

Managing National Assessment Report

Cromwell College

March 2023

FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

Cromwell College

17 March 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 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.

Actions and considerations

Agreed actions

The school agreed that a number of actions will improve the quality of their assessment systems and practice for national qualifications. These are:

Action	Timeframe
External and internal review	
Ensure senior management monitor responses to external review to maintain credible assessment, including <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Managing National Assessment review action items and- External moderation feedback.	Immediate
Review the ongoing leadership of assessment within the school to ensure that recent improvements to policy and practice are embedded to maintain credible assessment.	Immediate
Credible assessment practice to meet student needs	
Ensure that quality assured practice external assessment grades are reported to NZQA for use as derived grades.	By the start of the 2023 examination period
Increase monitoring to ensure entries and result data submitted to NZQA is accurate and timely.	Immediate and ongoing

For consideration

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

- Including discussion of assessment leadership and practices in regular senior leader meetings with Heads of Faculty to embed a renewed approach to ownership and accountability
- Removing assessment procedure guidance from course outlines to remove a potential source of confusion with generic staff and student information.



Kay Wilson
Manager
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

2 May 2023

NZQA

0800 697 296

www.nzqa.govt.nz

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 23 June 2021 Managing National Assessment Report The previous MNA review identified a significant issue for the school to address, requiring them to follow up external review recommendations and findings (*CAAS Guidelines 3v*). The school has made significant progress in resolving the specified action items since the 2021 MNA review and NZQA's 2022 return visit.

The school now has clear expectations, monitoring and storage processes in place to ensure compliance with NZQA external moderation submission requirements. Results cannot be submitted to NZQA until a member of the senior leadership team is assured that work will be available for external moderation if requested. Action plans created in response to external moderation feedback are discussed with and signed off by the Principal's Nominee.

The Principal's Nominee has introduced measures to ensure that all internal assessment grades have been subject to a quality assurance process, and that all systems will be monitored on an ongoing basis. These developments are discussed later in this report.

Processes are now in place to check that the school only assesses students against standards for which it has consent to assess, and that arrangements with external providers are clear and up to date. Memoranda of Understanding for external providers are carefully checked by relevant teachers and monitored by the Principal's Nominee.

The school's staff and student NCEA information handbooks have been thoroughly reviewed and updated for 2023 to provide current and comprehensive information about NZQA requirements and school assessment processes. The Principal's Nominee, supported by other senior leaders, ensures that all expectations are communicated clearly and adhered to across learning areas.

External moderation processes and response to outcomes The next step for the school in meeting NZQA's external moderation requirements is for Heads of Faculty, supported by senior leaders, to evaluate the effectiveness of completed action plans in resolving the issues raised by external moderators. There needs to be a record of effective responses to all external moderation feedback. Processes are now in place to monitor that teachers use feedback for the purpose for which it is intended; to strengthen school assessor decisions.

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 acting Principal's Nominee has overseen significant changes to school assessment policies and practices so far this year, in response to the previous Managing National Assessment review. These have included all the required actions listed above. To maintain the momentum of review and change, and securely embed all the new processes implemented, the school should review how assessment is led

within the school. A strategic focus to this review would help to confirm that assessment leadership, ownership and staff development are all aligned for continuous improvement.

Further development of staff capability in assessment leadership and practices would be assisted by including these as agenda items in regular senior leader meetings with Heads of Faculty. This could be particularly useful as each learning area prepares for the implementation of the NCEA Change Programme while embedding changes to school assessment policy and improvements to assessment processes. Staff are appreciative that changes to date have led to increased accountability for all staff by ensuring that every process is supported by ongoing, accessible evidence.

Effective communication about assessment The Principal's Nominee and other senior leaders have thoroughly reviewed the communication of assessment information to staff, students and whānau. This now includes a range of more accessible digital materials, student sessions with quizzes, and parent evenings. The school could consider removing assessment practice information from course outlines, to remove a potential source of confusion, as accurate information is now readily available elsewhere to students. Staff meetings and weekly emails from the Principal's Nominee bring teachers up to date with assessment matters and provide ample opportunities for questions and discussion. The school is intending to explore providing further NCEA information to Year 10 students and University Entrance information to Year 12 students, in preparation for the year ahead.

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)

Cromwell College offers a range of courses both within the school and with external providers that support students to access their chosen pathways. The students spoken to during the MNA review expressed their appreciation for the academic mentoring and careers guidance they have received at the college. Cromwell College works in partnership with the Central Otago Youth Employment Programme to support selected students to gain vocational skills and qualifications.

Ensuring data accuracy Increased monitoring of student entries and results is needed to ensure that information that is submitted to NZQA is up to date. A number of errors in 2022 results data took some time to resolve. Effective data systems include making timely entries for external assessments, the timely reporting of grades for all completed internal assessments and ensuring that the school only assesses standards that are listed in its current Consent to Assess.

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)

Each step of the school's internal moderation process is now supported by evidence and closely monitored by the senior leadership team. Senior leaders have confidence that each grade reported to NZQA has been subject to a quality assurance process. Grades can only be published in the school's student management system by a

senior leader, and only if they have sighted evidence of completed critiquing, grade verification and related procedures. Each teacher is required to record verification comments for each standard in the student management system, while each Head of Faculty oversees their learning area.

The increased accountability inherent in these new systems ensures that internal quality assurance is given the attention required. This will stand the school in good stead as it prepares for the assessment of new achievement standards and related adjustments to school procedures. These include enhanced digital storage protocols, assessment over extended periods of time and significant changes to how assessment is conducted in some learning areas.

The school needs to use a similarly robust system to ensure that all practice external assessment grades are reported to NZQA for use as derived grades. Recent reporting of these grades to NZQA has been about 60 percent of the school's external entries. Revised school procedures ensure that all grades reported to NZQA will be quality assured, and teachers spoken to for this review have a good understanding of how these systems will support credible assessment for students.

Appendix 1: Effective Practice

Effective assessment practice to meet the needs of students

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

- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with external providers and extending the school's Consent to Assess if required
- broadening assessment opportunities by engaging with 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 opportunities for digital assessment including digital exams
- engaging in Review of Achievement Standards pilots to prepare for future assessment
- identifying and providing support for students at risk of not achieving literacy and numeracy or their qualification goals.

Cromwell 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
- safeguarding student privacy in the issuing of student results.

Effective internal and external moderation to assure assessment quality

Cromwell 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, and verification notes 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.

Cromwell 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.

Effective management and use of assessment-related data

Cromwell College effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:

- monitoring and tracking student progress
- 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.

Cromwell College reports accurate achievement data by:

- 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
- 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 whānau about assessment

Cromwell 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.

Cromwell 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 Cromwell 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 whānau.

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 *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
- *Staff Assessment and New Zealand Qualifications Guidelines Document – Cromwell College 2023*
- *Student Assessment Handbook – Cromwell College 2023*
- *Board of Trustees Student Assessment and Curriculum Delivery policies.*

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Assistant Principal
- Heads of Faculty for:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education and Health
 - Science
 - Social Sciences
 - Technology
- 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.