

Managing National Assessment Report

Maniototo Area School

June 2019

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Maniototo Area 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 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, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, 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; 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 2019* (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
- *Staff NCEA Handbook, Maniototo Area School*
- *Students NCEA Handbook, Maniototo Area School*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Heads of Department for
 - Agriculture, who is also teacher of Tourism and History
 - Art
 - Physical Education
 - Science, who is also teacher of Business Studies
- 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.

SUMMARY

Maniototo Area School

13 June 2019

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

Maniototo Area School uses the acronym 'PRIDE' to communicate its values of Participation, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Empathy. These values underpin the work the school is doing to realise their vision of students who are independent learners who achieve regular success and enjoy learning.

Despite the school's size, the provision of courses is effectively managed to offer a broad curriculum to provide pathways that meet their students' individual needs. Most school-based courses offer a choice of standards to provide personalised pathways and give each student opportunities to succeed. The use of distance learning and self-directed days is carefully managed to build learners' independence. The school has worked to identify an increasing number of students who can benefit from approved special assessment conditions and provides them with appropriate support. These actions contribute towards assisting students to improve their assessment outcomes.

The school responds appropriately to assessment issues identified by both internal and external review. Self-review is driven by the Principal and Principal's Nominee, taking account of teacher and student voice. This leads to changes in assessment-related practice to better meet the needs of students.

Internal moderation processes, responses to external moderation and monitoring by the Principal's Nominee ensure that only credible assessment results are reported to NZQA. The school proactively seeks to gain wider feedback from internal moderation by expanding its range of verifiers. This effective practice means any issues are identified promptly and resolved. Improved processes are reflected in the increasing level of agreement between teacher and NZQA external moderator judgements.

Data management and use effectively support student achievement outcomes and ensure the timely and accurate reporting of results to NZQA. Students monitor their own progress towards completing qualifications, and staff use data to identify and intervene with students at risk of not achieving to their potential. Achievement data is also analysed to review department practice and courses, set strategic direction and evaluate the effectiveness of changes.

The school has a range of communication systems that help staff and students to gain a common understanding of NCEA and school assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

All departments should use the school course outline template. This would ensure students have access to consistent and complete information showing how the standards in each course they study can contribute towards gaining NZQA qualifications.

Where the school is assessing standards that have an Industry Training Organisation as the standard setting body, the Principal's Nominee needs to ensure that they record the outcome from external moderation in their summary document. This will ensure the school has a clear and complete picture of external moderation outcomes for all subject areas.

Some minor changes and additions are required to the staff and student handbooks, so they reflect current practice and are accurate.

Agreed action

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

- ensure all departments use the school course outline template
- include the outcomes of external moderation by Industry Training Organisations in the Principal's Nominee's summary of external moderation
- review and update student and staff handbooks so they provide current and accurate information.

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School Quality Assurance and Liaison

29 July 2019

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FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

External review

Evidence for external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)

Action Items from 9 August 2017 Managing National Assessment report An agreed outcome of the review was a follow-up visit early in 2018 to check that the full cycle of required internal moderation processes had been completed and the planned improvements implemented. The check confirmed the full cycle was being completed.

The review identified four agreed actions. The school included the agreed actions in the staff handbook to ensure all staff were aware of the required areas of improvement and the reasons for changes to processes. Three actions covering moderation-related processes and staff understanding of the use of special assessment conditions have been fully addressed. A fourth action, to ensure that all departments provide course outlines following the school guidelines, has been partially addressed. Nearly all departments now include the necessary information. Requiring all departments to use the school's suggested template would ensure every course outline contains the relevant information. It would also mean students and parents have clear, consistent and easy to understand information to refer to.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. These ensure senior management are fully informed of issues and aware of the actions in place to resolve them. Feedback from external moderation shows departments are improving their assessment judgements.

The school actively manages any ongoing issues to resolve them. This includes now clearly defining who has responsibility for storage of materials when standards are not assessed directly through a department to ensure the materials are available for moderation. Teachers understand the need to reflect on each report and query and/or appeal reports where appropriate. The Principal's Nominee keeps a summary of the outcomes for each standard and discusses any issues with the teacher. She records and checks any actions, including if further follow-up is needed to resolve the issue. The outcomes and results of actions are also included in annual department reports.

The Principal's Nominee receives the external moderation feedback where an Industry Training Organisation is the standard setting body. The reports are shared with the teacher, and although they have not highlighted any issues, the Principal's Nominee should include the outcomes in her summary document. This would ensure they are recorded, that senior management are better informed, and mitigate possible issues arising from any personnel changes.

Some subject areas share the feedback with the verifiers they have used outside the school. All departments should be encouraged to follow this good practice.

