

Managing National Assessment Report

Te Karaka Area School

September 2018

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Te Karaka 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.

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 2017* (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
- *Te Karaka Area School National Qualifications Procedures Staff Handbook-NCEA 2018* (Staff Guide)
- *NCEA Level One Student Handbook 2018* (Student Guide)
- *NCEA Level Two Student Handbook 2018* (Student Guide)
- *NCEA Level Three Student Handbook 2018* (Student Guide)

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, two students, and Heads of Department for English/Technology, Health/Horticulture/Physical Education and Mathematics/Media Studies.

There was a report-back session with the 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

Te Karaka Area School

19 September 2018

Significant issues found

This review found significant issues that the school must address to 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 two years to check that these issues are being addressed and that quality management of assessment for qualifications has improved.

The issue is:

- ongoing inconsistent practice around delivering and completing standards on offer in assessment programmes, which results in students having insufficient credits to gain NCEA qualifications.

Actions required to address significant issue

In order to address this issue, the school must:

- have appropriate procedures for managing assessment processes (*CAAS Guidelines 2.6i*)
- follow-up external review recommendations and findings (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*)

Areas for improvement

In order to develop its systems for managing national assessment for qualifications, Te Karaka Area School should ensure that:

- all teachers are fulfilling their professional responsibilities towards the school's documented assessment and moderation practices, including meeting agreed deadlines.

Agreed action

The school agreed that the following actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. This is:

- ensure all staff complete assessment processes in a timely manner.

What the school is doing well

The Principal's Nominee, who was recently appointed, has continued to revitalise the school's assessment and moderation processes. Thorough self-review of systems, including the introduction of a robust quality assurance process and online verification, has resulted in changes that enhance the credibility of assessment practice within the school.

Where possible, assessment programmes are developed to meet individual student needs to support transition to future pathways. The school engages outside providers to broaden assessment opportunities for its students.

A range of communication structures is in place, such as scheduled meetings with parents and students, to engage families and appropriately inform them about assessment for national qualifications.

The school continues to develop its digital capacities to enhance communications with all stakeholders and to support assessment and moderation practice. The school is submitting most of its external moderation material digitally in 2018 and is well positioned to participate in NZQA's digital assessment and moderation work streams.

Effective internal moderation procedures are in place, which are clearly articulated to and understood by all teachers assessing students for NCEA qualifications. All assessment tasks are critiqued prior to use and grades are verified by subject experts from within or beyond the school as appropriate. Teachers know that only results that have been internally moderated will be reported to NZQA.

The Principal's Nominee is respected by the Principal and senior school staff for her dedication and professionalism. Under her guidance, significant progress has been made, since the beginning of 2017, ensuring that Te Karaka Area School reports credible results to NZQA.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

9 January 2019

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

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

External review

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

Action Items from 26 September 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

Te Karaka area school was required to:

- use assessment information to inform learning and review of programmes and/or courses *(CAAS Guidelines 2.6v)*
- have appropriate procedures for managing assessment processes. *(CAAS Guidelines 2.6i)*

Information used to develop assessment programmes Evidence was provided that demonstrates achievement information and student voice is impacting positively on assessment programme development. Sufficient standard entries are now made so that students have the potential to qualify for their respective NCEA's and chosen pathways.

The Principal's Nominee and senior school staff have worked hard to improve their procedures for managing assessment processes. Some effective improvements include:

- creating a system for storing assessment evidence online in a team drive where it can be accessed by:
 - other staff members for verification purposes
 - senior managers in case the staff member responsible leaves the school
 - the Principal's Nominee so she can monitor assessment progress in each subject and in individual assessment programmes
- the practice of providing course assessment information on a common template to all students for all courses at the beginning of the year
- providing assessment calendars for all courses so that students and teachers are reminded when assessments are to be completed.

Assessment processes are inconsistent school-wide Senior teachers are not consistently following the school's documented procedures to ensure all assessments are completed at the scheduled time. Consequently, there is a risk that students will be unable to achieve their respective NCEAs due to insufficient completion of internal assessments.

The school has appropriate systems for managing assessment procedures, however the onus is on school leadership to ensure the procedures are consistently followed by all teachers in the senior school and that factors beyond the control of the classroom teacher are minimised as necessary. This will ensure that all senior students have an equitable and fair opportunity to present their best efforts for assessment in a manner that is timely and fit for purpose.

