Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Managing National Assessment Report

Central Southland College

May 2025

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Central Southland College

8 May 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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

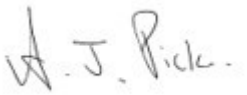
The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Strengthen school responses to external moderation	Throughout the 2025 moderation cycle, and ongoing
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Clarify and update information about derived grades evidence	Immediate and prior to school practice examinations

For consideration

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

- supporting teachers to utilise additional assessment supports
- ensuring external examination entries are made on time to guarantee personalisation of student papers.



Amanda Picken
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Support

10 July 2025

NZQA

0800 697 296

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 20 October 2021 Managing National Assessment Report
There were no action items from this report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes
The school should strengthen its response to external moderation. While follow-up occurs with the relevant teacher and Heads of Learning Area (HoLA) where reports indicate a Not Consistent or Not Yet Consistent outcome, there is no standardised process to record this. The Principal's Nominee is developing a template to guide and record conversations which should include:

- subject specific related points and issues
- the action(s) that need to be taken to address identified issues
- who has responsibility for completing the actions along with the timeframe for completion
- a reflection on the effectiveness of the internal moderation process previously undertaken with both internal and external verifiers.

Documentation will provide evidence of the quality assurance process. Furthermore, it will better enable follow up to ensure it is completed and that teachers are referring to the plan before assessing the standard again. Actions should be evaluated for effectiveness after they have had a chance to embed following a few assessment cycles. Response to external moderation provides teachers with a valuable resource for future delivery of the assessment.

The school could better utilise additional NZQA assessor support to assist teachers in their assessment practice and in meeting the requirements of the standard. The school is encouraged to support teachers to access and utilise these supports, which include:

- using the *Request for clarification of an internally assessed standard* form to ask a specific question prior to delivery of an assessment
- accessing the Assessor Practice Tool through Pūtake, where teachers can practise making grade judgements against student samples and getting feedback on the accuracy of their grade judgements
- undertaking additional short courses and tutorials on Pūtake, such as the online training module *Teachers New to NCEA Standard-Based Assessment* designed to support new and returning teachers
- utilising the query function in the External Moderation Application to clarify understanding of the standard and its grade boundaries through two-way communication between the assessor and the moderator.

Outlier Report The identified internal external / outlier for 2024 was analysed resulting in discussions that led to a review of the course. The school has used this data to support discussion and review around course structure and teacher support with the aim to improve the overall effectiveness of the course.

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, the school has been actively engaged in a thorough and ongoing change process journey. using effective self-review and data to guide improvements across multiple areas.

Changes implemented to improve student engagement Changes to the timetable and course structures have been implemented in response to concerns over student engagement in the classroom and with assessment. The Year 9 – 11 programme has been divided into semesters with students taking six courses each semester. This has allowed for a wider range of courses to be offered to students with a greater focus on learning rather than assessment. Students who may require additional focused support and scaffolding in their learning are catered for in a timetabled Foundation course rather than removing them from existing classes. Alongside the introduction of semesters has been the paring back of Level 1 NCEA assessment in 2023 with the decision to remove all Level 1 assessments in 2024. Ongoing review of courses is undertaken at the end of each semester involving community, whānau, staff and students. Students and staff reportedly enjoy the flexibility and variety the new approach offers them.

Supporting success in literacy and numeracy Common Assessment Activities (CAAs) In response to community feedback that expressed the preference for an '*exam experience'*, most students undertake the NCEA co-requisite through the Common Assessment Activities in Year 10, along with identified students in Years 11 - 13. As part of a schoolwide focus on strengthening Literacy and Numeracy skills, teachers have reviewed their subject content to embed these skills across the curriculum. While all courses include elements of literacy, many also incorporate numeracy where relevant. Certain courses are designated as literacy or numeracy-rich to reflect their deeper focus in these areas. This information is clearly communicated with students to support informed subject selections.

