

Otago 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

Otago 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.

Otago 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

Otago Girls' 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.

Otago 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 Otago 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 NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2025*.

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
- *Assessment for NCEA Guidelines for Teachers, Otago Girls' High Schools 2025* (Staff Handbook)
- *NCEA Assessment Information Booklet for Students, Otago Girls' High School 2025* (Student Handbook)
- *PowerPoints for Literacy and Numeracy co-requisite information for students.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Learning
- Heads of Department for:
 - English
 - Social Sciences
- Teachers in Charge of:
 - Digital Technology
 - Media Studies
- Teachers of:
 - Science
 - Te Ao Haka
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Deputy Principal - Learning 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.