Internal review

Evidence for 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 reviews its assessment-related processes in response to identified issues and to explore potential improvements. From her review of departments' practices, the Principal's Nominee is aware of the strength and weaknesses of each department and tailors her level of support appropriately. The Principal's Nominee works with the Principal to review assessment related processes and the curriculum. There is input from other staff through regular meetings, and from students through discussions with the Principal's Nominee.

Assessment practice is regularly reviewed This has led to whole school and departmental changes to better support students including:

- increasing the number of students with approved special assessment conditions and planning to build on this with more in school testing to provide data for additional school-based evidence applications
- improved student understanding of resubmissions
- greater student engagement in feedback processes through encouraging them to discuss their work with their teachers
- better student awareness of the impact on available pathways from their decisions about which standards they choose within a course
- in response to student voice, introducing Business Studies and Agricultural and Horticultural Science courses and adapting the Agriculture course so some students can be farm based for more days per week
- offering vocational courses through the Otago Secondary-Tertiary College.

Internal self-review is a continual process The school's self-review includes forward planning as well as responding to issues as they arise. Planned areas of future development include:

- investigating the provision of more vocational courses to better support students desired pathways
- devolving some of the management of Virtual Learning Network courses to Heads of Department to give students more subject specific assistance
- building the staff's understanding of processes to move from compliance focus to shared ownership.

Agreed action

NZQA and senior management agree on the following action to improve the school's response to external review and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice. Senior management undertakes to:

- ensure all departments use the school course outline template
- include the outcomes of external moderation by Industry Training Organisations in the Principal's Nominee's summary of external moderation.

How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

Evidence for assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2019 5.5)

Maniototo Area School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:

- differentiating assessment by offering a choice of standards in most courses to meet students' interests and support their future pathways
- extending assessment opportunities by using a range of external providers to deliver standards the school is unable to offer
- using formative assessment activities, milestone checks and feedback to prepare students for assessment opportunities
- clearly informing staff of students' special assessment conditions and readily providing appropriate assistance
- using a learning management system to ensure students have access to all assessment-related materials
- offering access to additional tutoring after school and during supervised study.

Maniototo Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- monitoring the authenticity of student work during the assessment and marking process
- managing missed and late assessment, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules
- providing valid resubmission and further assessment opportunities
- ensuring evidence for derived grades is standard-specific and verified
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.

Supporting students undertaking distance learning Most distance learning is undertaken through a Virtual Learning Network. Students are carefully counselled before starting a course to help them decide if it is an appropriate learning style for them to succeed. The eDean frequently reviews their progress with them and is in regular contact with the virtual teachers to support the students' learning. Where the school can offer expertise in the subject area, staff give extra specialist support. In previous years the Science department has assessed some practical standards to supplement the virtual teaching.

Building student capacity for independent learning From Term 2 onwards, Tuesday is student self-directed time. On the previous Friday, students agree a plan for the day with their teachers. This is helping to build towards the school's vision of developing independent learners and teaching students planning, prioritising and time management skills.

Māori and Pacific student engagement and success in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects Over recent years, the school has had very few Māori students and no Pacific students in Year 13, so the STEM data supplied by NZQA gives little insight into the success rate for different ethnicity

groups. With increased retention rates across the school and an increasing Māori roll, the school plans to ensure course selection discussions continue to focus on the expectation that all students have access to a STEM pathway. Currently every Year 12 and 13 student is studying at least one STEM subject.

No action required

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

Evidence for internal and external moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2019 6.4b)

Maniototo Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:

- ensuring all new or modified assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists, mainly outside the school, to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work to ensure assessment judgements are consistent with the standard
- documenting the quality assurance process on an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*
- retaining and updating work to be used as exemplars for students and benchmarking for assessor judgements
- following appropriate processes for moderating Industry Training Organisation administered standards.

Maniototo Area School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:

- negotiating suitable changes to the moderation plan
- selecting samples of student work randomly to NZQA requirements, where necessary

Improving staff understanding of standards through engaging with a wider range of verifiers Staff are increasing their network of verifiers to ensure they gain wider feedback on the standards they assess and their grade judgements. They are making links through the Southern Area Schools' Community of Learning, colleagues they have previously worked with, and through contact with schools from teaching via the Virtual Learning Network. The Principal's Nominee also contacts NZQA to find schools who are assessing certain standards, particularly when departments are considering adding new standards to courses.

Effective monitoring of internal moderation The school has an effective documented process for monitoring internal moderation. This provides quality assurance and ensures senior management that all reported results are credible.