There is a current, focused school-wide approach to literacy supported by professional learning and development. Teachers are looking at the Big Ideas in literacy and reflecting on how they fit into their courses. Looking ahead, it is expected that all Year 9 – 11 subjects will incorporate at least some of literacy's Big Ideas explicitly within them. Additional support for students to achieve literacy is through activities developed in the CAA format, distributed weekly to students and incentivised for student and whānau groups.

Organisational systems strengthened Curriculum and assessment oversight has been consolidated and is managed within the school by the HoLA group with Assistant Principal line management. Fortnightly meetings enable robust discussion around all areas of curriculum and assessment, which can then be disseminated to the relevant teachers within each learning area. This has improved the speed of decision making and the shared responsibility of ensuring credible assessment practices.

The school has reviewed its pastoral processes and has increased the number of whānau groups. Students are allocated to a whānau group that supports students by liaising with families, tracking progress towards pathway goals and focusing on student well-being and hauora. The aim is that the whānau teacher will follow through

with their student cohort in the same way as the year level dean has done. The focus is on supporting each student's pathway with smaller whānau class sizes supporting stronger and personalised relationships. Whānau time includes a structured, level-specific programme, with an emphasis on academic guidance for senior students.

The school is committed to evaluating the impacts of the change process and will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives over the coming years through data analysis, staff, student and community voice.

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)

Update and clarify information about evidence for derived grades Information about evidence for derived grades contained in the staff handbook is no longer current. This needs to be updated. While discussions with teachers suggest the practice is credible, this is not reflected in the supporting documentation. Furthermore, students spoken to were unclear as to how evidence for use as derived grades is obtained. Results reported for the purposes of generating a derived grade must come from quality assured, pre-existing, valid, authentic, standard-specific evidence from a practice assessment of the standard that matches the format and conditions of the external assessment.

Ensure external exam entries are made on time The school should ensure entries for external examinations are made by 1 September in order to safeguard the printing of personalised examination papers. Over the last two years, the school has had a higher number of requests for late external examination entries when compared to national data. Non personalised examination papers mean the Exam Centre Manager must manage the individual labelling of papers manually, which may produce errors and missing papers in the marking and results reporting process, with potential additional stress for students.

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)

Strengthen and embed internal moderation documentation processes The school has introduced an online process through its Student Management System, requiring teachers to document the internal moderation of each internal standard before the publication of results. HoLAs spoken to see the benefit of this system as it confirms to them and the school leadership that only quality assured results are reported to NZQA. Teachers have embraced the new process and are utilising the online form to document the critiquing and verification process. Examples sighted during the review show that assessors practise sufficient and purposeful selection of student material.

The online internal moderation record would be strengthened by assessors explaining the reasons for the selection of student examples, especially those at grade boundaries. Such comments provide a useful resource to refer to when making decisions in the future as they give reference to why the assessor and verifier gave the grade they did and why the final result was awarded. Furthermore, if the standard is then suggested or selected for external moderation, teachers can compare the

moderator’s feedback with their documentation to either affirm their practice or make amendments, as necessary. It was identified during the review that the box titled *Reason selected for verification* prepopulates, which has given the impression for some teachers that commentary is not needed.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Central Southland College 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
- 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.

Central Southland College 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

Central Southland College 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 and exemplars 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
- monitoring and documenting completed internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

Central Southland College 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.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Central Southland College 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.

Central Southland College 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

Central Southland College 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 including through revamped academic assemblies.

Central Southland College 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 Central Southland College:

- 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
- *Curriculum and Student Achievement Policy*
- *Assessment Best Practice and Procedures Staff Handbook 2025*
- *Year 11 Student Assessment Handbook 2025*
- *Year 12 and 13 Student Assessment Handbook 2025.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Learning Area (HoLAs) for:
    - Arts
    - English
    - Languages
    - Physical Education
    - Sciences
    - Social Sciences
    - Technologies
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Acting Principal, Assistant 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.