

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Ko Taku Reo**

**August 2023**

## FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

### Ko Taku Reo

**29 and 31 August 2023**

### 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

### Agreed actions

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

Action	Timeframe
<b>Credible assessment practice to meet student needs</b>	
Report a result for all internal entries, or withdraw the entry, as appropriate	Continually, to be completed by 1 December
Submit derived grades to NZQA prior to the beginning of external examinations.	To be included in data entry by 1 November

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25 October 2023

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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 previous Managing National Assessment Report** This is the first Managing National Assessment review for Ko Taku Reo. The school, however, reviewed the items identified for action in the reports of the two previous deaf education centres, to improve the quality of assessment systems and practices for national qualifications. Items were to ensure monitoring of internal moderation processes by senior management, reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding process for relationships with consented providers and ensuring memoranda are fit for purpose. These practices have been addressed and are discussed in the relevant section of the report.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** The school has effective processes to quality assure and respond to external moderation outcomes. Where an issue is identified with assessor judgements or assessment materials, the Principal's Nominee unpacks and reviews the requirements of the standard with the relevant teachers in the provision located at a partner school. Teachers action moderator's feedback and initiate support, as needed.

The Principal's Nominee monitors the completion and effectiveness of actions taken to address external moderation inconsistencies and evaluates the impact of changes for overall improvement. The school's external moderation outcomes indicate that teachers' judgements consistently align with the standard. Teachers suggest standards for moderation that they want feedback on.

### 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's self-review in recent years has focussed on the establishment of Ko Taku Reo with the merger of the two deaf education centres. The Principal's Nominee and NCEA Lead have effectively aligned school, NZQA and external provider assessment processes to ensure common modes of practice and required procedures are being followed across the school. They are to be commended for their commitment and leadership in the face of considerable adversity and change.

The Principal's Nominee, previously the NCEA Lead and new to the role in 2023, has a thorough knowledge of school assessment processes and manages changes and issues to improve current practice. The school's strengthened systems are being embedded into practice, such as the completion and monitoring of internal moderation. The Principal's Nominee is supported in her work by the staff, and senior leaders, who collectively support students to achieve.

The school provides clear and comprehensive assessment information for staff professional learning to support consistent practice and promote ownership across the provisions. The Principal's Nominee meets regularly in person with staff and through online forums to maintain credible assessment practice and effective quality assurance across the sites. This approach together with ongoing informal professional dialogue within and across provisions, and with colleagues in partner

schools strengthens professional learning and uniformity of practice. The Principal's Nominee also meets regularly with senior staff to review teaching and assessment practice and student achievement progress.

**Building leadership, ownership and capability** Ko Taku Reo has extended professional learning and strengthened networks across the provisions and with colleagues in partner schools including through the formation of Literacy and Numeracy Clusters. The clusters work collaboratively, sharing learning and assessment resources and best practice, improving understanding of sufficiency of evidence to support assessor grade decisions. Senior leaders consider this professional learning is effective and plan to continue to support and expand this approach.

The school is reviewing teaching and assessment practices with the upcoming changes to the literacy and numeracy requirements of the qualification, once the work and study skill unit and New Zealand Sign Language standards are no longer available. They have identified significant challenges with the learning and assessment of the co-requisite standards, including student access to language and assessment contexts. To this end, the Principal's Nominee will develop a Year 9 and a Year 10 targeted literacy programme, based on the evaluation of the functional unit standards requirements, to support student readiness for the co-requisite assessment.

**Development of a dedicated student management system** The Principal's Nominee is supporting the development of a fit-for-purpose student management system which, through centralised evidence storage, will provide a reliable record of pastoral, learning, and achievement information for every student in the school. The student management system requires significant development as it is not configured to NZQA processes. The school is using web entries as an interim measure while students currently access the partner school's student management system and the NZQA website to check results. The Principal's Nominee will be able to expedite data management, tracking of student achievement progress and achievement analysis more efficiently once the student management system is fully operational.

Self-review has also resulted in further recent initiatives to expand capacity to provide effective assessment practice for NCEA students and improve achievement outcomes, including:

- piloting and evaluating the Level 1 New Zealand Sign Language standards for use by schools in 2024. The school has identified the challenge of having sufficient teachers with cultural and sign language expertise, and the limitations of delivering and supporting deaf and hard of hearing students through two dimensional online forums
- data-based academic reporting which will help inform next steps in learning and assessment in students' Individual Education Plans
- the Principal's Nominee producing a number of fit-for purpose process diagrams of assessment systems, including *Student Subject Selection Guide*. This helps increase access for deaf teachers who are visual learners and promotes school-wide understanding and consistent practice. The next step is to develop a document that summarises for each student their interests, career aspirations, and achievement goals to support their intended future direction, accessible to all teachers

- all teachers undertaking a Student Achievement Learning Inquiry to support improvement of student achievement, including NCEA practices.

Teachers' reflective practice, informed by ongoing discussion with individuals about their progress enables student needs to be addressed. School-wide relationships inform professional learning and enable sharing of resources and good practice to support student learning engagement and achievement. Senior leaders can be confident that the Principal's Nominee will identify and resolve any concerns related to assessment practice and data reporting. The school's approach is facilitating the development of assessment best practice.

## **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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)*

**Tailored programme pathways and support address student needs** Ko Taku Reo is committed to providing access to the language and curriculum through meaningful learning and assessment pathways for each student. This is integral to recognising the student's identity and cultural background and their confidence in learning and achievement in qualifications.

Teachers are responsive to individual student's needs and pathway choices and design individualised timetables. Positive relationships are characterised by teachers knowing their students. Provisional Leads and teachers hold weekly meetings with students to support and mentor them, to discuss what they need, what is working well and what changes are required. Students have agency to direct learning and assessment relevant to their own interests, goals and future educational, vocational, or work opportunities that they intend to pursue through their leadership of their Individual Education Plans (IEP). Programs and pathways are discussed with parents primarily through the IEP process.

Teachers interviewed indicated parental feedback identified the support students receive is transformational, evidenced by high levels of student attendance and engagement. Similarly, most students interviewed during the review acknowledged the approachability and responsiveness of their teachers and other staff in supporting them to access the curriculum and achieve success.

Students are taught in the provision for subjects that require strategies and specialisation by a Teacher of the Deaf. Students can choose to attend mainstream classes for some or all of their subjects. Provision Leads and mainstream teachers continually liaise to support student needs being met. Students access vocational learning and assessment including with tertiary providers through their partner schools, such as in hospitality and construction. Students have a more equitable access to NCEA assessments through Special Assessment Conditions. Teachers ensure that students are aware of their entitlements and know how to best use them. Educational Interpreters and Teacher Aides of the Deaf support access to learning and assessment.

**Literacy and numeracy are targeted, to meet student need** The school focuses on developing students' literacy and numeracy foundation skills and competencies, for their future success. The aim is for the majority of students to achieve the literacy and numeracy components of the qualification and for leaving students, as appropriate to have gained Level 2. The Principal's Nominee

analyses progress for improvements in practice and reports outcomes to the School Board.

Low teacher-to-student ratios, working at the student's pace and extensively scaffolding learning to support access to the language and the curriculum, assessing when students are ready, and quality teaching methods are keys to success. Teachers collect naturally-occurring evidence for assessment using the functional unit standards. The school will however engage in the co-requisite assessments in October. Students have familiarity with the digital platform through participation in digital exams for mainstream subjects.

**Consistent school-wide processes to support authenticity of assessment practices** The Principal's Nominee has developed school-wide processes to ensure support staff working with students understand and apply credible assessment practices. Provision Leads induct support staff and provide regular professional learning to ensure the authenticity of assessment practice and appropriate guidance when gathering evidence. Provision Leads and teachers use their knowledge of the student and their abilities, among the strategies to monitor the authenticity of student work. The subject teacher, Special Assistant Conditions Assistants and students are required to complete an Authenticity Statement to confirm appropriate conditions of assessment. Transparency of practice and clear expectations across the school supports credible assessment practice.

**Memorandum of Understanding processes reviewed** The school has established clear processes to ensure current and fit for purpose memoranda are held for all relevant situations.

The school reports a number of results for students using the codes of providers other than their own. A memorandum authorises this process and provides clarity about who is responsible for each aspect of the assessment process.

Memoranda are now in place with partner schools where Ko Taku Reo students are taught and assessed in mainstream classes, with schools where Ko Taku Reo teachers deliver New Zealand Sign Language to students, and with other external providers, as required. Exam centre Memorandum of Understanding are also established with partner schools.

**Remove internal entries for students with no result** To ensure that student assessment records are accurate, the school should report a result for all internal assessment entries by 1 December. Where there is no result because there has not been an adequate assessment opportunity, the entry should be withdrawn. An inaccurate view of possible student achievement may be provided if tracking of progress includes those entries for which no results are ultimately reported.

A significant number of entries were reported without a result last year across several subjects, primarily in mainstream classes. The school identified that internal entries without a result were not removed due to the challenging circumstances facing staff at the end of the year. The Principal's Nominee will use the *Counts by Subject or Course Report* on the NZQA website to identify and resolve entries without results before the 1 December deadline. This will ensure that student assessment records are accurate.

**Reporting Derived Grades for Unexpected Events to NZQA** To meet NZQA's requirements for access to quality assured grades that could be used in the event of an emergency or other unexpected event, the school must submit to NZQA derived

grades prior to the external examinations. Low levels of these grades were provided to NZQA in 2022.

The mainstream schools offer external assessment opportunities to Ko Taku Reo students. These schools have processes to collect standard specific evidence for derived grades. The Principal's Nominee will proactively collect these derived grades from the partner schools and include them in data submission to NZQA. She can monitor the progress of these grades reported to NZQA through the link on the school's homepage.

## **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, TEO's assessing Achievement Standards and Candidates 2023)*

**Strengthened monitoring of internal moderation** The Principal's Nominee has strengthened school-wide processes and monitoring of internal moderation. She is embedding into practice required and well-defined internal moderation steps to ensure consistency across the provisions and in response to identified actions in the reports of the previous two deaf education centres.

As the quantity of assessment is not extensive, all student assessment evidence is collected, verified and stored. Assessor grades and verifier judgement decisions are documented on an Internal Moderation Cover Sheet. The Principal's Nominee updates the markbook on receipt of the cover sheet, checks all processes are completed, and then reports the results to NZQA. She supports improvement by following up when gaps or issues are identified. The school's high expectations and thorough approach are providing confidence that all reported results are quality assured, and credible results are reported.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**Ko Taku Reo 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
- 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
- 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.

**Ko Taku Reo 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
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.



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

**Ko Taku Reo 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.

**Ko Taku Reo 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**

**Ko Taku Reo 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 Enrolled School Leader and School Board an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**Ko Taku Reo 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
- 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 / whānau about assessment**

### **Ko Taku Reo 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 and support staff new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes
- celebrating students' success.

### **Ko Taku Reo assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- communicating assessment information
- 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 Ko Taku Reo:**

- 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 / 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 Candidates 2023*.

### 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 and Student achievement Policy*
- *NZQA staff Assessment Handbook, Ko Taku Reo, 2023*
- *Student Assessment Handbook, Ko Taku Reo, 2023.*

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- three Provision Leads
- Head of New Zealand Sign Language
- Literacy Support teacher
- six students.

There was a report-back session with the Deputy Head of Enrolled School, the Assistant Head of Enrolled School and 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.

## Background

Ko Taku Reo, Deaf Education New Zealand, was established in 2021 from the merge of Kelston Deaf and Van Asch Deaf Education Centres. A Residential Special School, the Ko Taku Reo Enrolled School caters for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students from Years 1 to 16. Students attend one of the five secondary Deaf Provisions in Auckland at Kelston Boys' High School, Kelston Girls' College, Ormiston Senior College, and in Christchurch at Hillmorton High School and Hagley Community College. The school enrolls, teaches, assesses and supports secondary school students who are working towards an NCEA qualification. The school assesses students in New Zealand Sign Language, English/English Language Skills, Mathematics and Supported Learning. Students are supported as needed in mainstream classes which make up the balance of their NCEA programmes. The school manages the data for all their enrolled students. New Zealand Sign Language is also offered as a subject in online and blended learning situations to students in Ko Taku Reo Outreach School and in some cases siblings of students or students at partner schools.