

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School**

**March 2023**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School

23 March 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.

At the request of NZQA and due to the restrictions of Covid-19, the school agreed to reschedule this review from 2022.

### Actions and considerations

#### Agreed actions

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

| Action  | Timeframe   |
|---|---|
| <b>External and internal review</b>   |   |
| Continue to review and manage how the school can effectively timetable and support both vocational and curriculum based courses                             | For 2024 course selection   |
| <b>Credible assessment practice to meet student needs</b>   |   |
| Continue to review and manage how the Dean/whānau teacher can best monitor and mentor student progress  | Iterative steps through 2023 to fully support in 2024                                 |
| <b>Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results</b>  |   |
| Ensure the Leader of Learning monitoring and attestation process is retained with the move to tracking internal moderation in the student management system | In time to send confirmed quality assured internal assessment results to NZQA in 2023 |

### **For consideration**

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

- investigating if underlying issues around assessment practice are responsible for ongoing inconsistent external moderation outcomes in individual subject areas
- encouraging staff to use the function in the external moderation application to query external moderation reports where they need further clarification
- reviewing if the school is making full use of the option of using school-based evidence to support special assessment condition applications.



Kay Wilson  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

9 May 2023

**NZQA**

**0800 697 296**

**[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://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 2 April 2019 Managing National Assessment Report** The school was required to implement a process to confirm internal moderation documentation reflects actual practice. This has been resolved through greater oversight and an attestation process by Learning Area Leaders with the Principal's Nominee following up on any issues. With the introduction this year of tracking the internal moderation process through the student management system the school needs to ensure it can retain this oversight and attestation process.

The second action to strengthen external moderation follow up to ensure actions are completed has been resolved. The required actions are recorded in a shared online document and the Principal's Nominee and/or Curriculum Manager checks on the successful completion of the actions. As most subjects receive consistent outcomes for external moderation it will take several years to embed this practice across all learning areas.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** NZQA moderation outcomes show that overall, the school has a high rate of assessment judgments consistent with the standard. The school has a clear process to follow up issues raised in individual moderation reports. The relevant staff for the subject are required to complete a written response where reports highlight an issue. Where there are inconsistent judgments, the school should consider encouraging teachers to use the function in the moderation application to query reports where they feel they would like further clarification or feedback. Also taking the opportunity to give feedback on moderation reports through the application could help NZQA better meet school staff needs.

The school's moderation history has shown their actions usually resolve issues with a standard and/or in a subject area. A very small number of subject areas have a recent pattern of ongoing Not Yet Consistent outcomes. The school should consider investigating in these subject areas if there are underlying issues around assessment practice that need resolving.

External moderation where a Work Development Council is the standard setting body follows the same process.

### 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)*

In recent years the school has had major changes in the make-up of the senior management team and in those leading NZQA assessment. This has led to the school being firmly in a period of investigating change. This aims to affirm current good practice whilst thinking more widely about how to best meet the needs of their students. This is being led by the senior management team, but involves wide consultation with staff, students, and the extended school community.

Current areas being explored include:

- determining the balance between offering vocational and curriculum based courses
- reviewing the timetable structure and considering a possible move to semester courses
- expanding the Rural College that is currently on site and following a similar model for Construction courses
- considering if course design is an enabler or barrier to course and certificate endorsement
- creating and maintaining an easily accessible assessment calendar to help manage student assessment workload
- developing with the Education Review Office a school wide self-review process with student and teacher voice.

The school has a significant number of students involved in off-site vocational courses and is continuing to investigate how to maximise the opportunities this provides whilst minimising the impact on student progress in other courses. It is important to effectively manage this balance of needs.

Whilst exploring these areas other changes are still occurring from self-review with many being developed through staff and wider community consultation. This includes:

- school wide focus on a culture shift around diversity and acceptance, which has included positive portrayals of academic excellence
- the increased use of Google Classroom as a consequence of Covid-19, leading to it becoming embedded practice as a standard tool for sharing material with students, giving them greater access
- the review of some individual isolated pockets of weaker practice enabling targeted support as an outcome of the increased focus of the Leader of Learning Area check in the internal moderation process
- the evolution of the annual reporting to the Board of Trustees so that the individual analysis at teacher and subject level is now distilled down to an overall summary to the Board to better inform their governance process.

