

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

**Waiau Area School**

**November 2024**

## **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

### **Waiau Area School**

**6 November 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**

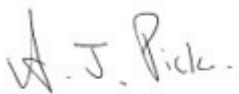
##### **No action required**

The school has no action items relating to the quality of their assessment systems.

##### **For consideration**

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

- building reflection on moderation and assessment into the teacher professional growth cycle to embed self-review
- clarifying the selection process of student work for external moderation.



Amanda Picken  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Support

11 December 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 16 October 2019 Managing National Assessment Report**

The action item from this report has been addressed. The staff handbook has been updated to provide current information that aligns with school practice. This supports school-wide understanding and consistent quality assurance and assessment procedures.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** Waiau Area School has a well embedded process to respond to external moderation feedback. For standards with Not Consistent and Not Yet Consistent outcomes, the Principal's Nominee works alongside assessors to reflect on and address the feedback, providing support to develop improved assessment practice where needed.

The reports produced in this process are discussed by the assessor and the Principal's Nominee at the start of the following year. This promotes teacher reflection on how the intended actions have been undertaken and will be subsequently evaluated.

Other professional support provided by the school includes encouraging teachers to join subject associations, providing access to NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, and developing relationships with other schools and subject specialists.

This multi-faceted approach has led to the school having sound overall agreement rates between assessor and moderator judgments. Waiau College has had encouraging feedback on moderation outcomes for the new Level 1 standards.

### 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)*

**Pathways support for students** Waiau Area School is a small rural Year 1-13 school committed to providing a wide range of subjects in the senior school. To develop teachers to identify appropriate learning matched with robust assessment opportunities, the school's senior leaders and Principal's Nominee promote challenging conversations among staff around assessment and moderation processes. The Principal's Nominee effectively leads NCEA assessment practice and promotes school-wide consistency and ownership.

The school has developed strong relationships with outside providers as a bridge to employment but also to provide interest courses for students who are aiming to gain NCEA qualifications and University Entrance before leaving in Year 12 or 13. Most courses take place on Wednesdays and Fridays and teachers adapt the teaching and learning programme so that students can stay on top of schoolwork. For students who are not aiming for NCEA qualifications, their engagement with vocational pathways encourages them to continue with tertiary study after leaving secondary school. The school prioritises sending students for taster courses and supports them to attend university open days.

**Teachers' self-review of moderation and assessment** Teachers are reflective and self-critical about their development and delivery of the curriculum. In their professional growth cycle, they engage in ongoing self-review of teaching and learning student engagement and achievement. A consideration for the school is to build reflection on moderation and assessment into the professional growth cycle for teachers to embed teacher capability and ownership.

**Meeting the curriculum and qualification attainment needs of students** After reviewing their approach to the changed requirements for gaining the Literacy and Numeracy co-requisite, the school is setting up a combined Year 10 and 11 class for 2025. This has a "two years to Level 1" approach and the aim is to integrate learning with assessment for NCEA for these students. The focus will be on first developing literacy and numeracy skills, and then on achieving NCEA Level 1. Fewer Level 1 standards will be assessed to allow more time to support the development of literacy and numeracy skills.

**High engagement with digital assessment** Waiau Area School has been proactive in their adoption of digital exams and there is high student engagement with this mode of assessment. The school has strong digital support for assessments both during the year and at the end of the year. The Exam Centre Manager is also very comfortable administering NZQA's digital platform, leading to high student confidence in engaging with digital assessment.

## **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)*

**Shared responsibility for tracking student progress** The tracking of student progress towards qualifications and for literacy and numeracy is a shared responsibility across all staff in the senior syndicate. In weekly senior syndicate meetings, attended by all Year 7 to 13 teachers and the Principal, the Principal's Nominee leads discussion of assessment related items. He has set up a tracking system which is regularly updated with new results for senior students and this data is interrogated in the senior syndicate meetings. This ensures that all students are supported to meet the requirements for NCEA qualifications.

Waiau Area school aims for early intervention using structured literacy and numeracy support. As progress in literacy and numeracy is a key part of student tracking, the junior syndicate leader also attends senior syndicate meetings, to support the continuity of programmes leading into the senior school. There are mathematics and writing targets across all levels of the school. These are tracked by the Principal with senior leaders providing interventions for students identified through curriculum level and assessment data checks. Once this strategy has sufficiently lifted student achievement in literacy and numeracy, the school anticipates targeted classes should no longer be needed.

The school has a philosophy of assessing when they are confident that students are likely to be ready and this is also applied to the assessment of the co-requisite. Because teachers have good knowledge of their students, they can adapt learning and assessment pathways to student needs. The school consults with whānau and keeps them informed of changes to programmes.

**Comprehensive assessment communication** The Principal's Nominee provides comprehensive assessment handbooks for staff and students and their whānau. Because the Principal's Nominee attends the senior homeroom classes on a regular basis, students are very well informed about the school's assessment processes and have ownership of their assessment data and pathways. There are regular and frequent reminders for students to check entries and grades and there are high levels of learner logins to MyNZQA. Teachers have key points of the year for checking accuracy of results and removing standards where students have not been assessed. Communication with parents is mostly via phone calls from teachers, emailing of the student handbook, reporting, and interviews. School-wide understanding and consistency of assessment practice enables students to have access to fair assessment.

To support teachers to manage submissions for external moderation, the school's staff assessment documentation should clarify the selection process of student work to match advice on current requirements from NZQA.

**Effective management of data** The school's competent management of assessment data enables complete, accurate and timely results to be reported to NZQA. Examples of robust data management resulting from teachers' and the Principal's Nominee's numerous checks across the data system are high levels of reported derived grades and negligible numbers of results not reported for internal entries. This highlights the school's effectiveness in identifying and addressing data errors.

## **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)*

**Robust moderation practice** Waiau Area School has well established and embedded moderation practices. Senior leaders can be confident that assessments are appropriate, marking in most subjects is at the right level, and that teachers can identify assessment issues and address them. This is crucial as all teachers are essentially sole charge in their subjects. The school leaders encourage and support teachers to engage with subject networks so that they can access wider expertise in their subjects and develop relationships with qualified verifiers. Teachers at the school share external moderation feedback with their verifiers so that they can use it to reflect on the requirements of the standard and adapt assessment practices. Teachers have also begun using NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, to gain a better understanding of a standard and to practise making assessor judgements.

The process for the school's derived grade assessments closely follows the internal moderation process including justification and verification of grades.

Senior leaders can be confident that the school's quality assurance processes are effective and that the Principal's Nominee monitors these to ensure all results reported to NZQA are credible.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**Waiau Area 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 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.

**Waiau Area 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 grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

## **Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality**

**Waiau 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 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.

**Waiau Area 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
- using external moderation outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of internal moderation processes.

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

**Waiau Area 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.

**Waiau 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 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 whānau about assessment**

### **Waiau 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 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.

### **Waiau Area 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 Waiau 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, students 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
- *NCEA Staff Handbook, Waiau Area School 2024*
- *NCEA Student Parent Handbook, Waiau Area School 2024*
- *Waiau Area School Policy – Assessing Student Learning*
- *Waiau Area School Policy - Curriculum and Student Achievement*

### **The School Relationship Manager met with:**

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal (Curriculum)
- Teachers of:
  - Agriculture
  - English and Social Sciences
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education and Health
  - Sciences
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the 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.