

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

**South Otago High School**

**May 2024**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## South Otago High School

17 May 2024

### Consent to assess confirmed

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

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

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

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

### Actions and considerations

#### Agreed actions

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

Action	Timeframe
<b>Credible assessment practice to meet student needs</b>	
Develop a school-wide approach to the administration and assessment of submitted standards.	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:

- setting up regular meetings between the Principal's Nominee and a designated member of the senior leadership team
- having senior leaders follow up assessment and moderation action plans at the start of the year
- adding reflection on the credibility of internal moderation to the annual reporting process for departments
- engaging with NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, and other assessor support material especially with mentoring new teachers.

A. J. Picken

Amanda Picken  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

11 July 2024

**NZQA**

**0800 697 296**

**[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)**

## 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 7 August 2019 Managing National Assessment Report**

The action points from the last Managing National Assessment review have been appropriately addressed to embed new systems. The Principal's Nominee has introduced a process to track moderation utilising the school's Student Management System. This has made the process of completing internal moderation documentation more manageable for Heads of Department and supports consistent practice. The Principal's Nominee can more easily maintain an overview of completion of moderation and reporting of verified results. External moderation outcomes and actions taken are included in departmental annual reporting.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** The Principal's Nominee uses a summary form to follow-up external moderation outcomes with teachers. Having identified a subject area where there were ongoing moderation issues, the Principal's Nominee worked with the subject teachers to develop their assessment practice and make action plans that resulted in significant improvements in the 2023 moderation outcomes.

A consideration for the school's senior leaders is to revisit action plans at start of year to follow up that teachers are implementing the intended actions, including using any further information that may have resulted from requests for clarification or appeal. The senior leaders have access to all moderation tracking and use this in discussions with Heads of Department about credible assessment. Reflection on the credibility of internal moderation could be added to the annual reporting process for departments so that senior leaders can be assured that intended actions have been implemented.

### 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)*

South Otago High School's leadership have developed the school's approach to the implementation of NCEA Level 1 through focused teacher only days at school and in regional Accord days. Based on analysis of achievement data and the school's history of credible internal assessment, it was decided that existing courses would be adapted to offer the full suite of Level 1 standards. This would support students to keep open careers-orientated and academic pathways.

**Co-ordinated approach to assessment** To ensure that senior leaders are well informed about the credibility of assessment in the school, there should be regular meetings between the Principal's Nominee and a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team. This would lead to early identification of the implications of assessment changes and ways of managing these leading to a more co-ordinated approach to assessment.

**Review and analysis of achievement data** As a result of school review and analysis of achievement data, literacy and numeracy co-ordinators were appointed to support the school's achievement strategic goal and help students develop good strategies to self-monitor their assessment progress. In addition, the school funded a

bilingual support worker to work with the growing Samoan student population and to support the Samoan community. The scope of the ESOL teacher was increased to augment the work done towards literacy and numeracy goals including targeted support for Samoan students.

**Consultation on assessment** NCEA information is shared through presentations to students and in parent meetings, including whānau hui, with the Principal's Nominee having good visibility in the school community. This has enabled consultation with the Māori community to support the school meeting the assessment goals of Māori students. Student voice is valued by teachers who feel it could be more strategically focused school wide to influence the structure of courses.

## **Credible assessment practice to meet student needs**

*Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)*

The school has provided comprehensive staff and student handbooks that are readily accessible through dedicated shared channels. The Principal's Nominee regularly reviews communications, updating them to reflect the most current information, and liaising with appropriate staff to disseminate the school's assessment processes to staff and students. She is considering making the student handbook available from the school website, along with interactive links, to facilitate the internal appeals process.

**Proactive engagement with digital assessment** The school has proactively engaged with digital assessment over the past three years, with most students having experienced at least one digital examination. This has supported the adoption of the NCEA Co-requisite Common Assessment Activities and includes a wider range of subjects with digital examination for NCEA Level 1 in the end of year examinations.

Senior leaders and the Principal's Nominee should now develop a school-wide approach to the management and assessment of submitted external standards for NCEA Level 1, including an assessment calendar to manage student workload across subjects. This should include how to support students to upload their work and coach teachers on the processes required to verify the authenticity of student work. Teachers' approaches to the assessment of submitted standards need to be co-ordinated across curriculum and subject areas.

**Tracking and mentoring students** Students are tracked and supported to make subject and assessment choices that allow them to achieve their qualification and career aspirations. The school has improved shifting students who were close to achieving NCEA Level 1 over the required 80 credits from 2022 to 2023. Mentor teachers keep track of student progress and if a student is struggling, they give them guidance on how to address this. Subject teachers are key to the tracking process and adapt assessment plans to meet student need, including making unit standards available to students so that they can achieve their NCEA qualifications. Heads of Department make good use of data analysis by comparing internal and external results, male and female outcomes, ethnicity and performance of standards to make decisions about the structure of courses.

## **Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results**

*Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2024)*

**Monitoring internal moderation** The Principal's Nominee has developed solid processes for ensuring that the school reports only quality assured data to NZQA. She regularly checks key indicators and has introduced tools to assist consistent moderation processes for all teachers who assess internal standards.

The moderation history for South Otago High School has steadily become more consistent in the last three years and the school leadership can be confident that all results reported to NZQA have been quality assured.

**Ownership of moderation processes** Teachers interviewed were able to clearly explain the school's internal moderation processes. Using assessment and moderation discussions to promote developing assessor confidence is evident across departments. The Principal's Nominee encourages departments to use a range of verifiers, both from within the school and with other schools to build relationships and encourage assessors being open to other voices. Wider engagement with NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, and other assessor support material would give further support especially with mentoring new teachers and single teacher subjects. Encouraging teachers' access to the Assessor Practice Tool in Pūtake will build confidence in making accurate grade judgements.

**Checking the accuracy of results** The Principal's Nominee has instituted systems for teachers to check the accuracy of results for internal assessment. She has identified why the school's data for internal entries with no results was higher than expected and has put in place a process to resolve this.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

### **Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students**

**South Otago High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of its students by:**

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on student interests, needs, abilities and aspirations
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers to offer courses the school is unable to offer
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing students when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet student needs
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

**South Otago 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
- 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**

**South Otago 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.

**South Otago High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- responding effectively to external moderation outcomes and providing support for assessors where appropriate
- monitoring and documenting actions taken to address external moderation feedback.

## **Effective management and use of assessment-related data**

**South Otago High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**South Otago 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

- 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**

### **South Otago 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.

### **South Otago 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 South Otago 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 2024*.

### What are possible outcomes

**Outcomes may include NZQA:**

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

### What this review includes

**The review has three components:**

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

## How we conducted this review

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

### Prior to the visit the school provided the following documents:

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *2024 NCEA assessment handbook for students* (Student Handbook)
- *2024 NZQA Staff Policies and Procedures* (Staff Handbook)
- South Otago High School Assessment Policy
- South Otago High School Curriculum Delivery Guidelines.

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for:
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education
  - Science
  - Social Studies
- Teacher in Charge of:
  - Technology
- one student.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principal (Curriculum) 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.