

Managing National Assessment Report

Mana College

9 August 2017

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Mana 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.

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 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report 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
- *Guidelines for Teachers for Internal Assessment, NZQF/NCEA Procedures at Mana College 2017*
- *NZQF/NCEA Information for Students, Mana College 2017*
- *Curriculum and Achievement Policy, Mana College*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with the Principal's Nominee, three students and Heads of Department for Gateway/Transition, History, Lifeskills/Careers, Physical Education, Science, and Visual Arts.

There was a report-back session with the Assistant Principal 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.

SUMMARY

Mana College

9 August 2017

Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*. 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. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

What the school is doing well

The school is effectively reviewing its assessment practices. These reviews have resulted in positive changes improving student outcomes, evident by the school's improved NCEA results. Self-review processes inform strategic planning, identify areas for on-going improvement and ensure action plans are implemented accordingly.

Moderation practice is embedded in the school and feedback is valued by the teachers. The overall rate of agreement between assessor judgements and external moderators has improved over the past two years. This reflects the good processes in place to respond to external moderation. The Principal's Nominee effectively monitors that action plans have been implemented.

Effective tracking of student progress using assessment data has also contributed to the improvement in student achievement. NZQA data is effectively used to identify at-risk students and target appropriate support for them. The school has improved its identification of students requiring special assessment conditions, using school based evidence so more students now have access to them.

Student needs are met well through flexible course design and the use of external providers to provide suitable assessment pathways. Vocational assessments have been matched in STAR and Gateway courses to better meet student needs. The school can individualise programmes so that students gain more meaningful qualifications with a greater focus on vocational pathways.

Students demonstrate a clear understanding of school assessment policy and procedures. The school uses a range of communication tools to ensure that the information reaches its many stakeholders and that they are clearly informed. Teachers are well supported in their assessment practice by the Principal's Nominee and they feel confident in seeking her advice.

Areas for improvement

There is inconsistent practice among staff applying the school missed and late assessment policy. These needs to be followed to ensure extensions for assessments are given fairly and appropriately and that the credibility of the assessment is not at risk. Reviewing this with staff will help to ensure that the policy and procedures are clearly understood and followed.

A high number of student entries did not have a result reported against them in 2016. Schools must report all assessment results to NZQA (*Assessment Rule 5.6.a*) where candidates have had an adequate assessment opportunity. A process to ensure all results are reported or the entry is withdrawn will improve the accuracy of the data reported to NZQA.

Results from external providers should be reconciled with memoranda of understanding held. This is to ensure that consent to assess has been established and the correct provider code used for reporting.

Agreed action

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems. These are to:

- ensure that staff understand and follow the school missed and late assessment policy and procedures
- ensure that all student entries for internal standards have a reported result or the entry is withdrawn
- reconcile results from external providers with memoranda of understanding.

Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

18 October 2017

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, 3v)

Action Items from 3 September 2014 Managing National Assessment Report

Following the 2014 review, senior leadership undertook to:

- track that copies of internal moderation coversheets for all assessed standards are received by the Principal's Nominee
- investigate further methods of ensuring that students register for their NZQA Learner login.

This review found that both action items have been addressed.

Response to external moderation outcomes Mana College is well placed to respond to external moderation. The Principal's Nominee has effective procedures in place. Staff follow up feedback with appropriate action plans. The Principal's Nominee monitors the completion of the action plans in the annual review of departments. This has helped to improve agreement rates between assessors and moderators for the past two years.

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)

Since the previous review Mana College has undergone significant changes to its management structure. With the appointment of a new Principal and Assistant Principal, the school has reviewed aspects of their core business including strategic planning, policies and procedures, and curriculum and assessment. Resulting actions have had a positive impact on assessment practice.

A tracking and mentoring system was implemented by senior leadership in 2016 to help lift NCEA achievement rates. Deans and Learning Advisers track student progress using assessment data and target those at risk of not achieving. Action plans are put on place for the students to give the required support. This has greatly contributed to the improvement in student achievement rates at the school.

A staff induction process to better communicate school policy and procedures. This is particularly for new and beginning teachers so that the school's assessment and moderation procedures are clearly communicated and understood. The induction process for new staff is now formalised to include meetings with their Learning Area Head or Principal's Nominee.

A new Special Education Needs Coordinator has been appointed to support students with special assessment needs. This was in response to the school finding that students at Year 12 and 13 who required special assessment conditions were not being identified in the junior school. The number of special assessment conditions

candidates has now increased through the testing implemented by the Special Education Needs Coordinator at Year 9 and 10.

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, 2.6 I & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2017 5.5)

Mana College has effective processes and procedures for meeting the needs of their students by:

- providing differentiated assessment within courses
- scaffolding and contextualising learning and assessment tasks so that they are more relevant and better engage student interest
- linking courses and standards to vocational pathways to provide alternative pathways for students
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers to deliver:
 - courses the school is unable to offer
 - assessment against individual standards related to career pathways
- collecting school-based data to support applications for students identified as needing special assessment conditions, and providing appropriate support
- identifying and supporting students at risk of not achieving or meeting the literacy or numeracy requirements of NCEA and University Entrance by providing targeted support
- assessing when ready to minimise the need for further assessment opportunities.