## **Credible assessment practice to meet student needs**

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

**Planned engagement in digital external assessment** The school has engaged in external digital assessment since 2019 and steadily increased the number of students involved. This has given them the opportunity to be assessed in a familiar way using digital tools they use throughout the year. This has led to the school now confidently engaging in digital first assessment, piloting the reviewed Level 1 standards, and in the literacy and numeracy co-requisite.

**Strengthen the process to effectively track student progress and mentor individuals to improve their assessment outcomes** It is important that a coordinated and manageable approach is in place to help ensure each student is supported to maximise their achievement.

To achieve this the school is considering how to strengthen its tracking processes to support students improve their assessment outcomes. Currently, Deans track individual students and there is some involvement from whānau teachers. To strengthen this the school is looking how to formalise the whānau teacher's role in the process. The Principal's Nominee is exploring how he can help support this through sharing up to date assessment data. He plans this through a two-pronged approach; encouraging and checking that teachers regularly submit results into the student management system, and investigating how he can effectively share the data the Deans have access to directly with whānau teachers.

**Consider increasing the use of school-based evidence to support special assessment condition applications** The school should consider if it can better meet student needs by increasing the number of applications it makes for special assessment conditions using school-based evidence. The use of school-based evidence could remove the barrier that the cost of, or access to, a report from a registered professional may present.

Compared with schools of a similar decile the school submits a slightly higher number of applications, but a significantly lower percentage are supported with school-based evidence.

## **Internal moderation to ensure the reporting of credible results**

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

**Strong internal moderation processes are in place** Learning Areas showed evidence of good internal moderation practice with the verification of grades awarded to a strategic selection of student material central to the marking process. Many subject areas, particularly single teacher subjects, have strong relationships with other schools enabling assessment judgements to be reviewed by another suitably experienced and qualified teacher. The Principal's Nominee contacts his School Relationship Manager to find other schools offering a particular standard if they cannot find anyone in their existing networks to verify judgements. The school also ensures inexperienced teachers are supported to build their assessor capacity, so they are able to verify judgements in future years.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- designing assessment that is focussed on student interests
- 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
- ensuring teachers are aware of individual students with special assessment conditions entitlements, and resourcing their support
- providing expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing targeted support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy goals
- implementing strategies to provide open opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

**Darfield High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- managing missed or late assessment
- managing resubmission and further opportunities for assessment
- investigating student appeals of assessment decisions
- investigating possible breaches of assessment rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student work using a range of strategies
- reporting Not Achieved for proven breaches of authenticity and where students have had an adequate assessment opportunity but have submitted no work
- assuring valid, verifiable and standard-specific evidence is collected for derived and unexpected event grades
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

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

**Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring assessment tasks are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are fit for purpose
- using clarification documents, exemplars, 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
- monitoring internal moderation processes to ensure only quality assured results are reported to NZQA.

**Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School 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**

**Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment programmes to ensure these allow students to meet their assessment goals, and inform changes to courses and standards offered
- gathering student voice to inform changes to programmes, contexts, and standards
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.



**Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School reports accurate achievement data by:**

- ensuring that data files are submitted to NZQA in a timely manner so that NZQA holds up-to-date data
- checking Key Indicators and NZQA reports to identify and resolve any errors
- conducting student and teacher checks of entries and results at key times during the year
- ensuring low levels of late external entries, and internal entries with no results
- reporting results against the correct provider codes of providers with which the school holds current Memoranda of Understanding.

**Effective communication to inform staff, and students and their whānau about assessment**

**Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate, and reviewing communications to ensure they remain fit for purpose
- ensuring students receive outlines for courses they undertake
- supporting students to monitor their achievement
- discussing assessment policy and procedure with staff, and providing updates of NCEA information throughout the year
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing opportunities for parents to discuss their children's NCEA goals, progress, and achievement
- supporting teachers new to the school through an induction programme to understand school and NZQA assessment processes

**Te Kura Tuarua o Tawera | Darfield High School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- communicating assessment information, such as holding NCEA information evenings for parents and NCEA assemblies for students
- informing students about suitable learning pathways
- supporting students to understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

## Appendix 2: Overview

### What this report is about

**This report summarises NZQA’s review of how effectively Darfield 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 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
- *Darfield High School, Assessment Procedures for NZQF Qualifications (NZ Qualifications Framework) Teacher Edition 2023*
- *Darfield High School, Assessment Procedures for NZQF Qualifications (NZ Qualifications Framework) Student Edition 2023.*

### The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Curriculum Manager
- Learning Area Leaders for:
  - Arts
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Physical Education
  - Science
  - Social Science
- three students.

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