

Managing National Assessment Report

St Bernard's College

October 2022

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

St Bernard's College

19 October 2022

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 2021.

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 2020.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed that the following action will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. This is:

Action	Timeframe
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Review the use of supported learning standards.	Within 12 months

For consideration

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

- evaluating the effectiveness of any action plans created in response to issues raised by external moderators.



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23 November 2022

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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 04 July 2017 Managing National Assessment Report School leaders have responded effectively to the agreed action in the previous report. This includes significantly expanding their capacity and processes for the use of the digital environment, including for internal assessment, submission of external moderation, and external examinations. Student feedback to the school and from those interviewed for the review confirms that these changes have been very well received. They have resulted in strong increases in the number of subjects utilising digital external assessment and the overall number of entries for digital examinations.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The Principal's Nominee manages the response to external moderation effectively. He ensures that feedback from external moderators is responded to purposefully by department leaders and oversees any resulting action plan. External support, including courses available in the NZQA learning management system, is accessed where required.

An evaluation by a senior leader of the effectiveness of any action plans created by teachers in response to issues raised by external moderators would further strengthen the process. This could be included in the Principal's Nominee's annual departmental compliance checks.

The school's internal moderation system is excellent and has resulted in a high rates of assessment judgements consistent with the standard. This provides senior leaders with assurance that internal assessment practice is reliable and producing credible results.

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 strategic goals for student achievement provide a useful framework for effective internal review. They have been developed by senior leaders through analysis of assessment and feedback data and consultation with students and families. The strategic goals include supporting students to understand and achieve their potential, to offer a wide range of subjects and learning experiences, and to provide support for removing barriers to achievement. Internal review in the school is well led by the principal, focused on achievement data, and a widely shared responsibility of staff at all levels. In this context of self-review, in the last three years the school has:

- established small senior tutor classes to improve academic mentoring
- introduced new courses to expand learning and assessment pathways available to students such as Sports Studies, Outdoor Education, Financial Literacy and Tourism
- developed its information technology systems to strengthen digital assessment including for external assessment, which students prefer
- reduced streaming of senior subjects to improve inclusivity and equity of access.

There have been some increases in NCEA attainment rates, particularly at Level 1 and 2 in the last two years. The school continues to regularly evaluate these changes against student outcomes through departmental reporting and Principal's updates to the Board of Trustees.

Substantial investment in Digital Technologies to support assessment School leadership and the Board of Trustees have overseen a significant investment in systems and resources for digital assessment since the last review. All students have access to a suitable digital device for learning and assessment. During the time of the COVID pandemic the school made significant changes to its assessment practices, including enabling all assessment responses to be created, checked and submitted online.

The school has also increased its uptake of digital external assessment from 5 percent of students in 2019 to 23 percent in 2021. A further significant increase is expected this year. Feedback from students about using digital methods for internal assessment and for external assessment is positive. They favour this type of assessment for the flexibility it creates with producing responses and for it being well matched to the way they learn.

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)

Regular monitoring of assessment data supports learner progress School leaders, teaching staff, students and families all monitor achievement data to ensure that learners are on track to meet their individual goals. Students needing additional support for literacy and numeracy are identified including those needing to utilise the unit standard pathway. This has resulted in the school having literacy and numeracy outcomes consistently higher than national averages in recent years.

Teachers (as academic mentors) and deans work closely with students to develop their individual learning and assessment programmes. Low numbers of student absences and standards not attempted in external examinations demonstrate the degree of planning that teachers and students undertake in determining their programmes and ensuring they meet individual student needs.

Review the use of supported learning standards The school must review the use of supported learning standards to ensure they are appropriate for students on an individual basis. The standards are designed for learners who require some form of support with their learning either through additional resources, specialised equipment, or adapted teaching programmes. They are intended for people with learning disabilities including those with intellectual disability. Results submitted to NZQA by the school in recent years suggest they may be being used with some students whose overall assessment programmes indicate they might not meet these criteria.

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)

Compliance checks ensure quality moderation practice in all departments The Principal's Nominee's process for departmental checks provides senior leaders with certainty that all staff have excellent quality assurance practices for internal moderation and that credible assessment results are reported to NZQA. He leads thorough department 'compliance checks' at least once per year, including some at random. He checks that documentation for all standards is completed appropriately and that student work is stored securely for benchmarking and moderation purposes. He also uses the digital moderation system built into the student management system to identify gaps. Support is provided for staff who need assistance with meeting the guidelines and any action items are monitored for completion and effectiveness.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

St Bernard's 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
- 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 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 or their qualification goals.

St Bernard's 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

St Bernard's 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.

St Bernard's 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.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

St Bernard's 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
- gathering student voice to evaluate courses and assessment workloads 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.

St Bernard's 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 their families about assessment

St Bernard's College 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
- celebrating students' success, such as the holding of parent gatherings.

St Bernard's 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 St Bernard's 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 2021* (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 *Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2022* (Assessment Rules).

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
- *St Bernard's College Staff Assessment for Qualification 2022*
- *St Bernard's College: Senior School Qualification Student Handbook.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Faculty/Department for:
 - English and Media Studies
 - Languages
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education and Health
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - Drama
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the 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.