Mana College has effective processes and procedures for:

- efficiently managing NZQA external examinations
- investigating and resolving potential breaches of assessment rules and student appeals of assessment decisions
- ensuring derived grades are based on valid, authentic and standard specific evidence
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Inconsistent practice in managing missed and late assessment policy The school's missed and late assessment policy must be consistently applied school-wide. This review found that some subject areas were consistent and formal in their application. Others would allow informal extensions for submission dates or sit assessments after the publicised date, which has an authenticity risk and may cause the assessment to be invalid. The school has a well-documented missed and late assessment policy and senior management agrees to revisit this.

Individualised assessment programmes lifting student achievement

Individualised programmes for senior students have greatly contributed to lifting student achievement. Gateway, STAR and the new Trades Academy extend the assessment opportunities for students. Standards on offer through these courses are aligned with vocational pathways and tailored to individual needs. This is improving achievement outcomes particularly for Level 3 students, who are now gaining more meaningful qualifications.

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 that staff understand and follow the school missed and late assessment policy and procedures.

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)

Mana College has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose
- verifying purposefully selected samples of student work
- documenting the internal moderation process using a standard *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- requiring Heads of Faculty to ensure internal moderation is completed and documented for all standards assessed in their faculty prior to reporting results to NZQA.

Mana College has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- randomly selecting samples of student work for external moderation to NZQA requirements
- discussing external moderation feedback with teachers, documenting actions and monitoring their completion
- adequately storing samples of student work to ensure material is available for external moderation.

Use of outside verifiers The school has identified developing the further use of external verifiers as an aspect that could improve its internal moderation process. This is particularly for its smaller departments that may, at times, have no suitable verifiers in the school. Using external verifiers will provide further assurance for the school that assessor judgements are at the required standard. The school is strengthening its links with local schools, particularly in its community of learning, so that external verifiers can be sought when needed.

For consideration

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

- developing greater use of outside verifiers to add robustness to the internal moderation system.

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)

Mana College effectively:

- **uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**
 - informing assessment programme design so that the standards offered match student strengths and interests
 - identifying learners at risk of not achieving their goals
 - enabling Deans to track, monitor and mentor student in their progress toward NCEA qualification and personal goals
 - annually report to the Principal and Board of Trustees an analysis of NCEA achievement, to inform strategic goals and actions
 - applying for special assessment conditions including the use of school-based evidence to support applications
 - using NZQA statistical reports and analysing results comparatively and longitudinally to inform decisions about future focus and strategic planning to raise student achievement
- **reports accurate achievement data by:**
 - actively encouraging students to monitor their progress using the student portal on the student management system, the NZQA learner login and NCEA app
 - using the Key Indicators and data file submission reports to identify and resolve data errors
 - teachers attesting that student grades are correct before they are reported to NZQA.

Reporting results for all entries To meet NZQA requirements (*Assessment Rule 5.6.a*) senior management agreed that all entries submitted to NZQA should have a result reported where candidates have had an adequate assessment opportunity. In 2016, 24 percent of all internal entries had no results reported. When an internal result is missing it is not possible to know whether a grade has not been reported or an intended assessment did not take place. Senior management agreed to implement procedures to ensure either all entries have a reported result or they are withdrawn.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the management and use of assessment-related data. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure that all student entries for internal standards have a reported result or the entry is withdrawn.

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, 2.7iib)

Mana College has effective processes and procedures for:

- having a common template for course outlines across subject areas ensuring consistent assessment information
- annually reviewing staff and student handbooks to maintain current best practice and ensure consistency of practice school-wide
- communicating consistent NCEA information, assessment policy and procedures through:
 - staff and student handbooks
 - the school website
 - student and whanau conferencing
- informing whanau of NZQA key dates and deadlines using text messaging
- reporting on students' progress towards qualifications, including providing online access to the information held on the school's student management system through the student portal
- widely distributing information on financial assistance to cover all students who are eligible
- informing staff of updates to NCEA information throughout the year via emails, the staff bulletin and staff meetings

Mana College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- checking whether teachers, students and parents are following processes
- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes
- holding student assemblies to inform them of school assessment policies and procedures
- improving whanau understanding of NCEA and assessment procedures through targeted hui
- knowing that students understand what they need to achieve to gain a qualification.

Reconciling results from external providers Results from external providers should be reconciled with a memorandum of understanding held between the school and the provider. This is to ensure that provider's consent to assess has been established and the correct provider code is used when reporting results. Senior management has agreed to undertake that memoranda of understanding with external providers will be tracked and student results will be reconciled before being reported.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to maintain the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicate them to staff, students and families. Senior management undertakes to:

- reconcile results from external providers with which they hold current memoranda of understanding.