Issues with managing assessment practice identified in previous review

Inconsistent completion of internal assessments was identified as an issue in the 2017 report. School leadership needs to address all mitigating factors, including high absenteeism, so that all students have a fair opportunity to complete their assessment programmes. Teachers indicated that lack of student attendance was a major factor effecting assessment completion and teachers interviewed said it impacted on student readiness for assessment. Consequences of students not completing planned assessments include insufficient results to gain NCEA qualifications and a reduction in future pathways.

Response to external moderation outcomes Strengthened internal moderation processes introduced by the new Principal's Nominee, have led to an immediate and marked improvement in external moderation outcomes, including a much-improved overall teacher moderator agreement rate. She has also introduced a robust response to external moderation practice which involves the Principal's Nominee and the teacher co-constructing a response action plan where outcomes are poor. Actions may include professional development for the teacher, finding new verifiers, creating new assessment tasks or further clarification of the standard. Response action plans are reviewed by the Principal's Nominee upon completion. Benchmark exemplars that have been moderated are also stored for future reference.

Internal review

Evidence found that the school is effectively 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)

Senior managers are constantly reviewing their assessment systems in order to provide credible assessment and moderation practice that is fit for purpose. Changes that have enhanced or streamlined practice at Te Karaka Area School since the 2017 Managing National Assessment Review include:

- terminating the Examination Centre status of the school and driving the small number of candidates for external examinations to a centre in Gisborne, reducing unnecessary pressure on school administrators
- introducing the practice of attaching moderator comments to the online moderation template, completing all documentation from the beginning to the end of the moderation process and providing valuable feedforward for the following year
- enhancing communications to better meet stakeholder needs including:
 - creating online access for parents to the school management system
 - providing a school facebook page
 - text messaging.

These examples demonstrate effective responses to self-review improving the school's ability to manage assessment for national qualifications.

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:

- have appropriate procedures for managing assessment processes (CAAS Guidelines 2.6i)
- follow-up external review recommendations and findings (CAAS Guidelines 3v)

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

Evidence found that assessment practice is meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Te Karaka Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- using past achievement information to ensure students are placed in assessment programmes appropriate to their academic capabilities
- providing differentiated assessment in some courses, where the same learning context is used or where there are multi-level classes
- aligning with outside assessment providers to enhance assessment opportunities for students and support future pathways
- using technology in assessment where appropriate, to engage students and complement the school's digital pedagogies.
- assessing when ready as appropriate.

Te Karaka Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment in accordance with school procedures
- investigating and resolving any appeals of assessment decisions
- using multiple strategies for ensuring student evidence of achievement is authentic, including the signing of authenticity forms for each standard
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*
- gathering standard-specific evidence for derived grades.

Integrated assessment with thorough planning Integrated assessment occurs where teachers have had sufficient opportunity to plan thoroughly. A passion-based enquiry approach to learning and assessment which was practised in the senior school between 2014 and 2016 was not successful due to poor planning and management. It is important that senior managers support successful outcomes for students by insisting on thorough planning before integrated assessment practice is used. Integrated assessment has been used successfully in 2018 where the two teachers responsible collaborated closely before and during the assessment process. With well-planned integrated assessment, students can benefit from being assessed for multiple standards within a single context, achieving in an efficient contextualised manner.

All teachers need to complete assessment in a timely manner Some teachers do not consistently follow their assessment calendars to ensure students get all the assessment opportunities anticipated from their course outlines. Effective assessment processes and procedures are in place and understood by interviewed staff, each of whom had completed some assessments with success at the time of the review. Senior managers agreed to monitor assessment processes more closely to improve the timeliness of assessment by all staff. This will support all students to continue with their planned assessment pathways.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management of assessment for national qualifications. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure all staff complete assessment processes in a timely manner.

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

Evidence found that internal and external moderation are ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 6.4b)

Te Karaka Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use, and using subject specialists from within and beyond the school to verify student work
- ensuring that all NCEA staff understand the school's procedures and expectations for internal moderation, including the correct use of the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- the Principal's Nominee monitoring moderation practice through reconciling kaiako documentation with actual practice and documenting the process online
- ensuring that no results are reported to NZQA unless internal moderation has taken place.

