

Managing National Assessment Report

Central Southland College

October 2021

What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Central Southland 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, 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 2021* (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
- *Achievement and Assessment Here @CSC 2021*, Student Handbook
- *Central Southland College, Staff Handbook 2021*
- 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:
 - Mathematics
 - Music
 - Science
 - Technology
 - Visual Art
- Teacher in Charge of:
 - Agriculture
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Principal, Deputy Principals 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

Central Southland College

20 October 2021

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 issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

At the request of NZQA, and with the school's agreement, this review was rescheduled from 2020 due to COVID-19 disruptions.

What the school is doing well

Central Southland College is committed to offering a broad range of assessment programmes and pathways that meet the needs of its student community. Senior leaders and Heads of Department have an effective reflective approach to curriculum and assessment that encourages ongoing review at school-wide, department and class levels. The current curriculum review and professional learning priorities address the school's intention to more actively use the flexibility of NCEA to raise achievement and effectively meet student needs.

Assessment practice is consistent across all learning areas that participated in the review and was evident in student responses to interview questions. Teachers monitor the progress of both high-achieving students and those at risk of not completing their qualifications and adapt courses as appropriate.

Sound internal and external moderation processes are embedded across the school. Teachers actively seek feedback to ensure that only credible results are reported to NZQA. Sufficient samples of student work are verified to confirm that grade decisions are consistent with the standard, using subject specialists from outside the school where appropriate.

Data management and use effectively support student achievement outcomes. Achievement data is analysed at multiple levels across the school to ensure that any issues are identified and steps put in place to support students to succeed. Results reported to NZQA are accurate and timely.

The school communicates up-to-date information that allows staff, students and whānau to gain a good understanding of NZQA and school assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

There are no agreed action items. Some next steps for the school to consider are detailed in the body of the report.

Kay Wilson
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15 December 2021

NZQA

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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 25 October 2017 Managing National Assessment Report

The school has addressed the two items detailed in this report by:

- providing an assurance that department practices guarantee all internally assessed standards are moderated, before results are reported.
- updating school documentation so that it is current, fit for purpose, and provides full coverage of school assessment processes.

Response to external moderation outcomes The school has effective processes to respond to external moderation. Agreement between teachers and moderators show that most departments do not have widespread or ongoing concerns. External moderation is valued by teachers for its contribution to ongoing review of assessments and internal moderation processes.

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)

Central Southland College is conducting a wide-ranging review of the school's curriculum and delivery. The purpose of the review is to ensure that school systems are meeting academic needs, to support quality teaching and learning, and to use both student and teacher time more purposefully. School leaders, Heads of Department and teachers are actively involved in the review. The intention is to develop programmes that will improve achievement for all students through more engaging and contextual course and assessment design.

The school's focuses for improving equity include reducing disparities for male students, Māori students, and students who are eligible for special assessment conditions. Achievement and engagement gaps between male and female students are being investigated by a teacher working group who will make pedagogical and curriculum recommendations.

The school is engaged in the *Poutama Pounamu* professional learning and support programme to embed the use of culturally responsive pedagogy and explicitly raise expectations for Māori students. The school has also significantly increased provision of entitlements for students who are eligible for special assessment conditions. All of these initiatives demonstrate an active commitment by school leaders and teachers to cater to the assessment needs of all their students.

Central Southland College demonstrates school-wide consistency of NCEA processes that ensure results reported to NZQA are credible. Heads of Department and teachers are engaged in ongoing review of assessment practices at both

department and school-wide level. Experienced leadership, shared ownership of assessment procedures and self-review provide confidence that any concerns relating to assessment practices will be identified and addressed.

No action required

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and/or its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

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 2021 5.1 – 5.7)

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

- offering New Zealand Scholarship and university courses to a variety of students in an increasing range of subjects, to develop pathways to extend high achieving students
- identifying individuals and groups of students at risk of not achieving to their potential in NCEA assessments, and implementing strategies to support them to achieve their goals
- investigating options for celebrating the success of students who achieve course endorsements and NCEA certificate endorsements, to encourage high achievement
- encouraging the ongoing use of productive online learning and assessment strategies that have been used during periods of lockdown in 2020 and 2021
- entering students in digital examinations consistent with digital teaching and learning activities
- extending assessment opportunities by using external providers to deliver courses the school is unable to offer, and assessment against individual standards related to career pathways
- supporting students requiring special assessment conditions by using school-based testing, making applications appropriately, and communicating entitlements clearly to teachers and parents.

