

Managing National Assessment Report

Wainuiomata High School

May 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Wainuiomata High 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.

The summary section evaluates the school's overall effectiveness and provides a broad overview of the review's key findings for all readers. The remaining sections provide detail of these findings for school managers.

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 meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* (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 2021* (Assessment Rules).

What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- 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 to consider 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 four 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
- *Wainuiomata High School Student Assessment and Achievement policy*
- *Wainuiomata High School New Zealand Qualifications Framework Assessment Procedures Staff Manual 2021*
- *Wainuiomata High School Student Guidelines 2021 NCEA and NZQA*
- an example of a faculties annual report to the Board of Trustees
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

Two School Relationship Managers met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Head of Faculty for:
 - Arts
 - English and Languages
 - Mathematics
 - Māori
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- 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.

SUMMARY

Wainuiomata High School

8 May 2021

What the school is doing well

Wainuiomata High School is a student-focused school which endeavours to meet the needs of a diverse range of students. In 2019 the school changed its model for delivery of curriculum and assessment, using the flexibility of the NCEA qualification and standards-based assessment more fully to better engage students.

Faculty Heads are very engaged with the changes and show the strong curriculum and assessment leadership needed for success. They describe being empowered to take risks and look outside for support. Some Faculties have developed quality assurance systems and are models of best practice that could be adopted more broadly.

All teachers interviewed for the review followed the school's internal moderation processes engaging with a variety of external subject grade verifiers. This is reflected by the historically good agreement rates between teachers and external moderators in their subjects.

Students interviewed for this review feel supported by both subject and their Manaaki teacher mentors to achieve. They described assessment practices as being firm but fair, experience positive relationships with staff, and feel engaged. The students and teachers interviewed used language in common, had a good understanding of school assessment policy and procedures, and knew the requirements to gain a qualification.

Progress on significant issues

This review found that while the school has made progress towards addressing the significant issues found in the 2018 review, further action is required for the school to fully meet the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*.

The next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years, with a visit within one year to check that the specified items have been actioned to strengthen the quality management of assessment for qualifications.

The items needing action are for senior leadership to:

- follow up internal moderation monitoring carried out by Heads of Faculty.
- provide written guidance for teachers on:
 - emergency grade requirements and processes for gathering evidence
 - evidence gathering requirements for derived grades
 - breaches of the rules of assessment.

Actions required to address these

To address these, the school must:

- monitor internal moderation systems to ensure that only results that have been subject to the internal moderation process are reported to NZQA (*Assessment Rules for schools with Consent to Assess 2020, 6.4(b)*)
- follow-up external review recommendations and findings (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*).

Areas for improvement

The school's complex and refined assessment delivery model requires systems that provide a whole of senior school view including an evidence-based understanding of their students' academic and pastoral needs. Our suggestions made in the body of this report for strengthening review of assessment and achievement aim to build systems that better connect senior management to the sound practices found in faculties. They build on existing review processes by providing senior leaders with timely information and data they can reliably use to evaluate success and determine next steps for improvement.

External moderation monitoring will be further strengthened by senior leaders checking that assessment quality issues are resolved, rather than using a later round of external moderation as the check.

Additions to the staff handbook required in 2018 remaining not actioned indicate that the documentation review process needs strengthening.

Agreed action

The school agreed this action will improve the quality of their assessment systems. It is to:

- further strengthen monitoring of external moderation to ensure that that planned actions resolve assessment quality issues.
- ensure that documentation is reviewed for completeness.

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26 July 2021

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence for external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 9 August 2018 Managing National Assessment Report To meet the conditions of their Consent to Assess, the 2018 review required the school to follow up our external review recommendations and findings (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*). Specifically, they were required to:

- develop a process to monitor internal moderation
- develop action plans in response to external moderation outcomes
- review the staff handbook to ensure it is accurate and current.

While some progress has been made, further action is required for all three items.

Further strengthen monitoring of internal moderation by senior management

A follow-up check carried out by NZQA on 18 October 2019 found that the Principal's Nominee carried out a random check of three assessments with every faculty where results had been reported to NZQA. This provides senior management with an evidence-based assurance that the internal moderation process is being followed for those standards. The next step is to supplement this faculty check with a process to provide senior management with evidence that all standards assessed have been subject to internal moderation, as required by NZQA's *Assessment Rules for schools with Consent to Assess 2020, 6.4(b)*.

Document guidance to staff on aspects of internal and external assessment

Three aspects of the staff handbook noted for updating in 2018 still need actioning:

- emergency grade requirements and processes for gathering evidence
- evidence gathering requirements for derived grades
- managing breaches of the rules of internal assessment

The low provision of emergency grades submitted to NZQA support the continued need for the this to be documented to help reinforce the process to staff.

Response to external moderation outcomes The process for monitoring external moderation needs further strengthening by senior leaders. Following up with Faculty Heads that planned actions resolve assessment quality issues would provide the school with timely assurance of credible assessment. It would also allow Heads of Faculty to share their successes and any areas for improvement with senior leaders, rather than waiting a year or longer for feedback should that standard be reselected for external moderation.

Evidence of senior management's process for monitoring of external moderation response was not on hand for this review visit. No evidence was available from 2019 and in 2020 only one Faculty participated in external moderation under NZQA's exemption due to COVID. As all outcomes for the three standards moderated were *consistent*, no action was required under the school's process which tracks *not consistent* and *not yet consistent* outcomes. The Principal's Nominee showed the

blank template document he has prepared for Faculty Heads to respond to, following this year's moderation round in June.

Internal review

Evidence for 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)

In 2019, following a school-wide review of curriculum and timetable, the school introduced a semester-based structure aimed at strengthening student engagement to improve achievement. One hundred and seven courses for senior students are delivered across two semesters, providing assessment opportunities in contexts that are genuine, authentic and relevant to them. Students now have access to a wide range of enriched contextualised assessment opportunities in vocational and academic pathways. This complex, highly refined delivery model requires review systems that provide both a broad and detailed view to optimise student success and confirm assessment credibility.

Good examples of review systems exist at faculty level. The next step is for senior management to connect these, so they have timely information and data to evaluate success, confirm next steps for improvement and have comprehensive evidence to assure them of the credible assessment practices found in faculties. Examples are described below and elsewhere in this report.

Evaluate new delivery structure It is recommended that the school carry out an evidence-based evaluation of their changed delivery structure on student achievement. This will help the school to be confident that the model is fit for purpose before the national changes required by the introduction of the new Achievement Standards take effect in 2023.

Current information gathered could be used for this evaluation. This includes:

- the analysis by Faculty Heads of student voice gathered after each course
- faculty reporting on achievement by standard and course for the Board of Trustees at the end of the year
- the Principal's analysis annual achievement of qualifications and student-based data held by Manaaki teachers and Deans.

Strengthen whole school review of assessment practice The success of the school's curriculum change relies on the professional leadership of Faculty Heads. A useful next step would be for senior leaders to develop a process that gives an overview of assessment and achievement across all faculties. This evidence base would better position senior leaders to confirm areas of strength in assessment practice and any improvements needed before the introduction of the new achievement standards in 2023. Heads of Faculty may provide some useful models and thinking about what this could look like, given they show the depth of professional understanding and ability needed to deliver credible assessment opportunities under the semester delivery model. The annual Faculty audit introduced in 2020 could provide a useful starting point for this process.

Required action

The following action is required to ensure effective response to external reviews and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice. The school must:

- further strengthen monitoring of internal moderation so that senior management can confirm that all standards assessed have been subject to internal moderation
- provide written guidance to staff on:
 - managing breaches of the rules of assessment
 - emergency grade requirements and processes or gathering evidence
 - evidence gathering requirements for derived grades.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice. Senior management undertakes to:

- further strengthen monitoring of external moderation to ensure that planned actions resolve assessment quality issues.

For consideration

To extend good practice in external review and self-review of assessment, the school is encouraged to consider:

- evaluating the impact of the semester structure on student achievement and outcomes
- developing whole school review of assessment practice.

How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

Evidence for 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)

Wainuiomata High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- using contexts that engage students in authentic and culturally appropriate learning and assessment
- developing courses that may include standards from a range of subject areas to meet the context
- structuring opportunities so that students can use a piece of evidence for assessment against multiple standards
- providing access to trades courses delivered by an external provider one or two days a week
- including a *My Personal Learning Day* in the weekly programme for students to explore another learning context or catch up on missed work
- using checkpoints to provide effective feedback and feedforward before an assessment event
- piloting the new Level 1 Te Ao Haka standards to broaden the assessment opportunities available
- supporting them to provide work for internal assessment digitally
- encouraging them to sit externally assessed standards
- providing special assessment conditions for a significant group of students, with three quarters having evidence of need collected by the school.

Wainuiomata High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment
- investigating appeals
- reporting *Not Achieved* when students do not provide evidence following a valid assessment opportunity
- managing resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*

Culturally responsive assessment practice Assessment practice at Wainuiomata High School continues to be student focused and culturally responsive. Teachers know their students well, are familiar with their needs and use student voice to help develop their courses. Students interviewed for this review confirmed this.

Using culturally responsive contexts and frameworks increases the relevance of assessments for students. The Rumaki and Bi-Lingual unit offers year 9 and 10 students a range of NCEA credits at Levels 1, 2 and 3 to promote achievement. Māori and Pasifika Achievement Officers target Year 11 to 13 students at risk of not

achieving and provide an afterschool programme one day a week to support students in their learning.

No action required

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

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

Wainuiomata High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- providing guidance to Heads of Faculty on moderation expectations
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work
- recording that internal moderation has occurred, including Heads of Faculty monitoring that all standards assessed have undergone this process.

Wainuiomata High School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements.
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Clarify moderation responsibilities for standards assessed by a Faculty outside their subject area Where courses are developed and delivered within one Faculty area, some Heads of Faculty were not clear about expectations when assuring assessment quality for standards assessed outside their area of subject expertise. Some Heads of Faculty commented that in this context a review of responsibilities and support options would be helpful to them. Their high level of professional capability meant all Faculty Heads described or had evidence of how they managed this situation. However, clarifying expectations and supporting heads to meet these would help preserve quality in the face of change, particularly with the introduction of the new standards.

For consideration

To extend school practice in assurance of assessment quality, the school is encouraged to consider:

- clarifying expectations and reviewing support for Faculty Heads when moderating standards assessed outside their subject area.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence for data management and use supporting student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Wainuiomata High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- gathering teacher assessment predictions by course in term 1 and early term 2 to identify students potentially at risk
- Manaaki Teachers and Deans using predictions for academic conferencing, developing assessment goals and Individual Action Plans for students
- annually reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement, to inform strategic goals and actions.

Wainuiomata High School reports accurate achievement data by:

- being signed off as accurate by students, teachers and Principal's Nominee
- reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- ensuring a low number of late entries for external examinations.

Strengthen student tracking and analysis of course achievement The school should consider strengthening their process for tracking student progress toward academic goals and qualifications. More frequent sampling of student progress for the four courses taken for each of the two semesters would help the school to take better advantage of the flexibility the semester model provides. It would allow for a more dynamic response by teachers and mentors to changes in student achievement needs. For example, in 2020 students were absent for one third of the standards they were entered in, which a more dynamic model could have identified and created the opportunity to put timely support in place. Analysing the data using a Faculty view will help identify any students who might benefit from change to the assessment structure of their course. Frequent sampling will help join up the current tracking model which relies heavily on the knowledge and relationship the Manaaki teachers have with their student mentee.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- strengthening student tracking to take advantage of the opportunities the semester structure provides.

How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?

Evidence for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Wainuiomata High School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all course they undertake.
- communicating assessment policy and procedure
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails and staff meetings
- communicating NCEA information to parents through:
 - text messaging
 - the school website
 - school newsletters and emails.

Wainuiomata High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- checking whether teachers and students are following processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- using the Manaaki relationship to help students understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification
- improving parental understanding of NCEA and assessment procedures through targeted evening meetings, such as whānau hui.

Review documentation The fact that additions to the staff handbook required from 2018 are still outstanding shows that the documentation review process still needs attention. As an example, the low rate of unexpected event grades provided to NZQA is likely due to the continued lack of guidance on gathering evidence for derived grades and unexpected events. Documentation provided for this review had been updated to include the change of requirements for resubmission.

Common understanding found Students and teachers interviewed for this review used language in common to describe school assessment policy and procedures, and the requirements needed to gain a qualification. Their consistent view indicates that lines of communication are effective in these areas.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that documentation is reviewed for completeness.