Te Karaka Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- selecting samples of student work for external moderation randomly to NZQA requirements as appropriate
- ensuring samples of student work are provided for external moderation by being adequately stored.

Digital moderation embraced Te Karaka Area School uses technology in all aspects of the moderation process, reflecting a natural extension of well-embedded digital teaching and learning practice. A shared staff drive supports newly developed protocols for storing sufficient evidence, including student work, assessment tasks, exemplars and marking schedules. These protocols are becoming embedded practice as teachers complete assessments throughout the year. The school intends to submit most of its 2018 external moderation digitally and values the many benefits from NZQA's digital moderation work streams, such as timely feedback and fewer concerns over misplaced student work.

Assessment and moderation progress and credibility can be identified and monitored The shared staff drive provides a platform from which the progress and credibility of all internal moderation and assessment can be monitored. Senior managers can check the status of assessment across the senior school at any time throughout the year. This system affirms the credibility of the school's quality assurance processes, but also provides school leadership with information they could use to ensure teachers stay on track to meet their assessment deadlines. This should be another step towards improving the issue of managing assessment processes discussed in the review and assessment sections of this report.

External moderation data shows that assessment is more credible Analysing external moderation data indicates that internal assessment practice has been more robust over recent years. Since the current Principal's Nominee arrived in 2017, quality assurance systems at the school have become more rigorous. Students interviewed could attest to this, referring to a time when credits were 'easy' to achieve. In 2016, the agreement rate between teachers at Te Karaka Area School

and NZQA moderators was 13 percent. The agreement rate rose to 62 percent in 2017. The Principal's Nominee is pleased that the effect of more robust internal moderation practice is reflected in improved external moderation agreement rates, meaning assessment at the school is growing its credibility.

For consideration

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

- using information in the shared staff drive to monitor completion of internal assessment and moderation.

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

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

Te Karaka Area School effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - the Principal's Nominee monitoring their progress towards achieving relevant NCEA qualifications
 - identifying their academic strengths to support the development of appropriate assessment programmes
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - submitting all data file information in a timely manner
 - including kaiako in its processes for checking the accuracy of data before and after it is reported to NZQA
 - withdrawing entries as and when appropriate
 - checking Key Indicators to ensure only results for standards for which the school has consent are reported.

Delays in assessment completion hinders effective monitoring of achievement

Inconsistent completion of assessments, discussed in the review section of this report, makes it difficult for senior leaders to effectively monitor credit totals. Achievement-data from 2017 has supported the development of assessment programmes for 2018 and all students have sufficient entries to achieve their academic goals. Senior leaders, including the Principal's Nominee, monitor and track student achievement from the information held in the school management system and the shared staff drive. Literacy and numeracy requirements are easily tracked by these staff members, as they are the teachers responsible for assessing those standards. When the school's documented assessment and moderation processes are consistently adhered to by all four staff members assessing students for the NCEA, students will have greater access to valid and current achievement information. This will enable staff and students to be more informed when making decisions about future pathways.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

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

Evidence found that school communication ensures understanding about assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Te Karaka Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- facilitating parent teacher interviews throughout the year where student achievement and school assessment procedures are discussed
- providing assessment information to parents through a range of strategies including online and hard copy booklets and newsletters
- ensuring students receive outlines, available as hard copy and online booklets, for all courses they undertake
- supporting teachers new to the school as needed
- reviewing communications to ensure they are fit for purpose and current.

Te Karaka Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes and constantly reminding them of their responsibilities
- promoting student understanding of what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

Staff documentation current and supporting best practice The Principal's Nominee has produced an NCEA staff handbook that has current, accurate information and supporting information that is specific to Te Karaka Area School. The online version is updated as appropriate, with a new hard copy version printed for staff at the beginning of each year. The contents page of the online version is particularly effective as it doubles up as a series of links to the relevant information on the NZQA website. The Principal's Nominee's expectations of all NCEA staff are clear and understood, but until all staff meet these expectations there will continue to be problems with assessment practice.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- having a different senior school teacher share a different assessment or moderation practice, on a rotational basis, at weekly staff meetings.

