

Managing National Assessment Report

Totara College of Accelerated Learning

July 2025

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Totara College of Accelerated Learning

30 July 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 three actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Submit material for external moderation and update the required processes.	Immediate and ongoing.
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Ensure that internal assessment results and external entries are reported to NZQA in a timely manner.	Following the completion of the internal moderation process and by the 1 September data file respectively.
Ensure documentation reflects current and expected practice.	Immediate and ongoing.

For consideration

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

- encouraging the use of NZQA's Learning Management System, Pūtake, to support assessor grade judgements.

A. J. Picken

Amanda Picken
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Support

23 September 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 28 September 2021 Managing National Assessment Report

The four action items in the previous review have been addressed by:

- documenting actions taken to address any issues identified by external moderation and monitor the effectiveness of these
- ensuring teachers are following current resubmission requirements
- identifying students who would benefit from Special Assessment Conditions and making applications to NZQA as appropriate
- ensuring consistent NCEA assessment processes and practices school-wide by reviewing information given to students and teachers.

Next steps relating to some of these action items are outlined in the moderation and internal review sections of this report.

External moderation response to outcomes and processes The school has been required to submit a small number of standards since the last Managing National Assessment review which reflects the limited scope of NCEA assessment previously undertaken at the school. The most recent external moderation report was from 2023. The teacher involved valued the process and used the report to review and confirm their own practice.

Submit material for external moderation and update processes External moderation must be submitted and the school's handbook updated to reflect NZQA's requirements. At the time of this review, the school had not submitted any external moderation despite results for standards having been communicated to students. As part of the Managing National Assessment review visit, the expected process was explained and the steps needing to be undertaken by the school and teachers were clarified. Aspects of the external moderation process to action, reinforce and update include:

- ensuring all teachers have the appropriate permission to access the external moderation application
- submitting student evidence for requested standards as soon as results have been reported
- implementing a response to external moderation feedback process whereby teachers reflect on, and record planned actions to meet any identified issues
- monitoring that the action plan created following the response to external moderation is effectively implemented
- updating teacher documentation to reflect the expected process and including a link to the *Guide to the NZQA External Moderation Application for Schools & TEOs* available on the NZQA website.

During the review visit, and in consultation with the School Relationship Manager, the current year's moderation plan was amended to reflect the assessment programme for the year. This is good practice and should continue in the future to ensure the external moderation required is relevant. Teachers should also be encouraged to request standards for moderation in subsequent years. External moderation is to be

submitted throughout the year immediately following the completion of internal moderation and the return of results to students. Timely submission ensures the feedback from external moderation becomes a key part of professional review within the assessment cycle for each standard. A suggested template for responding to external moderation feedback has been shared with the Principal's Nominee for adaptation and use by the school as reports are received.

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 school has a strong focus on supporting students towards their future tertiary, vocational or employment pathway by providing opportunities that meet their interests, aspirations, and abilities. With this in mind, the school continues to explore a range of programmes and learning experiences, as appropriate. Thorough knowledge of the educational needs, interests, and future career goals of each student within its Christian special character underpins the approach of the school.

The school is looking to engage more in teaching and assessing NCEA. Recent focused appointments have been made for teachers with previous NCEA experience as the school expands the assessment opportunities available for their students. The school has welcomed this Managing National Assessment review to clarify and develop school-specific processes and expectations around credible assessment.

Prepare for move to a Student Management System The school has introduced a Student Management System this year. It is being used to record results and report to students and whānau. The school has indicated it plans to utilise more functions next year to further support assessment practices. This will require ongoing upskilling and integration for teachers, the Principal's Nominee and senior leaders.

Two functions of particular relevance for NCEA include:

1. Moving from the current web entry process of submitting results to data file submission. Data file submission enables results that have been entered into mark books by teachers to be submitted on bulk to NZQA. This should also include results that could be used for derived grade purposes
2. The option to record, store and monitor the internal moderation process through the Student Management System internal moderation functionality. The use of the online internal moderation tool will enable:
 - real time monitoring of submitted results
 - transparency of all steps in the internal moderation process
 - visibility of the location of student evidence
 - access to archived internal moderation cover sheets for use by future assessors of the standard.

Utilising these functions of the Student Management System will help support accurate, consistent and credible assessment practice, and provide visibility and accessibility for all teachers.

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)

Submit results and external entries to NZQA regularly Schools are required to report results to NZQA in a timely manner. Despite a number of standards having already been completed this year and results communicated to students and whānau, at the time of this review, results had not been sent to NZQA as required. In previous years, results have only been reported to NZQA mid-December. The timely reporting of results ensures that students can see their progress and achievement on their NZQA Learner login, the results are recorded on their Record of Achievement, and their results are available to them if they leave the school or transfer to another. Results should be reported to NZQA throughout the year following an adequate assessment opportunity and the completion of internal moderation. The school is planning on entering students into an external examination this year. These entries must be submitted to NZQA by 1 September to ensure the personalisation of examinations papers.

Ensure documentation reflects current and expected practice The school has a comprehensive staff handbook and student handbook which contains relevant information. As the school has not assessed standards for a number of years, the relevance of several sections needs to be reviewed, including updating any changes in process. As the school is increasing its NCEA assessment, this documentation should be co-constructed with teachers to reflect the school and NZQA's expectations and processes. This would ensure there is a consistent and clearly understood approach which meets requirements, as well as reflecting the language and special character of the school.

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)

Established moderation practices Teachers at Totara College of Accelerated Learning are required to submit their completed internal moderation cover sheet to the Principal's Nominee who confirms all steps have been completed. Teachers recognise and follow the NZQA expectation that verifiers for internal moderation should come from subject experts with recent standard specific experience by accessing support from other schools. These processes confirm to NZQA and senior leaders that reported results are credible.

Assessor supports for teachers The school is encouraged to promote and support teachers to make use of various NZQA's assessor supports through its Learning Management System, Pūtake. The Assessment Practice Tool (APT) enables teachers to practise making grade judgements against student samples and getting feedback on the accuracy of those judgements. Pūtake also offers short courses and tutorials, such as how to use NZQA's digital assessment platform and the online training module Teachers New to NCEA Standards-Based Assessment.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

Totara College of Accelerated Learning 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
- 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
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Totara College of Accelerated Learning 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
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Totara College of Accelerated Learning 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.

Totara College of Accelerated Learning 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.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Totara College of Accelerated Learning 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.

Totara College of Accelerated Learning reports accurate achievement data by:

- checking Key Indicators and NZQA reports to identify and resolve any errors
- 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

Totara College of Accelerated Learning has effective processes and procedures for:

- 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.

Totara College of Accelerated Learning 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 Totara College of Accelerated Learning:

- 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 Policy.*
- *New Zealand Qualifications Framework Totara College 2025 Student and Parent Handbook of Policies and Procedures*
- *Totara College NCEA Teacher Handbook of Policies and Procedures 2025.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Assistant Principal - Curriculum
- Teachers of:
 - Careers / Transition
 - Chemistry
 - Drama and Music
 - Food Technology
 - Physical Education and Sport
 - STEM
- two students.

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

Background

Totara College of Accelerated Learning caters for students from years 1 to 13. It follows the New Zealand Curriculum assessing students against American Christian Education (ACE) certificates and a small range of NZQA achievement and unit standards. The school also offers assessment through external providers and Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu.