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associates
Te Huinga Kākākura
Mātauranga

Testing twice a year

Seize the moment

Garry Taylor



Assumptions and beliefs

- This presentation is based on what I know now – I understand that there are changes coming!
- Testing twice a year is not a new idea – we have advocated for this for many years
- I believe testing and assessment can be a good thing
- That for many schools this will not be much of a change from what they already do!
- I don't think we are doing this consistently well at the moment. There is variation.
- I believe there will be benefits, if this is done well!



3 July 2024

"Schools and kura will do twice-yearly assessments for students in Years 3 - 8 to monitor their progress in reading, writing, maths, pānui, tuhituhi and pāngarau."



The policy

Minister Stanford identified the following benefits from this policy:

- Early identification of learning needs
- Consistency in student assessment nationally
- Informing parents on their child's learning and progress
- Regular progress monitoring
- Inform teachers about the next steps needed for a child's learning.

"Parents deserve to know how their kids are progressing at school."

Minister Stanford, July 24



If in doubt...

*“Don’t dismiss outright change that you disagree with.
Give time to let ideas percolate and look for the gold.”*

(Rush, P. 2024)

It’s my belief students, teachers, leaders, and whānau can be better informed as a result of this policy, while still ensuring it aligns with our core vision for learners.

But only if we do it well!



Generate dependable data

For assessment data to be truly useful,
it must be dependable!



1. Be clear about who needs information

Have a plan for how data is to be used.

- Who needs the data?
- What data do they need?
- In what form do they need it?
- When do they need it?
- How will they access it?
- What aggregation and disaggregation needs to occur for cohort data?
- What analysis needs done prior to sharing?



2. Choose the best assessment tools for your setting

| English Medium | Māori medium |
|----------------|-------------------|
| e-asTTle | e-asTTle |
| PATs | Te Waharoa Ararau |

New tool?



Image generated with ChatGPT



3. Avoid year group testing

- The current tools do not require you to use the same test for a year group.
- “Year group” tests do not target all students well. Many will find the test too hard to too easy. This results in unreliable data.
- Offering tests with different difficulty levels means students can be assigned tests that have an appropriate level of challenge.
- This will help with engagement and motivation if students can be ensured of having some success and some challenge in a test.



4. Quality management of assessment

- Standardised tests are meant to be administered in a standardised way.
- This improves reliability and enable comparisons to norms

“Make sure that any standardised assessment tools are administered, marked, and recorded in exactly the ways specified by the test manual so that the information from them is going to be useful.”

Absolum, M. 2006

- Some students may require accommodations to participate in the assessment. This is a professional decision made with the student's best interests in mind.
- The nature of, and rationale for the accommodation can be shared with the student so they feel empowered, not demeaned.



5. Timing

- This is in relation to time of year, time of day and gaps between testing.
- Will the timing be at a time when most students can perform to their potential?
- Will the testing allow time for real progress to be seen?

| Time since first test | Chance (%) that the new score will be lower than the first score |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1 hour | 50 |
| 1 week | 48 |
| 2 weeks | 47 |
| 1 month | 43 |
| 6 months | 16 |
| 1 year | 2 |

Darr and Ferral, 2007

- Can testing be aligned with other relevant school activities?



Use the data well

Make the effort worthwhile!



6. For teaching and learning first and foremost

- A great feature of e-asTTle and PATs is that they have been designed and promoted as tools to support teaching and learning first and foremost!
- A good assessment tool should be able to provide information on:
 - areas of strength
 - gaps in learning
 - clear next steps
- Teachers need to possess the necessary technical skills and knowledge to use and share this information.
- One idea - role play!
- Students also need to understand the reports.
- Leaders need to dedicate time to build assessment literacy



7. Confirm or challenge

- Don't accept data at face value – it must be scrutinised!
- Confirm or challenge is a simple test of a result vs teacher perception.

