

# **Managing National Assessment Report**

## **Horowhenua College**

**May 2023**

# **FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW**

## **Horowhenua College**

**4 May 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**

#### **No Action required**

The school has no action items relating to the quality of its assessment systems.

#### **For consideration**

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

- prompting teachers to use the query and appeal functions in the external moderation application to clarify their understanding of grade boundaries
- reviewing entry of junior students in NCEA assessment standards
- reviewing unassigned standards to determine if a Course Endorsement is feasible for eligible students.



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9 June 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 13 August 2018 Managing National Assessment Report**

The school has resolved its agreed action to clarify resubmission assessment opportunities with teachers. Teachers follow NZQA's guidelines when providing resubmission and further assessment opportunities.

**External moderation response to outcomes and processes** In 2022, the majority of assessor decisions were consistent with the standard and met national external moderation requirements. Where an outcome is "Not Consistent," Heads of Faculty complete a Response to Moderation Action Plan. The Principal's Nominee monitors the completion and effectiveness of these action plans as part of his faculty review.

Staff value external moderation for its professional learning component. They use outcomes to clarify their understanding of assessment standards, store benchmarks, and inform changes to assessment tasks and grade decisions. It has led to some staff reviewing their verification processes as they are conscious that their moderation outcomes are not improving. When they are unsure about any outcomes, more staff should also be encouraged to use the Query and Appeal functions available in the external moderation application as staff who have used the Appeal function have found this feedback worthwhile.

### 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)*

Horowhenua College is committed to meeting the diverse needs of its students and to give them opportunities to enjoy academic success. Senior leadership has recognised an increase in the number of students needing learning support and has focused on providing inclusive education opportunities.

**Removing barriers to achievement** To facilitate this, classes are not streamed; each Year 9 class has a teacher aide and for the last two years there has been a school-wide professional development focus on Universal Design for Learning. Students eligible for Special Assessment Conditions are identified on the school's student management system and staff can request support for these students on an open shared document updated each week.

**Students assessed when ready** Teachers monitor student readiness for NCEA assessment by incorporating student feedback, feedforward and milestones into their teaching, and consulting the school's senior student register of students At Risk of Not Achieving (ARONA). Consequently, many assessment opportunities have due dates rather than deadlines, which allows students to submit work when they are ready.

To ensure the credibility of assessment, the Principal's Nominee has a school wide focus on authenticity in 2023.

Students may enter internally assessed standards from Year 9 and externally assessed standards from Year 10. The number of Year 10 students absent from external standard assessments or who gained Not Achieved from these standards in 2022, however, suggests that not all of these students were assessment ready. One of the faculties interviewed shared its review of junior students' results in its report to the Board of Trustees. This good self-review practice should be shared with other faculties to evaluate the efficacy of outcomes from junior entries into NCEA assessment.

**Senior leaders monitor course development and change** Staff make adaptations to assessment tasks and courses to make them more accessible by placing them in familiar contexts. They use their own processes of self-review based on data analysis and current educational research to implement changes that will continue to improve assessment outcomes for all students. Local curriculum is being incorporated into many areas of the school, including STEM subjects. The diversity of assessment opportunities is evidence of the school's responsive approach that furthers student engagement and achievement.

Each faculty presents an annual report to the Board of Trustees and from this, a school template, "Levers for Change – Unit Checklist" has been developed to assist with unit planning and to align practices across faculties. The senior leadership team monitors developments when meeting the Heads of Faculty at their fortnightly meetings. Recent examples of adaptations include providing a Level 3 English course with 14 internal credits, developing a new Level 3 Mathematics course and creating a multi-level Waharoa course, focusing on standards in a Māori context. These new courses have been introduced to meet student needs and to improve student engagement in their academic studies.

## **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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards, and Candidates 2023)*

**Additional academic support improves achievement outcomes for priority students** The school's Level 1 NCEA results for Pasifika students have improved markedly over the last two years and now exceed the national average. Level 2 results are also on an upwards trajectory. On Wednesdays, during time allocated for staff Professional Development some teachers use this time to provide additional tuition. An after-school homework programme, He Vaka Moana is open to all students but is primarily aimed at Pasifika students, in response to the growing number of Pasifika families moving into the Levin area.

In addition, Pasifika students are encouraged to enter externally assessed standards where they have strengths and competencies in their first language, and their Pasifika Fusion performances are assessed against Dance standards.

Allowing students to gain Course Endorsement would further validate students' academic achievements. To achieve this, the school is advised to review any unassigned standards for these students where they may be eligible for Course Endorsement.

## **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, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards, and Candidates 2023, Schedule 4.3 )*

Horowhenua College has a well-established school-wide process for internal moderation. The Principal's Nominee works collaboratively with departments, focusing on supporting Heads of Faculty to ensure that they complete internal moderation, and monitors its completion. Recent declining external moderation results, however, suggests that some subjects would benefit from reviewing their verification process. Staff should also be encouraged to use the clarification query available for internally assessed standards to ask specific questions of moderators about interpreting a standard or standards.

## **Appendix 1: Effective Practice**

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

**Horowhenua College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their 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 and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- using formative assessments and checkpoints to provide on-going feedback and feedforward information so students can present their best standard-specific evidence of achievement 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
- expanding opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving their qualification goals
- implementing strategies to provide opportunities to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

**Horowhenua College 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**

**Horowhenua College 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.

**Horowhenua College 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**

**Horowhenua College 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
- reporting to the Principal and Board of Trustees an annual analysis of NCEA achievement to inform strategic goals and actions.

**Horowhenua College 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 families about assessment**

### **Horowhenua College has effective processes and procedures for:**

- keeping assessment-related communications current and accurate 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
- celebrating students' success

### **Horowhenua College 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 Horowhenua College:

- 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.

### 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
- *Assessment Procedures for the National Qualifications Framework, 2023 Staff Handbook*
- *NCEA Student Handbook 2023*

### **The School Relationship Manager met with:**

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal – Curriculum
- Heads of Faculty for:
  - Arts
  - Health and Physical Education
  - Languages
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Technology
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principal (Curriculum) 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.