When moderation is completed teachers submit an *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*, with most recording detailed comments of the grade decisions, to the Principal's Nominee. She reads the sheets and discusses them with the teacher, ensuring any concerns are addressed before results are recorded in the student management system. To reinforce this requirement, when a data file is being prepared to be sent to NZQA, results are removed if the Principal's Nominee has not received a cover sheet. She reconciles each submitted sheet against course outlines and follows up missing ones with Heads of Department.

During Term 2 each department completes a quality assurance document outlining their moderation process. The Principal's Nominee visits each department during the year to discuss, and see evidence, that this practice is being followed. She keeps a

summary record of the outcomes of these visits and follows up on any required changes in practice.

A summary of the school's internal moderation process is shared with staff at the start of each year, so they have a clear understanding of what is required.

Encourage staff to suggest standards for external moderation In the last three years only one subject area has recommended standards to be included in the moderation plan. Teachers selecting standards for external moderation ensures they receive feedback on standards their self-review has targeted as important. It will also help increase engagement with the whole moderation process and assist in helping staff move from a compliance focus to ownership of strategic quality assurance processes and their own professional development.

For consideration

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

- increasing the number of subject areas selecting potential standards for external moderation.

How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?

Evidence for data management and use supporting student achievement outcomes. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)

Maniototo Area School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- analysing results, with a focus on the progression of individuals and next steps, which informs the review of student tracking processes and the modification of courses and teaching practice
- creating and regularly updating form profiles, so staff have a clear picture of attainment and students at risk of not achieving to their potential.

Maniototo Area School reports accurate achievement data by:

- reporting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- reporting Not Achieved results as appropriate
- having student and teacher checks and a sign-off process when results are recorded in the student management system and at key points in the year
- closely managing withdrawals from standards and late entries
- only reporting results for standards for which the school holds Consent to Assess, or using the correct code of external providers where the Principal's Nominee has a copy of a current memorandum of understanding.

Student progress effectively tracked, and interventions put in place to improve achievement outcomes The school effectively uses data to track student progress, with a focus on improving student achievement outcomes. Students set goals and predict and record the credits they have gained using a strategic planner and *My Mahi*. They also have access to data in the student management system and regularly review their progress with their mentor. The Dean also keeps a monthly credit count and meets with students she has concerns about to put in place any necessary support. Mentors, class teachers and the Dean discuss in senior team meetings any students who are at risk of not achieving to their potential and share ideas to help resolve any issues.

Further support student access to functions provided through NZQA Learner Login The school should consider how they can further support students to register their NZQA Learner Login and access the functions it provides. When students do not register, they cannot apply for reconsiderations and/or reviews for external assessments, order certificates and their New Zealand Record of Achievement or check their personal details and the reporting of results to NZQA.

In previous years close to 100 percent of students registered their Learner Login, but although still relatively high, this dropped in 2018 to 81 percent.

For consideration

To extend good practice in managing and making use of assessment-related data, the school is encouraged to consider:

- how they can further support students to register their NZQA Learner Login.

How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?

Evidence for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))

Maniototo Area School has effective processes and procedures for:

- ensuring students receive outlines for all courses they undertake
- communicating assessment policy and procedure to staff and students using a range of methods.

Maniototo Area School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- the Principal's Nominee explaining to students how NCEA works at the end of Year 10
- the Principal's Nominee discussing NZQA and school assessment processes with all senior students at the start of the year in Whanau time
- mentors reinforcing the Principal's Nominee's presentation and answering any further questions as they arise
- presenting NZQA and school assessment related processes to parents through NZQA publications and reminders in newsletters
- the Principal's Nominee reminding staff of NZQA related process at the start of each year and in senior staff meetings
- inducting new staff to familiarise them with the school's expectations for assessment and moderation processes.

Students show a good understanding of how NCEA works and school assessment procedures The students interviewed could clearly articulate how NCEA works. They understood school processes such as extensions, resubmissions, moderation, dealing with authenticity, derived grades and appeals, and felt their teachers applied them consistently.

Improving parent understanding of school and NZQA processes The school has found NCEA information evenings for parents have been poorly attended. Considering including a presentation in the options evening and a link to the student handbook on the school website, could provide opportunities to improve parent's understanding of NCEA.

Changes required to staff and student handbooks School publications require some alterations and additions to give full and accurate information that match current school practice. These include:

- adding that appeals can cover the whole assessment process, not just the grade awarded
- including information on privacy considerations for student results and use of their work as exemplars
- removing the reference to internally moderating 20 percent of student work
- adding to the section on external examinations that NZQA annually publishes full guidelines.

The student handbook is a detailed reference document. The contents page is designed to let students easily find the information they need as it is set out as common questions they may ask. When updating the handbook, the school should consider altering the language in some sections to make it consistently user friendly for students.

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:

- review and update student and staff handbooks so they provide current and accurate information.