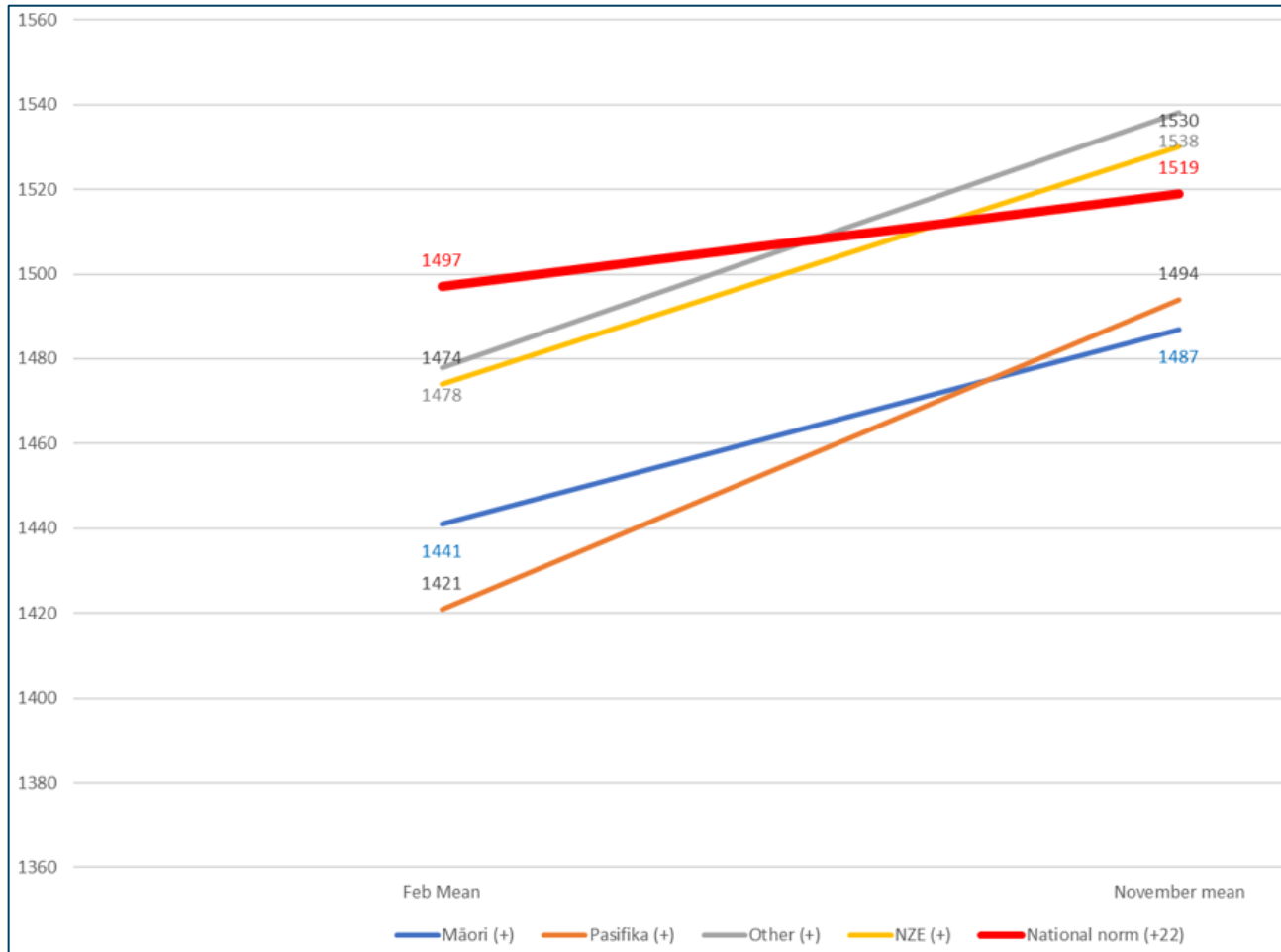
“I would have expected better from Nick”

- When a student result does challenge teacher perception, teachers can either:
 - establish the test result is not representative of the student's abilities and so maintain similar expectations of the student
 - verify the result and adjust their perception accordingly.