Central Southland College has effective processes and procedures for:

- managing missed and late assessment, and investigating appeals and breaches of the rules
- monitoring the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment by using suitable strategies, including trialling digital tools, during the assessment and marking process
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020* when returning results to students and retaining exemplars of student work.

Gathering evidence for achievement Teachers and students share an understanding that standard-specific evidence can be collected in various formats from a range of tasks. Teachers are beginning to explore collecting evidence over time rather than from single assessment events, to minimise the need for resubmission and further assessment opportunities. This includes more use of practice activities and instructional milestones to enable students to better monitor their own progress. Students receive feedback on their learning and progress towards assessment; increasingly on digital platforms.

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 2021 6.4b)

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

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- teachers engaging with NZQA's online assessor support programmes, including *Pūtake* learning modules, and in-person training when available
- attending regional moderation meetings for ITO standards.

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

- many departments requesting standards to be included on the external moderation plan
- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are provided by being adequately stored.

Teacher engagement in internal moderation The school works proactively to overcome the challenges that teachers have in finding suitable teachers with subject expertise to act as grade verifiers due to school size and distance from other schools. Relief requests are granted to enable teachers to travel to other schools, mark within their departments, and connect with their chosen moderators. Teachers strategically select samples for grade verification, focussing on borderline and contentious grades for discussion and feedback. All internal moderation cover sheets are co-signed and uploaded to a digital folder for ease of reference, and the completion of the process is monitored by senior leaders through checking the digital folder and during departmental reviews. Teachers spoken to for this review had a good understanding of the importance of internal moderation in ensuring the validity of student grades.

Evaluating responses to external moderation outcomes The school uses a clear process to follow up actions implemented in response to external moderation feedback. Each department discusses their external moderation reports and completes a response to moderation form. This summarises the report and includes a proposed action plan. The plans are stored in a digital file, implemented within departments and monitored by the Principal's Nominee in discussion and as part of the senior leadership-led department review cycle. The school is intending to add to this process, to ensure that internal moderation processes are reviewed when responding to external moderation feedback.

For consideration

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

- reviewing internal moderation processes when responding to external moderation feedback.

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)*

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

- reporting annually on school goals and student attainment within departments and submitting reports to the Principal and the Board of Trustees
- using data analysis to inform course design that better reflects the learning needs of students
- identifying students at risk of not achieving to their potential, and using credit and endorsement predictions, literacy and numeracy support, and course adaptations to improve their outcomes
- setting annual aspirational goals for Merit and Excellence endorsements for each cohort, and monitoring and intervening to support students to achieve these goals.

Central Southland College reports accurate achievement data by:

- submitting results to NZQA on a timely and regular basis
- reporting results for all internal entries.

Data is used to monitor student progress The school makes good use of detailed data to identify and address any achievement concerns at student, course and group levels. Processes for tracking student achievement include pastoral as well as achievement data, and are supported by Deans, form teachers and classroom teachers. Teachers make adaptations to courses throughout the year to enable students to meet their achievement goals. Students are encouraged to monitor their own progress through the school's Student Management System student portal, their NZQA Learner Login, and a mentoring application.

No action required

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

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))

Central Southland College has effective processes and procedures for:

- communicating assessment policy and procedures to staff, students and their whānau using a range of means including, paper, digital and in-person
- ensuring that whānau who have limited digital access still receive important communications from the school in hard copy format and at meetings with teachers
- reviewing the student and teacher assessment handbooks to ensure they are fit for purpose, current and consistent with each other.

Central Southland College assists common understanding of assessment practice by:

- informing teachers about assessment best practice and providing opportunities to discuss changes at staff meetings
- the Principal's Nominee ensuring that teachers are updated by passing on relevant communications from NZQA.

Consistent communication of information in course outlines Course outlines could be improved by removing assessment processes that are covered in school-wide documentation. Currently, all departments provide course outlines to students, but some of these include different interpretations of late and missed assessments, resubmission, and further assessment opportunities. This creates the potential for confusion for students and the incorrect application of assessment policies. Existing course outlines that include assessment options, the standards that contribute to literacy, numeracy, and University Entrance requirements, and the opportunities for course endorsement provide useful information for students and could provide a starting point for a common template.

No action required

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.

For consideration

To extend good practice in ensuring that information about assessment to students, staff and families is current and accessible, the school is encouraged to consider:

- providing students with consistent assessment information in course outlines.