



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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Managing National Assessment Report

**Whangamatā Area
School
May 2022**

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Whangamatā Area School

31 May 2022

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 2021*.

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 2020.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

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

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Check the effectiveness of external moderation processes	Immediate
Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results	
Monitor internal moderation so senior leaders can be confident that improvements in quality assurance practices are identified and addressed	Immediate

For consideration

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

- Strategically request standard for external moderation to further inform assessor judgements.



Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

2 August 2022

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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 19 May 2017 Managing National Assessment Report The school has addressed three of the five actions from the 2017 Managing National Assessment review.

It has reviewed and updated the system for responding to external moderation by developing a transparent digital tracking process to ensure effective actions are planned and documented.

The Learning Support Co-ordinator oversees the use of school-based evidence to support an increasing number of applications for students who may be entitled to special assessment conditions.

The Principal's Nominee works with the Head of Gateway to check that memoranda of understanding are current and are reconciled with reported results.

The remaining two actions related to internal moderation are ongoing.

The school has strengthened the system to ensure the effectiveness of the internal moderation undertaken by staff by ensuring that purposeful selection supports growing teacher certainty of grade boundary decisions. Single teacher departments seek support from verifiers outside of the school.

As next steps, Senior Leaders need to develop a more transparent overview of quality assurance practices to be confident that their processes are intentionally developing teacher capability, especially where this shows that new verifiers might be required. The school should continue to develop strategies to ensure internal moderation is more transparent to Senior Leadership and schoolwide so that collective understanding of standards can be shared. Documented monitoring of Principal's Nominee's visits to departments will ensure that all results reported have been subject to effective quality assurance processes as the credibility of the qualifications relies on effective processes within each department.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The Senior Leadership Team has supported the recently appointed Principal's Nominee to lead an effective review of the school's system for responding to external moderation feedback.

In 2022 new processes have been introduced to ensure the system is robust and strategies for change are becoming embedded. These include tracking responses digitally, creating and monitoring action plans and holding individual conversations with each Curriculum Leader and/or relevant teachers on their external moderation feedback. Reflective discussions with the senior management team support teachers to identify actions that will improve the quality of assessment, such as through rewriting tasks and seeking professional development through subject associations.

The Principal's Nominee plans to evaluate action plans for the effectiveness of expected improvements before standards are offered again. In addition, greater

schoolwide understanding of the purpose of external moderation can be developed by ensuring teachers strategically request and the school submits timely changes to their external moderation plan. This will ensure that teachers receive the most helpful feedback to support their understanding of the standard.

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 Senior Leadership Team has analysed student achievement data, especially to help improve academic performance at Level 3, to ensure that students have the best opportunities to meet both their academic and pathways goals. It has set strategic targets by reviewing the balance between internal and external assessment to develop a greater focus on the value of external assessment and students setting aspirational endorsement goals.

The school has reviewed its preparedness for the digital first approach of the NCEA Change Programme. In response there has been a shift in the location of the school's examinations to a community location that provides improved digital access for students to engage in digital examinations and thereby increase student engagement. This shift preceded a decision to take part in a Level 2 RAS pilot which has proven successful for the cohort engaged by improving staff and student confidence in using digital platforms and newly installed infrastructure. This effective practice will be scaled up to include other levels in the same subject area in 2022 to better meet the needs of students who are increasingly confident in using digital systems.

The school identified the need to rationalise assessment documents so it is easier to for staff, students and parents to understand processes. A full review of communications led by the new Principal's Nominee ensured that all assessment documentation is standardised and written in plain English to meet the needs of their target audience. This includes staff and student handbooks, the senior options booklet and clear, information-rich course outlines and better targeted NCEA level assemblies. These changes are supported through timely publication of the assessment calendar to ākongā, staff and whānau. Feedback received from parents and students shows that the new documents provide clearer communication about assessment expectations to all members of the school community.

Credible assessment practice to meet student needs

Evidence of assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

Effective individualised education programmes and pathways Whangamatā Area School is using the flexibility of NCEA to offer academic and trades learning and assessment options to meet student needs. It values the effective provision of online learning to offer a broad range of academic and vocational pathways. Students extend their learning through engagement with Te Kura and e-Learning providers. In addition, the school uses multi-leveilling to adjust student programmes and meet individualised learning needs. Students interviewed explained their pathways are effectively supported through careers discussions, KORU teacher support and pathways visits to tertiary institutes or universities.

Clarifying expectations over submission dates for students The school has identified a need to clarify expectations around submission dates for students. This is better meeting student assessment needs by providing clarity of assessment deadlines for students and supporting them to present their best evidence in their assessment programmes. The new system is underpinned by greater use of feedback and feedforward checkpoints.

The school has used results data and the COVID experience to identify the need to better pace assessments so this can happen when students are ready before a tight submission deadline. In support of this a schoolwide assessment calendar was introduced in 2022 to avoid pinch-points. Any changes to deadlines are now justified to the Principal's Nominee. This gives students greater clarity around assessment planning.

Use of Data to track student progress The school uses data to track individual student progress effectively. Monthly bulletins from the Principal's Nominee to NCEA teachers track achievement and progress towards qualifications. Predictive data along with longitudinal and comparative tracking is used in departments both to follow up current student assessment needs and to anticipate course design so that more students are meeting their qualification and entry requirements identified in their personal goals.

Quality assurance through internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results

Evidence of internal moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2021 6.4b)

Documented discussion over purposeful selection of assessment materials at grade boundaries Teachers interviewed showed a consistent understanding of the need to discuss purposeful selections of student work at grade boundaries, and the importance of using clarifications documents. These ongoing discussions will help to improve professional understanding of the standards that are being assessed as well as developing quality exemplars within departments, particularly at grade boundaries.

Strengthening internal moderation The school's quality assurance processes can be further strengthened by the Principal's Nominee's monitoring the completion of internal moderation processes to ensure that all standards submitted to NZQA have had a sample of grades verified by a suitably qualified subject specialist. A process of evaluating the effectiveness of verification partnerships would help to ensure valid assessor decisions while building capability. This is especially the case when subject specialists are not available, or where there are persistent patterns of inconsistent grade boundary decisions reflected through the lens of the school's external moderation feedback

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Whangamatā Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their 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
- expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing targeted 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.

Whangamatā 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 and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Whangamatā 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, and professional learning opportunities to inform assessment judgements
- documenting the completion of steps within internal moderation processes

Whangamatā 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

Whangamatā 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.

Whangamatā 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 families about assessment

Whangamatā 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, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

Whangamatā 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 Whangamatā 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 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 2021* (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 *Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2022* (Assessment Rules).

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
- *Whangamatā Area School NCEA Information for Teachers 2022* (staff handbook)
- *Whangamatā Area School NCEA Information for Students 2022, National Qualifications* (student handbook)
- *Whangamatā Area School Senior Course Handbook 2022* (options booklet)

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal
- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Faculty for:
 - English and Social Sciences
 - Mathematics and Science
 - Physical Education
 - Technology
- Head of Department for:
 - Music
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - Health
- three students.

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.