Look for trends and patterns

Aggregate and disaggregate data!



I believe good data analysis should cause further thinking!

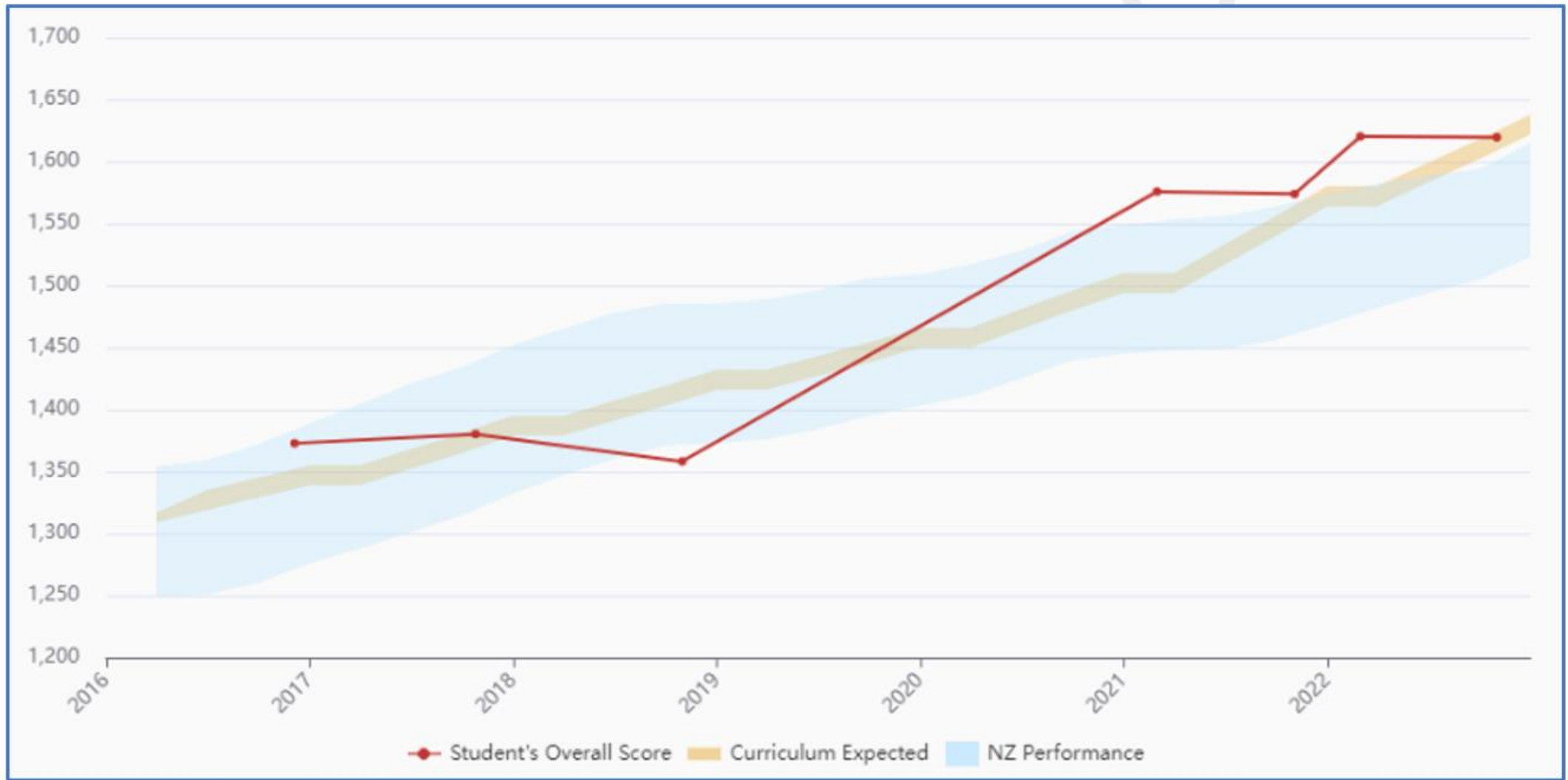


9. Think longitudinally

- Progress is often thought about within a year.
- Longitudinal provides clearer picture of trends and progress over time. It is less affected by non-representative scores.
- A school should aspire to understand if there is improvement in excellence and equity over time.
 - How do our year groups compare to national norms?
 - Are our year groups making accelerated progress within and across years?
 - What does progress for our year groups look like over the last 4 years?
 - Are there gender or ethnicity differences in our data?
 - Are our students performing better or worse than similar students in the past?



9. Think longitudinally




Seize the moment

By seizing the moment of testing twice a year, and doing it well, there is a chance to create a more effective, informed, and forward-thinking environment.



