

Managing National Assessment Report

The Catlins Area School

April 2024

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

The Catlins Area School

11 April 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 the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Introduce annual reporting of student achievement and quality assurance practice for each subject to the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees	For 2024 annual reporting to the Board

For consideration

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

- developing teachers' procedures for administering digital submissions and supporting students in digital assessments
- including reflection on moderation and assessment in professional growth cycle.

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27 June 2024

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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 6 August 2019 Managing National Assessment Report

The action points from the last Managing National Assessment review have been addressed. The Principal's Nominee checks that teachers have entered all results before the last datafile submission for the year, although there is still work to do with teachers to withdraw standards for students who have not had the opportunity to be assessed. This would ensure entries mirror the intended assessment opportunities to assist tracking of student progress towards qualification goals. The staff and student NCEA handbooks have been updated and shared within the school community to reflect current practice and support consistent understanding.

External moderation response to outcomes

In her analysis of external moderation outcomes for the previous three years, the Principal's Nominee identified that strengthening the school's internal moderation practices would be a priority in 2024. This was driven by a requirement to improve the school's consistency rate which had declined from 2021 to 2023 and does not meet the school's or NZQA expectations. The main improvements by the Principal's Nominee are to check the suitability of verifiers early in the year to support assessor judgment decisions at the standard, and to monitor completion of internal moderation more closely via moderation check sheets.

The Principal's Nominee uses the reports from external moderation to conduct conversations with subject teachers about their moderation processes and to develop action plans in response to external moderation outcomes. The Principal's Nominee follows up with teachers to make sure that they are supported to take the intended actions, including providing access to professional learning and external experts, to make improvements to their quality assurance practices.

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)

Building capability in self-review The school's leadership must implement annual reporting for each subject to the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees to help inform future strategic direction and resourcing priorities. This could include, but is not limited to, review of course and assessment programmes, moderation including feedback from external moderation, data analysis and student voice. This would develop teachers to identify areas for ongoing improvement and evaluate any actions taken as a result. Findings from self-review by teachers should feed into the school's reporting to the Board of Trustees.

Building professional learning connections The provision of professional learning is a strength at The Catlins Area School and the school is committed to developing strong assessment and quality assurance practices. Teachers contribute to ongoing review of school policies and procedures. There are strong professional learning connections with teachers in other schools in shared teacher only days and with Kahui Ako professional learning groups. New teachers have a targeted

induction, supported by ongoing checking in, to develop their confidence in their understanding of learning and assessment practice in the context of the school.

To support the assessment requirements for the new NCEA Level 1 achievement standards, the school's authenticity requirements have been updated to address different modes of assessment in the new Level 1 standards and the use of generative artificial intelligence tools. The expectations are very clearly communicated in the school across subject and Whānau groups and supported by good documentation in staff and student handbooks.

The school has enthusiastically introduced the changes to NCEA Level 1 assessment, with teachers expressing confidence in their understanding of how to plan for teaching and learning. What the school should consider is how to develop teachers' procedures for administering digital submissions and supporting students in digital assessment.

Meeting the diverse needs of students The school has developed good processes to design their programmes of learning and assessment to meet the needs of their students. This includes targeted use of funding for outside providers, both tertiary and also distance learning through NetNZ, to meet individual learning needs and ensure learning is student-centred. Student voice feeds into the decision-making around matching these courses to their needs with students being surveyed to gather interest and goals when deciding what courses to offer. New students are supported by teachers to develop their ability to contribute to discussions around course selections and modes of assessment.

The small size of the school means that teachers are continually conferencing with learners and providing them with appropriate feedback for assessments and checking on their progress. This is also supportive of provision of special assessment conditions and matching assessment methods to students. As well, every student knows that they can approach the Whānau teacher and the Principal's Nominee if they have any course or assessment issues.

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)

Using data to drive change in practice The Catlins Area School leadership promotes a culture of using data to drive ongoing review of their courses and assessment. Teachers use their analysis of teaching and learning for their professional growth cycle, and they share their progress in regular reflection and discussion sessions with other teachers in the school. The school intends to include reflection on moderation and assessment in the professional growth cycle so that teachers can learn from assessment practice of other teachers in the school.

Checking of entries and results happens regularly as a tool for growing student ownership of their assessment data. This data is also shared with whānau via regular emails and notifications generated from the school's student management system. The Principal's Nominee and subject teachers manage assessment data effectively and use it to communicate progress in learning hui and to check that students are tracking towards their qualifications.

The Principal's Nominee effectively manages the school's data processes and ensures accurate and timely reporting of entries and results. This includes the reporting of results with the correct provider code for external providers, with a Memorandum of Understanding available for each of these. An increase in late entries was due to markbook error and has resulted in a change to the final checking process for this year.

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)

Strong arrangements with external verifiers The strong relationship with external verifiers will help support improvement in understanding the requirements of the standards and making assessor judgements at the standard. Teachers are supported with good processes for internal moderation and have strong support arrangements with external verifiers who are identified at the start of each year. All internally assessed standards are moderated by the verifiers and the Principal's Nominee has developed an improved process to monitor this through the year. All assessors have access to the moderation application in the NZQA provider login, with the Principal's Nominee working with them to ensure that they have completed internal moderation before external moderation is submitted. Once external moderation feedback is received, it is shared with the external verifiers.

Building on the strength of the relationship with external verifiers, the school is incorporating similar verification or justification into their Derived Grade assessment process so that the school's leadership can be confident that only verified results for derived grades are reported. Although applications for derived grades are not frequent, reporting of school derived grade assessment results is recommended so they are readily available to NZQA if an application is made.

Utilising support for assessors The school has a high usage of NZQA's learning management system, Pūtake, and other supporting documents provided for assessors by NZQA and the Ministry of Education. Teachers are enthusiastic about improving their own assessment capabilities as well as using their learning to grow student understanding of the assessment process.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of ākonga

The Catlins Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of its ākonga by:

- designing coherent programmes of learning and assessment that are culturally appropriate focussed on ākonga 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 ākonga can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement
- assessing ākonga when they are ready
- using a range of methods for collecting assessment evidence, to meet ākonga needs
- ensuring kaiako are aware of individual ākonga with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing support for ākonga 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.

The Catlins Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating ākonga appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of ākonga work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where ākonga 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 ākonga privacy in the issuing of ākonga results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

The Catlins Area 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 grade verifiers from outside the school

The Catlins Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- ensuring samples of ākonga work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- selecting sufficient samples of ākonga 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
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Effective management and use of assessment-related data

The Catlins Area School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for ākonga by:

- monitoring and tracking ākonga progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow ākonga to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- gathering ākonga voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards.

The Catlins Area 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 ākonga and kaiako checks of entries and results at key times during the year
- ensuring low levels of late external entries.
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

Effective communication to inform staff, and ākonga and their whānau about assessment

The Catlins Area 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 ākonga receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting ākonga to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on ākonga progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting kaiako new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating ākonga success.

The Catlins Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for ākonga
- informing ākonga about suitable learning pathways
- supporting ākonga 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 The Catlins Area 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, ākonga and 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 *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 Assessment Information for Learners and Whānau [NZQA] (Ākonga Handbook).*
- *2024 Procedures for NZQF Assessment (Staff Handbook)*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Principal
- Kaiako of:
 - Mathematics and Science
 - Physical Education and Mātauranga Māori
 - Science
 - Technology
 - Visual Arts
- three ākonga.

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.