Where to start



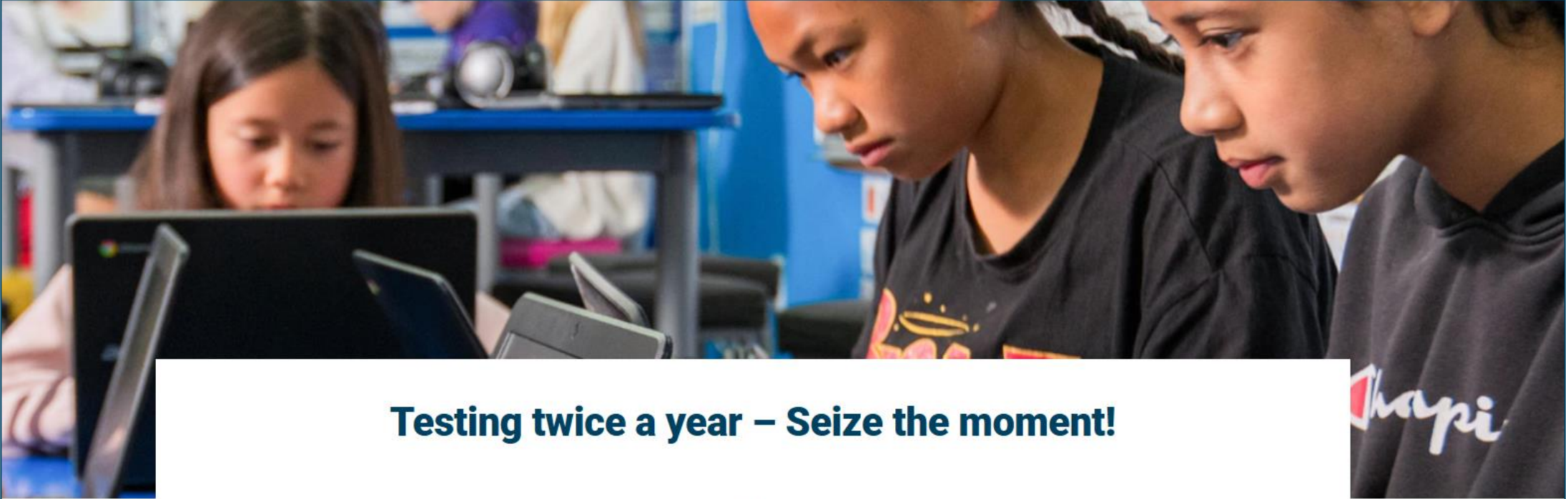
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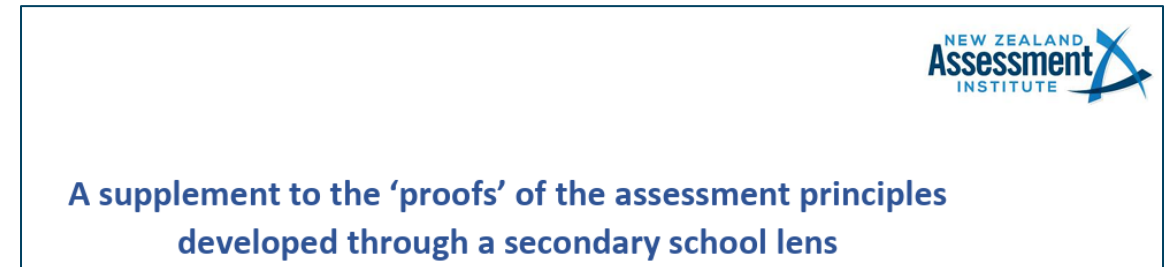
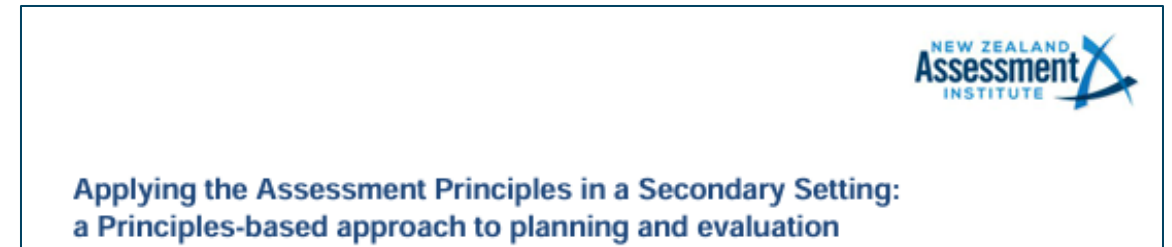
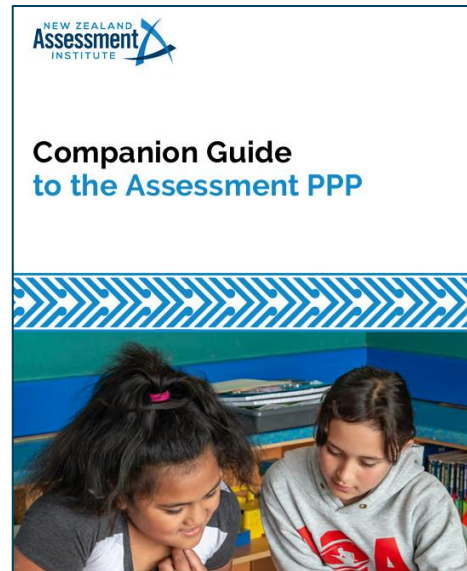
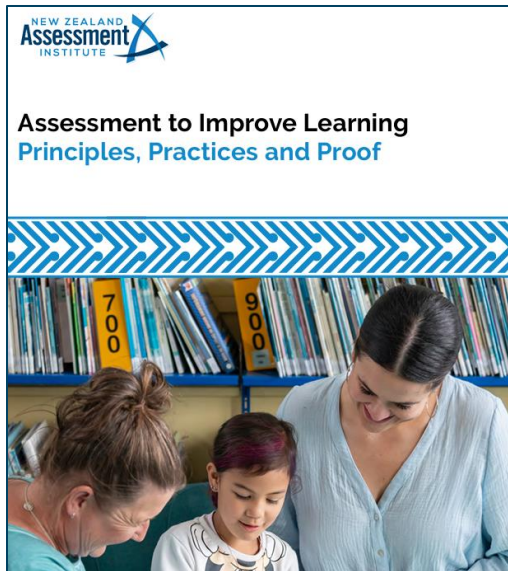


By [Garry Taylor](#) on November 8, 2024 in [Assessment tools](#)



Where to start

- Review the current state of assessment at your school | kura
- This may require input and feedback from multiple perspectives, so discussion is needed – particularly with the students and whānau.
- These documents will help – **free** from the NZAI website



Some thoughts and wonderings

- What changes, if any, are needed to assessment thinking, tools and reporting with a curriculum where teaching is planned to align to the students' year level?
- What position will the new assessment tool hold?
- What's the best way to have all teachers confident with analysing and articulating test reports?
- AI marking of writing – is it better to have consistency of marking and some analysis or teachers marking their own students scripts?
- How are we going to check that this policy is beneficial?



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